

A Letter for Mr Darcy

A Pride and Prejudice Variation
Epistolary Short Story

Amelia Westerly

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This is a work of fiction based on the characters in 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen. The events in this work are entirely the product of the author's imagination. Any resemblance to real persons, whether living or dead, is purely coincidental and not intended by the author.

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****from Miss Elizabeth Bennet to Mr Fitzwilliam
Darcy****

*2th September 1812
Longbourn*

Dear Mr Darcy,

Please forgive my abominable presumption in writing to you. I was once given a letter that had to be read, as justice to the writer's character demanded it. This may be another such - though it is not the writer, but rather the reader whose character may have been treated most unfairly.

By now, you have either thrown my impudent letter into the fireplace unread, or you have steeled yourself to have patience with me. I will gather my courage and go on.

Mr Darcy, were you the guardian angel who found my sister, who made the arrangements, who

paid Wickham's debts - in short, who saved myself and all my sisters from the most certain ruin? I am sure you must be startled in being interrogated in such a manner, and after you took such pains to maintain secrecy. You must not blame my aunt for indiscretion. It was Lydia who thoughtlessly told me you were in attendance at the wedding, from which I have inferred much and fruitlessly puzzled over still more.

However blind I have been to your character, however unjust to you I have been in times past, I have at least always known you for an honest man. Please be honest with me once more, and let me know how deeply I and all my family must thank you. If you have done half all this, I am deeply in your debt.

*Impatiently, gratefully, sincerely,
Elizabeth Bennet*

****from Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy to Miss Elizabeth
Bennet****

*5th September 1812
Pemberley*

My dear Miss Elizabeth Bennet,

Having received your missive last evening, I write with some urgency and much surprise. I shall forgive your lack of prudent caution in writing to me, if you will forgive me my too-great joy in having received your letter. I know that if you still thought of me as you did last April, when my behaviour merited the strictest censure, you would not honour me with your trust in such a way.

I will not sport with your patience. Yes, I was able to find Lydia. They had gone to ground in London, you see. Having long wished rather less awareness of Wickham's habits and tastes, it was strange indeed to find myself grateful for all my unwilling knowledge. In such a task, our long years

of acquaintance was no small benefit. After some days, I was able to find them in a lodging house. I spoke with Wickham at length. In the end, we agreed upon a settlement of his debts in exchange for his commitment to marry her and act the part of an honourable man.

All this was no more than my obligation. It was my repayment of the debt I owed to society for my blind pride, my mistaken belief that it was below me to call Wickham to account and see to it that he would no longer be a danger to those around me. Had I acted as I ought from the first, he could not have been a danger to your sister or to the tradespeople of Meryton.

At this point, I believe it would be customary for me to assure you that there is no obligation between us. I will not do so. I confess that my strongest motivation was to promote your future comfort and happiness. If you will therefore act always to promote these interests, in whatever

form this may take, I will be well satisfied and any 'debt' you may perceive will be amply repaid.

As there is no need for you to thank me, the necessity of our correspondence is at an end. You must therefore take care. If you reply to this letter, I shall take courage, and will certainly write to you again.

*My most sincere regards,
Fitzwilliam Darcy*

****from Miss Elizabeth Bennet to Mr
Fitzwilliam Darcy****

*8th September 1812
Longbourn*

Dear Mr Darcy,

*Impossible man! I am not to feel myself
indebted, not even to express my thanks? How
could you think it possible? Sir, your actions have
raised me - no, raised my entire family - from the
deepest despondency to hope.*

*I hope I am not too bold in saying that your
generosity in writing to me is no insignificant part
of the improvement in my spirits. For these past
weeks, I have thought of the happenstance that you
entered the room shortly after I had received Jane's
letter as the bitterest ill luck. I could not bear that a
man that I had come to deeply respect should hear
of this worst of all frailties in my sister. I did not
think that I would see you again. Indeed, I did not*

see how you could possibly bring yourself to see me after what had transpired.

And now, to hear that rather than dropping the acquaintance, you have put forth every effort, every inconvenience, and no small amount of money. You have been a St. George and St. Michael put together, and I am not to thank you? I refuse. I do thank you, Mr Darcy. I thank you from the very bottom of my heart.

