

JANE BENNET – the most beautiful of the Bennet sisters is serene, gentle-mannered, and sees the good in everyone and everything. She is, as Mr. Bingley would say, “an angel.”

JANE 1

(Dreamily contemplating meeting Mr. Bingley for the first time.)

Mr. Bingley is good-looking and gentlemanlike. His sisters were fine women, with an air of decided fashion. I never saw such happy manners! —so much ease, with such perfect good breeding! I was very much flattered by his asking me to dance a second time. I did not expect such a compliment.

(notices Elizabeth is not paying attention)

Do not fret about Mr. Wickham, Lizzy. Captain Carter said he was called away. A militia man’s life is not his own. I’m sure he would have come if it were possible, and he will visit as soon as he returns. Besides, there must be more to the story. It is impossible to conjecture the causes or circumstances without actual blame on either side. I inquired of Mr. Bingley, but he does not know the whole of it and is quite ignorant of the circumstances which have principally offended Mr. Darcy; but he will vouch for the good conduct of his friend and is convinced that Mr. Wickham has deserved much less attention from Mr. Darcy than he has received. Oh, I wish mother, Kitty and Lydia had refrained from their usual outbursts. But Mr. Bingley bore it well.

JANE 2

Oh, had we been less secretive and told what we knew of Wickham, this could not have happened. I know not. To expose the former faults of any person, without knowing what their present feelings were, seemed unjustifiable.

Mr. Collins took it upon himself to write an admonishing letter to papa. He had the *nerve* to write that even the death of our sister would have been a blessing in comparison to *this*. By now everyone knows our shame and we will be ruined by association. Mr. Collins wrote that *he* “related the affair to Lady Catherine and her daughter” and that her Ladyship responded, “who will connect themselves with such a family?” Thoughtless, thoughtless Lydia. But at least *she* was serious in the object of her journey. Poor father. How he must have felt it.