

ANNE

My goodness Arthur, there you are! I have taken the morning to wander through Pemberley's rooms – they are somewhat brighter than I remember; there is a certain openness I find unappealing in a house, do you not agree?

(He doesn't respond.)

Arthur. Arthur!

ARTHUR

(Lost in thought)

Sorry? Yes. What?

ANNE

Brightness. Also, the drawing room furniture is not so fine as what we have at Rosings. It has been remarked on that the style of the furnishings as Rosings is unparalleled. I would never say it myself, but who am I to disagree. Mr. Collins – have you met our Mr. Collins yet?

ARTHUR

No, not –

ANNE

He said just the other day that one of my mother's most enduring legacies would be her handsome style. Also her willingness to give freely of her opinion and advice, a trait he suggests lives on in me.

ARTHUR

Does it?

ANNE

It does. You'll be relieved to know there is scarcely a thing that will need doing at Rosings after you arrive, save for the wedding preparations and making room for some of your things. I cannot imagine you have much, perhaps a dusty book or two, which we can easily tuck out of sight.

ARTHUR

Out of sight?

ANNE

We are to be married, Arthur. I will tell you what is of interest and what is not. My mother was of great help in that regard to my father. I shall be so for you.

ARTHUR

I – I'm sorry, Miss de Bourgh, I am inexperienced with engagement, especially as ours seems to have snuck up on me, but –

Miss Bennet:
Christmas at Pemberley

ANNE SIDE #1

ANNE

Our marriage was my mother's wish. To keep the estate intact, of course.

ARTHUR

Yes, but...

ANNE

And to continue the de Bourgh line.

ARTHUR

Oh my goodness.

ANNE

And your father would have wanted it as well. With the fortune left to me and the estate to you, you cannot possibly object.

ARTHUR

Objection is really at the discretion of the objector, but –

ANNE

Arthur. It isn't as though you are otherwise attached, and your life as a student is rather complete, and bachelors make people uncomfortable. We have always been fond of each other. Don't you recall, Arthur, how fond we are of each other?

(She takes a moment)

Rosings is my home. I will not be made to leave my home, Arthur. Where would you have me go?

ARTHUR

Well I don't really –

ANNE

So it is settled.

ARTHUR

I just think that –

ANNE

It's settled.

Miss Bennet:
Christmas at Pemberley

ANNE SIDE #2

ANNE

Arthur. We must leave immediately. I am ready to be away from this place and these people!

ARTHUR

I...

(Looks at Mary, looks back to Anne)

No. No, I don't wish to leave.

ANNE

You don't... what? We have an estate to run, we have a wedding to plan. Arthur. Come.

ARTHUR

No.

ANNE

Arthur.

ARTHUR

Miss de Bourgh. I... foremost I do not wish you any pain or displeasure. But I cannot marry you.

ANNE

Excuse me? You cannot be serious, Arthur.

ARTHUR

I do not love you.

ANNE

Oh, of course you do. And I you. Since we were children. Now can we please –

ARTHUR

I do not love you. It is as simple as that. I do not wish you any harm, but you must acknowledge that this is an *arrangement* and not a match of hearts.

ANNE

A match of - ? What are you even talking about? You require a wife and I a husband.

ARTHUR

I cannot, I *will not* marry without happiness.

ANNE

Everyone marries without happiness.

Miss Bennet:

Christmas at Pemberley

ANNE SIDE #2

ARTHUR

But they do not have to. We do not have to.

ANNE

You might not have to, but I do. I *have* to marry, I have to marry *you* or else I lose everything, Arthur, don't you see? And it is not fair, and I don't like it either but Rosings has always been my home, and it was mother's wish for my future, and what will happen to me if I am stripped of my home? I will be nothing, I will be lost, and I will not be muted or caged or *thrown aside any longer*.

ARTHUR

Neither will I. And I will not let you suffer, I promise you on my honor, you will be given whatever you need. But I will not deny what I know is true. Love is... attainable. And we are both of us deserving of it. Of something finer and more free than either of us thought possible, something that is a complement rather than a command. Human hearts are built for stronger stuff than convenient duty.

ANNE

For pity's sake, the kind of love you speak of is fiction. It is the stuff of novels and operas... the ones where everyone dies in the end.

ARTHUR

It is not fiction. It is very real.

(Turns to Mary)

I know it is. Now I do know it.

**Miss Bennet:
Christmas at Pemberley**

ANNE SIDE #3

LIZZIE

Miss de Bourgh.

ANNE

Mrs... Darcy.

LIZZIE

Your arrival was so late last night, I may have been remiss in my welcome. I did not know your journey was imminent or we should have been more prepared. Please forgive me.

ANNE

If the matter was not so pressing I would not have had the necessity to intrude on your little festivity.

LIZZIE

Certainly it is not an intrusion. You are always welcome at Pemberley.

ANNE

How kind. To be welcomed to a place one spent so many hours of one's youth by someone so recently positioned here. I ought to have come earlier to help you get oriented, dear.

LIZZIE

Oriented?

ANNE

A sooner intervention might have prevented your more... eccentric decorating. Though it is understandable, coming up from such inferior conditions as you did.

LIZZIE

(Barely keeping her composure)

I am surprised at your offer of help, Miss de Bourgh. I had always thought the residents of Rosings to be rather against my marriage to Mr. Darcy. At the least, I'm certain that was the belief held by Lady Catherine. She did seem unable to contain her opinion on the matter.

ANNE

(Sharply emotional)

I would ask you to kindly not speak of my mother. I feel her loss quite deeply. You could not possibly understand. If she objected, it was with good reason, I'm sure.