Pride and Prejudice

Dramatized by Claudia Haas
From the novel by Jane Austen

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

10 m, 16 w, many extras /with doubling 8 m, 11 w

MR. BENNET: 40; as calm as a man with five daughters can be.

MRS. BENNET: 40; as nervous as a woman with five daughters can be.

JANE BENNET: 22; one of the loveliest and kindest of the Bennet sisters.

ELIZABETH BENNET: 20; perceptive young woman who unfortunately has the idea she can marry for "love."

MARY BENNET: 18; as the middle child works hard at being taken seriously.

CATHERINE (KITTY) BENNET: 16; slightly vacant young woman who lives in Lydia's shadow.

LYDIA BENNET: 15; very flirtatious and fun-loving young woman.

MR. BINGLEY: 24; a kind, very marriageable young man.

MISS CAROLINE BINGLEY: 22; his not-so-kind sister; prone to "airs."

MR. DARCY: 23; a very proud, aristocratic man.

MISS CHARLOTTE LUCAS: 24; a pragmatic young woman.

SIR WILLIAM LUCAS: 40s; very amiable / **MR. GARDINER**.

LADY LUCAS: 40s; also amiable / **LADY CATHERINE DE BOURGH**.

MR. WILLIAM COLLINS: 25, a bombastic mixture of pride and servility.

MR. WICKHAM: Mid-20s; a seemingly amiable regimental.

MR. DENNY: Mid-20s; well-thought of regimental / **COLONEL FITZWILLIAM**.

MR. PHILLIPS: 30s-40s; kindly gentleman of some means; uncle to the Bennet sisters.

MRS. PHILLIPS: 30s-40s; also kindly; Mr. Phillips' wife; Mrs. Bennet's sister / **MRS. GARDINER / SARAH**.

GEORGIANA DARCY: Darcy's sweet younger sister. / **MISS DE BOURGH / SUSANNAH**.

SETTING SUGGESTIONS FOR SMALL THEATRES

The stage can divided into thirds. There should be a small seating area SL and a small one SR. The CS will do extra duty as various places. SR will be the Bingley sitting area and other areas. SL is the Bennet sitting area. The seating areas can be dressed differently for the scenes. You may use servants to change the tablecloths and small set pieces to that keep the areas specific. The apron of the stage (or the audience) can be used for the outdoor scenes.

SCENE BREAKDOWN

ACT I

Scene 1: Introducing the Bennets and the Bingleys (Both sitting areas.)
Scene 2: The Assembly (A town hall.)
Scene 3: Conversations (Both sitting areas.)
Scene 4: An Invitation (Bennet sitting area.)
Scene 5: A Visit (Both sitting areas.)
Scene 6: Mr. Collins (Bennet sitting area.)
Scene 7: The Regimentals (Walking path to Meryton.)
Scene 8: Dinner at the Phillipses' (Phillipses' parlor.)
Scene 9: The Ball at Netherfield (Ballroom at Netherfield.)

ACT II

Scene 1: Winter Letters (Bennet and Collins sitting areas.)
Scene 2: The Return of Mr. Darcy (Collins sitting area.)
Scene 3: The Letter From Jane (Charlotte's sitting area.)
Scene 4: The Letter From Mr. Darcy (Charlotte's sitting area and outside.)
Scene 5: Home (Bennet sitting area.)
Scene 6: Pemberley (A hall in Pemberley.)
Scene 7: Farewell to Prejudice (A hall in Pemberley.)
Scene 8: An Elopement (Elizabeth's room in Derbyshire.)
Scene 9: Reputation (Bennet sitting area.)
Scene 10: The Return of Lydia (Bennet sitting area.)
Scene 11: Pride and Prejudice and Love (Bennet sitting area and walking path.)

ACT I

Scene 1: Introducing the Bennets and the Bingleys

(AT RISE: Mr. and Mrs. Bennet are seated in a small sitting area. MR. BENNET is trying to read. MRS. BENNET has some embroidery which she is ignoring. We hear some narration. It may be played through the sound system or we may see ELIZABETH DS making her pronouncement. The narration all through the play may be live or pre-recorded.)

ELIZABETH: It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife. And when the fact that Netherfield Park – a country manor near our town – was rented to a gentleman of means, the news spread quickly.

MRS. BENNET: My dear Mr. Bennet, have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?