I am ashamed, now, to remember how sorely I misjudged you. You are charity itself to have forgiven my unjust, unfeeling words. No one would have blamed you had you never wished to see me or speak to me again. And instead, you have reached out with the greatest civility, the most welcoming aspect. How can you have done it? I believe I must now credit another flaw to your account - that of being too generous by half. You must be careful, Mr Darcy, lest your good nature be taken advantage of.

I shall now prove my last supposition to be true by intruding myself into your plans and affairs in the most shocking and unforgivable manner. As you doubtless know, Mr Bingley is in residence at Netherfield Park. I believe he will stay some weeks to enjoy our hunting and clear country air. Would it not be a fine thing if you were to visit him once again? I could then express my gratitude to you in person.

*With deepest thanks,
Elizabeth Bennet*

****from Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy to Miss Elizabeth
Bennet****

11th September 1812

Pemberley

My dear Miss Elizabeth Bennet,

I would that all such interferences into my plans were of such a gentle and considerate nature. Allow me to inform you that two weeks hence, I shall travel to Netherfield Park. Mr Bingley has been kind enough to issue me an invitation. He writes that we shall have good hunting and that he is eager indeed for the exercise, as he has neglected it of late, preferring to spend as much time as possible with your honoured sister.

How pleasant that this visit will begin in September. I am very fond of walking under the golden autumn sun. My only regret in visiting Hertfordshire is that it must mean leaving Pemberley behind. I hope you will excuse my pride

in it, for there simply is no cure. I was sorry you had not more time to enjoy the grounds. I know few who would be more likely to find pleasure in the walks here.

There is a little path by the stream that I would most particularly like to show you. It winds about in the most charming way, showing first one view, and then another. The path ends in a small hill, which Georgiana called "Pemberley Mountain" when she was a little girl. How proud she was when she at last grew old and strong enough to climb to the top! It takes a strong walker, to be sure. Miss Elizabeth Bennet, I have not a doubt that you would accomplish it in good style. I should dearly like to walk it with you. I do not consider myself to be an amusing man, but you would find any defects in my conversation to be amply compensated by the beautiful views offered along the way.

After I have visited your family, perhaps you would be so good as to show me some of the finest

paths near Meryton. I am sure Bingley will be unable to provide me with the information. His letters are full of nothing but blots and praise of the beauty of Miss Jane Bennet.

I must now beg your indulgence, as there is something I should wish to ask you. May I give my sister Georgiana your permission to begin a correspondence? She was most distressed at the sudden interruption of your acquaintance and would be glad to renew it. As a keen observer of human nature, Miss Elizabeth Bennet, you no doubt discovered my sister's shyness, which some have unjustly called excessive pride. I, who have long acted the part of a father to her, am not now able to encourage her to more liveliness and confidence, more ease in company. No - for, of course, it is this very ease which I myself lack. But were Georgiana to benefit from your lightness and wit, your bewitching combination of gentility and playfulness, she would see that there are more ways of being in company than the mere reserve

that I am able to model for her. I believe this would be a most valuable benefit for my dear sister. When she is better known to people of discernment, she is treasured for her good nature, her intelligence, and her diligence. But she, like myself, lacks the ability to enter a room of strangers and make friends of them. If Georgiana might catch a little of your own ease in this matter, it would be a most valuable benefit for her. In saying so, I think particularly of her approaching entry to the marriage mart, which at present causes her no small amount of unease. If the correspondence was not displeasing to you, I believe that it would be of no small value to her.

I shall leave off writing now, lest I be unprepared for the carriage tomorrow morning.

*With best regards,
Fitzwilliam Darcy*

****from Miss Elizabeth Bennet to Mr Fitzwilliam
Darcy****

*14th September 1812
Longbourn*

Dear Mr Darcy,

How obliging you are! One merely hints that a thing might be desirable, and you see to it that it becomes reality as swiftly as dusk becomes night. I hope that Jane will forgive me when you are come to steal away some portion of your friend's attention. Mr Bingley and my sister have been inseparable of late.

