

Charlotte Lucas: Elizabeth Bennet's practical and wise best friend. She is 8 years older than Elizabeth and concerned with becoming a burden on her family because she remains unmarried.

CHARLOTTE 1:

Mr. Darcy is not so well worth listening to as his friend, is he? Poor Eliza, to be only just tolerable. Within five minutes, the report of his having ten thousand a year caused him to be a fine figure of a man. The ladies declared he was much handsomer than Mr. Bingley.

His pride does not offend *me* so much because there is an excuse for it. One cannot wonder that so very fine a young man, with family, fortune, and everything in his favor, should think highly of himself. If I may so express it, he has a *right* to be proud. He is also handsome, which a young man should be, if he possibly can. His character is thereby complete.

CHARLOTTE 2:

(Elizabeth just thanked Charlotte for distracting Mr. Collins away from herself.)

I thank you for the compliment, but it is not obligation. My parents have enjoyed his company and, well, I have come to tell that Mr. Collins, and I are engaged. My dear Eliza, I see what you are feeling. You must be very much surprised, so lately as Mr. Collins was wishing to marry you. But why? Do you think it incredible that Mr. Collins should be able to gain any woman's good opinion because he was not so happy as to succeed with you?

When you have had time to think it all over, I hope you will be satisfied with what I have done. I was never romantic, you know. I ask only a comfortable home. Considering Mr. Collins's character, connections, and situation in life, I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people can boast on entering the marriage state. But I shall depend on hearing from you very often, Eliza. Promise me you will come to Hunsford. My father and Maria are to come to me in March and I hope you will consent to be one of the party. Indeed, *you* will be as welcome as either of them.