MR. BENNET: Can't say that I have.

MRS. BENNET: But it is! For Mrs. Long has just been here and she told me all about it! *(Pause as MR. BENNET reads a book and does not reply.)* Do you not want to know who has taken it?

MR. BENNET: *You* want to tell me and I have no objection to hearing it.

MRS. BENNET: Why, my dear, you must know, Mrs. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England; that he came down on Monday to see the place and he was so delighted with it that he is to take possession by Michaelmas and some of his servants are to be in the house by the end of next week!

MR. BENNET: What is his name?

MRS. BENNET: Bingley!

MR. BENNET: Married or single?

MRS. BENNET: Oh! Single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of a large fortune! Four or five thousand a year! What a fine thing for our girls!

MR. BENNET: How can that affect them?

MRS. BENNET: My dear Mr. Bennet, how can you be so tiresome? You must know that I am thinking of his marrying one of them.

MR. BENNET: Is that why he is settling here? To marry one of our daughters?

MRS. BENNET: How you do talk nonsense, Mr. Bennet! But you must admit that it is very likely that he *may* fall in love with one of them and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes.

MR. BENNET: I see no occasion to do so. You and the girls may certainly go. Or better yet – send the girls alone – for you remain as lovely as any of them. We don't want Mr. Bingley to choose you!

MRS. BENNET: My dear, you do flatter me. I have had my share of beauty but cannot pretend to be extraordinary any more. Now my dear, you really must pay Mr. Bingley a visit. Sir William and Lady Lucas already have plans to do so and they never visit anyone! Besides, if you do not call first, we will never be able to go!

MR. BENNET: I daresay, Mr. Bingley will be pleased to have you visit and I shall send a note stating that he has my permission to marry whichever daughter he so chooses. I shall be sure to put in a good word for my Lizzy.

MRS. BENNET: We will not play favorites with our daughters. Besides, Lizzy is not half as handsome as our Jane. And not as good-humored as Lydia! But you always give Lizzy your preference!

MR. BENNET: They don't have much to recommend them now, do they? They are all silly and ignorant as most girls - but Lizzy has more quickness than her sisters.

MRS. BENNET: Mr. Bennet! How can you abuse your own children in such a way! You just like to vex me, that's all! You have no compassion for my poor nerves.

MR. BENNET: On the contrary, I have high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends. You have brought them up constantly these past twenty years.

MRS. BENNET: You do not know what I suffer!

MR. BENNET: I hope you do not suffer too badly and I hope to see you watch many such men worth four or five thousand pounds move into our neighborhood.

MRS. BENNET: It does not do any good if twenty such men move here, for you will not visit them!
MR. BENNET: Mrs. Bennet, I give you my solemn vow that when twenty such extraordinary men move into our village, I shall visit them all!

(MRS. BENNET exits as the LIGHTS fade and come up on the Bingley seating area. MR. BINGLEY, MISS BINGLEY, and MR. DARCY enter. A servant, SUSANNAH, is with them.)

BINGLEY: It's quite charming, is it not? Don't you think Father would have approved?
MISS BINGLEY: He always did want a country estate. Yes, he would have definitely approved.
BINGLEY: For now, we shall be tenants and see if the area pleases us. And if it does, this may well become our new home.
DARCY: While I do not believe that a grand estate here would have more pleasures than a home in the city, I do think you have done rather well for yourself. The place is – quaint in its own way.
BINGLEY: I shall take that as a high compliment from you! For nothing will dampen my mood.
MISS BINGLEY: I wonder what sort of people live here? Some villagers can be very tiresome.
BINGLEY: Why, my dear sister – I am confident that we will find the people amiable as in any part of England. And there is room for all of us to stay here comfortably. One cannot ask for more.
MR. DARCY: I am pleased to be a guest at whatever home you choose.
BINGLEY: Watch it, Darcy. You are in danger of offering a compliment!
MR. DARCY: Then I shall choose my words more carefully!
MISS BINGLEY: Have you heard that there is to be an assembly? With dancing! Why, it's almost civilized.
BINGLEY: Then we shall go and meet our new neighbors. We have come at an opportune time! I am determined to love everything here – the home, the dancing, the neighbors –
SUSANNAH: Excuse me, sir. There is a Mr. and Mrs. William Lucas here. They have come to welcome you!

End of Freeview

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