In your last letter, you were good enough to credit me with perhaps being of some use to your sister, Georgiana. I shall of course be delighted to correspond with her. Our acquaintance was broken off too quickly during our visit to Hertfordshire, but I liked all I saw of her. There is no denying she is very shy, but it is perfectly plain that she wishes

to make others perfectly easy, and is only wanting a little practice and courage to make it so. I think her a credit to her guardians.

Now, though, I have something to confess. It is not I who would be most fitting as a model for Georgiana, but rather Jane. I have looked up to her all my life. My older sister and my aunt Gardiner - these were and are my two models of how a woman ought to act, and indeed how a woman ought to think. But you must not blame them for my errors of judgement and forays into teasing. These flaws are uniquely Elizabeth.

If, after all this, you still wish me to write to Georgiana, I would be delighted. We may talk of the piano and our favourite compositions, and perhaps her diligence and dedication may inspire some measure of the same in me.

*My best regards to all your family,
Elizabeth Bennet*

****from Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy to Miss Elizabeth
Bennet****

16th September 1812

Pemberley

My dear Miss Elizabeth Bennet,

I beg that you may indeed write to my sister Georgiana. It would be better by far than my merely conveying your permission to write to her, for once she has a letter in her hands, she cannot help but respond to it. My sister is as dedicated to her work at the writing desk as to her study of the pianoforte. On the other hand, were I merely to say that you have given your blessing, she would be paralyzed by doubt. But if she is called upon to answer, rather than to begin the correspondence, her doubts will - I shall not say disappear - but they shall be materially lessened.

I walked the grounds of Pemberley as I thought out the contents of this letter. There is a

rather fine grove in the woods. On fine autumn days, one may go there to see the golden light filtered through the trees and feel that all is well with the world. In the winter, it remains free of snow in all but the fiercest storms. In spring, the wildflowers come. Perhaps you and your esteemed aunt and uncle may visit Derbyshire again, and we may walk there together. I believe I understood Mrs Gardiner to be not fond of walking overlong. One may drive on the main paths with a phaeton almost to the grove itself. Though I must confess that when I picture you there, I have always imagined you to have walked.

This business of correspondence is a dangerous thing. I find I say entirely too much. I ought to blot the words out, or perhaps begin again entirely, but I find I mean them too much to do so. I look forward to calling on you at Longbourn.

*With sincerest regards,
Fitzwilliam Darcy*

****from Miss Elizabeth Bennet to Miss Georgiana
Darcy****

*19 September 1812
Longbourn*

My dear Miss Darcy,

I was so pleased to make your acquaintance at Lambton this summer. Has your brother informed you - perhaps I might better say, warned you - that I am incurably interested in making out the characters of those around me? Well, now you know. It is a flaw in me, to be sure, but I can do nothing for it, and must therefore be forgiven. I seek to understand all I see, and while I often err, I hope that my constant practice may yet help me to improve.

Your brother Mr Darcy is perhaps my most interesting study yet. You see, he was sadly misunderstood by all upon first coming into Hertfordshire. I am sorry to say we saw only his

reserve, and missed the upright nature and sincere concern for others that make it a most respectable, even laudable thing. I saw his pride, but missed the very real virtues that justified it. But to write this is silliness itself. Of course you do not need me to tell you of your own brother's good qualities. I am sure you are the most urgent promoter of them. Short as our acquaintance was, I am certain of this much. Your brother is fortunate indeed to have such a champion.

I learnt through mutual acquaintance long before we actually met, Miss Darcy, that you and I share an interest in the pianoforte. (Though I must own, indeed, that your proficiency and dedication puts mine to shame! In our future acquaintance, I hope you may inspire my lagging dedication through the example of your own.) Are you also very fond of books? I learnt during our first acquaintance in Hertfordshire that your brother places a high value on the improvement of one's mind through reading. It was a sentiment that

stuck in my mind as at the time, I am sad to say I thoroughly misunderstood him and was surprised to find any opinion, let alone one of such importance, upon which we agreed.

