

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

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Pride and Prejudice is a very famous love story written by Jane Austen around 200 years ago (published in 1813). Jane Austen was a smart English writer who loved to write about people, love, family, and society.

The story is set in the English countryside in the early 1800s. It's about a family with five daughters and how they try to find good husbands — because back then, women usually needed to marry a man with money to have a safe and comfortable life.

The Main Family — The Bennets

Mr. Bennet: The father. He's quiet, smart, and likes to make jokes. He owns a nice house called Longbourn, but when he dies, the house will go to a male cousin (not to his daughters or wife). So the family is worried about money.

Mrs. Bennet: The mother. She's very loud and excited about marrying off her daughters. She talks a lot about it!

The five daughters:

Jane — the oldest, very kind and beautiful.

Elizabeth (Lizzy) — the second oldest, smart, funny, quick to judge people (this is her "prejudice").

Then Mary, Kitty, and Lydia (the youngest ones are silly and boy-crazy).

The Illustrations of Pride & Prejudice | Jane Austen's House

The Story in Simple Steps

A rich young man named Mr. Bingley moves into a big house nearby (Netherfield). He is friendly and nice. He likes Jane right away.

His best friend is Mr. Darcy — very rich, tall, handsome, but proud and quiet. He seems rude. At a dance (ball), he says Elizabeth is "not handsome enough" to dance with. Elizabeth gets angry and decides she hates him.

A man named Mr. Collins (a funny, boring cousin) comes to visit. He wants to marry one of the daughters (because he will get their house one day). Elizabeth says no. He marries her friend Charlotte instead.

Elizabeth meets a charming soldier named Wickham. He tells her a sad story about how Mr. Darcy was mean to him. Elizabeth believes it and hates Darcy even more.

Mr. Darcy secretly likes Elizabeth a lot. He suddenly proposes marriage to her — but he says it in a proud way, talking about how she's from a lower family. Elizabeth is shocked and angry. She says no and tells him why she thinks he's awful (he hurt Jane's feelings by making Bingley leave, and he was bad to Wickham).

The next day Darcy gives her a long letter explaining everything:

Wickham was actually dishonest — he tried to run away with Darcy's young sister for her money.

Darcy thought Jane didn't really love Bingley, and he didn't like how loud Mrs. Bennet was.

Elizabeth starts to feel ashamed. She realizes she judged Darcy too quickly (her prejudice).

Later, Elizabeth visits a fancy house called Pemberley (Darcy's home). Darcy is there by surprise. This time he's kind and polite. Elizabeth starts to like him and sees he's actually a good man.

Scene Breakdown: Encounter at Pemberley in 'Pride and Prejudice ...

Big drama: The youngest sister Lydia runs away with Wickham (very bad and embarrassing in those days). Everyone thinks the family is ruined.

But Darcy secretly finds them, pays Wickham a lot of money, and makes him marry Lydia to save the family's honor.

Elizabeth finds out Darcy did this kind thing for her family. She feels grateful and realizes she loves him.

Darcy comes back and proposes again — this time nicely. Elizabeth says yes!

Jane marries Bingley too. Happy endings for the good sisters!

The Big Lessons (Themes)

Pride — thinking you're better than others (Darcy at first).

Prejudice — judging people too fast without knowing the truth (Elizabeth).

Love grows when people change and understand each other better.

Family, money, and marriage were super important in that time.

The book is loved because the characters feel real, the conversations are funny and clever, and it's a great romance with happy endings. Many movies have been made from it (especially the 2005 one with Keira Knightley as Elizabeth).