Darcy's Diary

by Elizabeth (anghraine)

Summary

Obviously, the world didn't have enough of these.

I

After very long day corresponding with uncle, aunts, great-uncle, cousins, and father (all apparently incapable of managing their lives for two minutes at a time), wake to pounding on door.

‘Wickham?’

‘Daaaaarcey...’ He stumbles past, and promptly throws up in fireplace. Wish he’d burnt ears off, but at least hair slightly singed.

‘Wickham, what are you doing here?’

‘Nice... place...’ Overturns table trying to get to feet. ‘Acourse, nothing but the... the bestest... for Darcy heir...’

‘How much did you drink?’

‘Not much. Little -- tiny -- glasses.’

Remove all dangerous objects from vicinity. ‘How many little tiny glasses?’

‘Errr . . .’ Wickham holds up hands. ‘More than this.’ Smiles angelically. ‘Hate you, you know.’
'I entirely sympathise with your feelings.’ Consider dumping a pitcher of water over his head.

‘Not fair ... deserve just as much ... he likes me better, you know.’ Sways back and forth.

‘Yes, I know. A pity you aren’t his only son.’ He just gapes. Sighing, realise that witty repartee entirely lost on him, even when sober. ‘Sit down before you hurt yourself, Wickham.’

He crashes to the floor and stares at fire. ‘Pretty...’

‘I really should throw you out.’

‘But... Mr D wouldn’t like that. He’d... he wants you to... what’s it called? Protect, that’s it... from rogue gipsies at university!’ Laughs uproariously, only stops to belch.

Fan air away from nose. Rather pathetic to be so easily manipulated by drunken sot.

Really far too sweet-tempered & obliging for my own good.

Dumped the water on his head.

2

8 AM:

Woke up. Argued with Roberts over suitability of trousers. Have finally convinced him that black is the world’s only decent colour.

9 AM:

Locked self in library and enjoyed blessed solitude for an hour. Re-read Lear. Edmund’s fate far too painless.

10 AM:

Breakfast with Georgiana. Still convincing her to prefer music over mathematics. Will tell her that I did myself (unfortunately true) if all else fails. Decreed that she will not pronounce her name ‘George-ayna’ on pain of dancing.

10:30 AM:

Left G to her studies and went to Harrington House. Convinced Uncle to cut rents if winter is harsh (it will be).

Rochford begged a larger allowance. Uncle thinks him gambling it away and refused.

Loaned R five hundred pounds. Will certainly never see it again.

Paid Aunt proper attention. The dog should have been drowned at birth.

Talked to Kate. Somehow ended up giving her twenty pounds. Head hurts.

Spent very pleasant quarter-hour with Fitzwilliam and Mary. Strongly tempted to hide in secret passages for duration of tonight’s ball, but too undignified. F supposedly making inroads with merchant heiress of no breeding. Will convince him out of it.

11:30 AM:
Bingley in love again. Convinced him out of it. Again. Thanked the Almighty for preservation from such foolishness on my part, and requested aid in avoiding the Lennox sisters. Too tall, alas, to hide in windows as once did. Will look threatening instead. If still importuned, will invent insult clever enough to offend whole room. Perhaps then will be left in peace.

3

10:30 AM

Must ascertain suitability of Georgiana’s reading material, so reading *Cecilia*. Long-winded and dull. Heroine irritating and pretentious. Must steal second volume from Miss Bingley.

1 PM

Finished *Cecilia*. Letter from Lynch -- Browns and Cahills quarrelling again. Wrote to split property down the middle and give equal halves to each.

Re-read Georgiana’s last letter. Interested in music again but still traumatised.

Would like to tear W limb from limb or possibly hire it done as would not care for degradation of actually touching vicious amoral scum that he is. But would not be gentlemanlike and bad example to children & G.

1:30 PM

Miss E Bennet arrived to look after Miss Bennet. Not certain of point, as Miss Benn has minor head cold, or of propriety of wandering about countryside, but still nice thought. Weather not exactly conducive to neatness, hence a bit of mud which Mrs H and Miss B inexplicably find amusing. Miss E appeared well -- refreshed from walk rather than tired -- have decided is as handsome as Miss B and Mrs H and much more pleasant looking. Think happy medium between conceited fashion plates and insignificant squire’s daughter with stupidest woman of acquaintance as mother would be nice.

3 PM

Miss Benn must stay so Miss B invited Miss E as well. Former’s obvious reluctance very amusing.

Miss E’s conversation intelligent, quite the novelty, though often impulsive and irrational. Not certain whether she means half what she says.

Am used to Miss B’s obvious designs but Mrs H seems to have joined with unhealthy obsession. Never stops staring, jangling the stupid bracelets, staring. Not at face. Most unnerving, as Mr H is healthy.

Looked at Miss E for pleasant distraction -- nice wholesome girl. Never worry about arsenic or seduction with her.