Though I should be sorry to be examined by a true proficient, my study of the Italian language has lately progressed to admit a slow, painstaking journey through one of my father's books. It is he who has tutored me in the language, for which I am very grateful. The simplest of phrases sounds enchanting in Italian, even when pronounced in my clumsy accents! It gives me strength to once again turn back to my books, no matter how labyrinthine the sentence or obscure the word I am to decode.

Mr Darcy has not yet informed me of whether you study any of the modern and classical languages. Perhaps you might write and let me know. I should be curious to learn whether we share not one common language, but two!

*With fond regards,
Elizabeth Bennet*

****from Miss Georgiana Darcy to Miss Elizabeth
Bennet****

22th September 1812

Pemberley

Dear Miss Elizabeth Bennet,

It is so good of you to write to me. I shall own it openly, for I am sure you noticed even upon our short acquaintance - I am dreadfully awkward in society. I am forever saying what I ought not, or forgetting what I ought to say, or saying nothing through dread of saying the wrong thing.

Fitzwilliam says that I ought to think less of myself and more of putting others at their ease, but then he says that he has never learned how to do that himself, so it is not much of a help. It is terrible, being shy. You were so witty and sweet, I am sure you do not feel much shyness yourself. I wish I were half as graceful. But I am forever sure that I

am doing something wrong, and then I say nothing, and that is the worst thing of all.

I hope you will not think me terribly odd to write so, and in my very first letter to you! It is only that between what my brother has told me of you, our too-brief meetings, and the dear letter you sent me, I feel as though I already know you. Is not that strange? I think perhaps this is the other side of being shy and awkward. No sooner than one feels they can say something after all, than one says everything all in a rush. Or writes everything, anyway.

Italian is my favourite thing to learn (after the pianoforte, I mean!) though I, too, should be very sorry to be questioned by a native speaker. However much one's tutor explains, it is not as though I have heard it spoken at any length. I can read a bit, but I do not think I could keep up a conversation in the least. Of course, I cannot keep up an English conversation, either, so perhaps that is not saying much. I hope that we may meet again,

to slowly and carefully try our Italian with each other. Or do you sing in Italian? Perhaps I might play an Italian air, and you might sing. I cannot sing in Italian. I have not the courage for it.

There are very few days remaining until my brother begins his journey into Hertfordshire. I shall miss him very much, but I am comforted to think that he shall bring you my greetings and best wishes.

*Yours sincerely,
Georgiana Darcy*

****from Miss Elizabeth Bennet to Mr Fitzwilliam
Darcy****

September 25, 1812

Longbourn

Dear Mr Darcy,

On our first meeting, it was easy to see that Georgiana had not the least bit of pride. I have scarcely met a girl so shy and diffident. What I did not realise at the time is how perfectly sweet-natured she is. I believe she may be as good as Jane, and though you may not know my sister well enough to understand the compliment, you must take me at my word when I tell you it is the highest one I can bestow.

That much I am sure is no surprise to you, but did you know Georgiana is also fantastically witty? She does not say much in company, indeed, but her writing is delightful. I cannot remember the last time I was so amused. Do you think, Mr Darcy,

that you might be persuaded to look blackly upon our friendship and forbid us from ever writing to each other again? For it is delightful to find such a friend, but how much more might we champion our new correspondence if we could feel ourselves to be bucking rigid authority in continuing it?

You must pardon my ridiculous flights of fancy. It is only that I am very happy. The Royal Mail must punctually deliver this letter, for if they do, you shall receive it shortly before you begin your journey. Perhaps you will take it with you and read it in the carriage, and my foolishness will amuse a dull hour or help you to forget rough roads. Or perhaps, after all, you will prefer to ride. I care not what method of travel you choose, nor whether you may amuse yourself with my silly letter or with books of great worth, so long as you travel safely.

*With best regards,
Elizabeth Bennet*

****from Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy to Miss Georgiana
Darcy****

September 30, 1812

Netherfield Park

My dearest sister,

My journey to Hertfordshire was uneventful and as pleasant as such journeys can be. The Bingleys and Hursts all send you their best regards. I am pleased to say that all are in good health, as I myself remain.

Though Hertfordshire cannot compare with our dear Derbyshire, it is pleasant here. Despite what my preferential heart may believe, surely the September sunlight is just as golden as it would be at Pemberley, and the autumn leaves in as fine of colour. I have had the pleasure of long walks in the grounds of Netherfield. Bingley is pleased with it, indeed, but I have not yet lost hope of persuading him to settle near us at last. It is not yet certain, but

I have heard that the Beaumont estate may come up for purchase. It would be a capital choice for him, and it is not thirty miles from Pemberley. I should be happy indeed, to have one of my dearest friends settled so near.

I have had the pleasure of one meeting with Miss Elizabeth Bennet, as we were both invited to an informal dance the evening after my arrival. She danced with as much grace and lively spirit as ever. I confess I cannot report what the dance was - I was otherwise occupied with conversation, and when the measure ended, I was surprised that it had come so soon, and was left to hope that I had made my steps correctly if inattentively. Miss Elizabeth Bennet did not seem displeased, so I must have acquitted myself with at least acceptable skill. She is a witty conversationalist, indeed. Quiet enthralling. But it is silly of me to go on so. You will of course have discovered this yourself, through her letters.

I am pleased indeed with Mrs Annesley's reports of your studies. You do very well, Georgiana, to practise so constantly. Your future husband will be a lucky man indeed, to hear such music nearly every day. And Pemberley and I shall be much the poorer for its absence. You must come and visit me very often, even when you are a lady grown with children of your own. Surely Pemberley is inducement enough that your husband will think it no hardship.

*With love and best regards,
Your brother, Fitzwilliam Darcy*

****from Miss Georgiana Darcy to Miss Elizabeth
Bennet****

October 1, 1812

Pemberley

Dear Miss Elizabeth Bennet,

My brother has written to tell me of his safe arrival at Netherfield Park. I miss him, but I am happy for him that he may enjoy the society of Meryton. Fitzwilliam is always happy to spend time with Mr Bingley. They have been such good friends ever since meeting at school. In fact, they have been friends so long that I have known Mr Bingley since I was quite small. He is a very sweet man, and if he and your sister Jane do wed, I am sure she would never discover any lack or marr upon his character. I must own that I myself would feel rather relieved if they did wed. You see, I think my brother once treasured hopes that Mr Bingley might wed me. He has largely given it up, as

neither Mr Bingley nor myself have the slightest interest in the prospect, but still I have been sorry to deny Fitzwilliam my full participation in anything he believed to be good and right. It will be much more pleasant when Mr Bingley is happily wed and we need not think about any such possibility at all.

I have spent this morning at the pianoforte, rather indulgently. There are several pieces I ought to be practising, that I might perform them for company, but I have not touched a one of them. Instead, I have been going over some dear old friends, my favourite songs that I have long since committed to memory. I dearly love to lose myself in these familiar tones and rhythms, following where they lead until I lose track of time entirely. To practise new music is also a joy, but it is an enjoyment borne of rigour rather than of pleasure. I must admit that I do not always choose the more rigorous path. You see, I too am far from practising as much as I really ought. Perhaps we

might encourage each other to greater diligence, all the same.

I have written a full sheet of paper, trying to get up my courage, but I believe I must simply come to the point. Would you forgive me if I were very nosy and interfering? It is only this - Miss Elizabeth Bennet, I wish that you would encourage my brother in having the courage to make an offer to you. If you had only seen his last letter, and heard all he has said to me of you! I should so very much like to have you as a sister. But for all his strength of character and pride, my brother can be terribly shy sometimes, nearly as much as I am myself. If you feel as he does, perhaps you might see to it that he has a chance to speak to you away from the hustle and bustle of a dance or evening of cards. I wish you would - and if you do not, then please at least forgive my abominable interference. I should hate myself if you were angry at me for my impertinence.

*Very sincerely,
Georgiana Darcy*

****from Miss Elizabeth Bennet to Miss Georgiana
Darcy****

October 3, 1812

Longbourn

My dear Georgiana,

I shall forgive your impertinence, if you will forgive my sudden informality. After all, we are to be sisters! Your dear brother has asked me, and I have accepted him. I am all breathless joy. I have had such happiness in my sisters, especially my oldest and dearest sister, Jane. Now, exactly as she weds and must leave me, I am given a new sister. Is it not providential?

Fitzwilliam has given me the joyful task of writing you our news, and he tells me I am to write you a nice long gossipy sisterly letter, as his are rather short and dry. Having observed him writing to you, I do not believe this for a moment. I have never seen a more dutiful brother, nor one who

more deeply loves his sister. You are very lucky, Georgiana. I have always wanted a brother.

I will tell you a little of the proposal. With Mr Bingley and my sisters Jane and Kitty, we undertook a walk to Oakham Mount. You must visit Meryton one day, and we shall walk there together. It is a nice long walk, not too tiring.

Kitty ran off to visit our neighbours the Lucases, and Jane and Mr Bingley were dawdling down the lane, as you can well imagine! It was a delightful day to be ambling about in the countryside. The leaves are only just beginning to turn, and the sun was warm and mild. Mr Darcy spoke a little of how lovely the fall is in Derbyshire, and at Pemberley most of all. I do not doubt it. Pemberley is unique unto itself. I have rarely seen such natural beauty, nor such good taste in making it more lovely still. I think that to be a Darcy must mean being proud of Pemberley. Indeed, I do not see how anyone who belongs to so wonderful a place could do otherwise.

I said something of this to your brother as we were remarking upon the beauty of the day in our own little country lane. You see, I took most joyful hope from your letter. It arrived at a most uncertain time. Even as I became more and more sure of my own heart, I was less and less confident of his. Why was he so silent, and why so grave, if he loved me after all? It was due in no small part to your advice that I suggested a walk to all the party, and that my pulse beat fast as Kitty, Jane, and Mr Bingley walked apart from us and we had a moment to speak alone. It was then that he turned to me and asked me to share all his days, until death do we part. I accepted most joyfully, Georgiana. He has already spoken to my father, and all is arranged. Our wedding shall not be long delayed, and yet every day until it comes will seem an eternity to me!

It seems to me now that Fitzwilliam has risen in my esteem each day of our acquaintance, until I can hardly imagine what I would do without his

company. As you have told me and I have seen for myself, he is a wonderful brother and guardian, and now he will be a wonderful husband, too. Is it not daunting to know such a perfect man? I must take every opportunity to tease him, or I will soon be in awe of his perfection.

Yours with sisterly affection,

Elizabeth Bennet - soon to be Elizabeth

Darcy!

The End

Books by Amelia Westerly

Amelia Westerly's first book, 'Discretion and Daring: A Pride and Prejudice Variation,' will be released by Song Sparrow Press in August 2023. 'Discretion and Daring' will be available as a Kindle eBook and on Kindle Unlimited. We hope you'll join Elizabeth and Mr Darcy on a joyous romp through the English countryside. Mr Darcy's surprising invitation sets off a series of unexpected events, and a familiar villain has some decidedly new tricks up their sleeve. Only one thing is certain: both discretion and daring will be necessary for Elizabeth and Mr Darcy to find their happy ending at last.

Discretion and Daring

When Mr. Darcy invited Elizabeth Bennet to visit Pemberley, his stated purpose was that her friendliness and vivacity might help his sister Georgiana recover from her lingering sorrow and shame...but his hidden intention was to set his secret attachment to the test. Seeing Elizabeth

at his beloved Pemberley would surely either end a mere infatuation, or prove that their connection would be one to treasure for all time.

Elizabeth Bennet agreed to be a guest at Pemberley on the condition that Jane might come with her to see Mr. Bingley once again. She expected a pleasant time of good society and being of use to Georgiana. But Elizabeth could never have anticipated the hold the Darcys and their beautiful corner of Derbyshire would soon hold over her heart. Still less could she have guessed at the dark secret weighing down Georgiana's spirits...or the daring confrontation she would face to free her.

A *Pride and Prejudice* variation set in the loveliest of all counties and the most magnificent of grounds, featuring new twists to familiar villains and a happy ending for Jane Austen's most beloved couple.