4

Miss E here three days now; Miss Bennet recovering slowly, Miss Bingley usual irritating self, B going on-- and on -- and on-- about Miss Benn, Mrs H creepy as ever. Hurst drunk-- at least doesn’t expect conversation. Hope it’s only the wine.

Note to self: ask Nicholls regarding change in local supply of deadly poisons. Have heard something about ladies and belladonna?
Miss E only decent company here -- pretty, clever, sensible, educated, compassionate, pleasant, sweet but not insipid (not at all insipid), witty-- oh God. Am infatuated beyond belief. Have retracted former gratitude regarding merciful escape from experience.

If Bingley like this all the time, can dredge up rather more pity than usual.

But even if love of poets (though still find love poems nonsensical & annoying, so perhaps not), not marrying her, and dishonourable to encourage affections. Must be cold and distant. Fortunately natural state of being, so not too difficult.

Though . . . odd dreams lately, especially since Miss E in them -- very odd. Disturbing, even.

I was a leather chair, and she a teapot. Most unsettling.

5

Pleasant day as days go. Fitzwilliam and Courtland showed up at house and made themselves comfortable, per the usual. Courtland interested in Lady Lindsay. Pointed out is married and nearly fifty. Did not point out that frequently throws all four daughters at passing bachelors (eldest is thirty with moustache).

Of no consequence, apparently; Courtland began rhapsodising about Lady L’s feet. Fitzwilliam snickered.

‘How, precisely, do you know what her feet look like?’ said I.

C immediately launched into long rigmarole. Apparently was visiting Sir Edward and attempting to ignore Lindsay progeny, finally fled on pretext of admiring gardens, and found Lady L wandering about -- without shoes -- and heart was lost.

Stupidest thing have ever heard.

However, C was outraged when F asked if meant to seduce Lady L.

‘What do you think I am?’ C exclaimed, looking purity itself. ‘Lady Lindsay is married.’

Noticed in passing that headaches only occur around family. And Bingley.

C’s only intent with hopeless passion, apparently, is to moon for some time and write bad sonnets. Do not understand the point but seems to be enjoying himself.

6

Not certain why looked forward to week-end. Forgot Bingleys’ & Hursts’ irreligious habits.

Hurst complained about cold food. Explained was Sabbath and servants only worked half-day. H wanted to play at ridiculously high stakes. Explained was Sabbath and not in habit of gambling so high in any case. H complained some more; decided was not worthy of more explanation.

Bingley usual impulsive self, incapable of sitting down any length of time without distraction of pretty girl. ‘Darcy I must have you do this, do that’ every other minute.

Miss B stole second volume (again), not sure why as must make very little sense without first and only prevents others from reading whole novel. Georgiana most unusually out of temper, but do not blame her as in precisely the same state. Miss B constantly yawning and occasionally exclaiming, ‘my dearest Miss Darcy surely you would like to do this, do that’ -- B and Miss B
more similar than have previously thought.

Mrs H rearranged bracelets and stared. Still very uneasy about her, though more sympathetic regarding the arsenic after three weeks in company of H.

Finally fled with G into library on account of urgent business. Suddenly all most humourous and laughed together before going over her translation to recover sanity, then braved company again.

More complaining ensued. On verge of pointing out that is my house.

On brighter note, spent entire day so excessively irritated that did not once think of Miss E. Must count blessings.

7

April most vile month in existence.

After seven years of waffling, finally proposed marriage to respectable young lady. Explained at length the importance of such a step, and what was setting aside -- personal judgment, family expectations, duties to estate, etc -- to marry child of insignificant country squire and tradesman’s daughter.

Miss E, apparently, not impressed.

Lady C would say shows ill breeding. Fully expect her to know, since she so frequently falls into it herself. Though admittedly Mrs B and Lydia Unfortunately-Not-Languishing could give her lessons.

Miss E obviously just waiting for the opportunity to list personal flaws and supposed misdeeds. Do not remotely care what silly, over-emotional, gullible girl thinks.

... Oh, very well. Do care, but that is personal failing. Will not think of her again.

8

Freezing cold day at Pemberley.

Library, usual refuge, has been co-opted by father-in-law. Catherine & Mary reading More. Consider self to be reasonably devout, but do not like Evangelicals. Better than husband-hunting butterflies however.

Mrs Wickham w/ Mrs Bennet, complaining vociferously together when not ‘admiring’ furniture. Crass and vulgar per usual. Have asked Baddeley to check silver. Jane & Bingley w/ them, earning sainthood.

Know should count blessings, but none leap to mind. Flee to study-- but not empty.

‘Papa, Papa!’ Edward clearly has escaped dragon-governess. ‘It is snowing! Do you see that?’

‘May we go out? And not with Them either.’ Lizzy has charming habit of refusing to call W’s by name. ‘Just you and Mama, please?’

‘Where is your mother?’
‘Indiposed,’ says L. Edw snickers; silence w/ one look.

‘She says she’s not feeling well.’

‘Fitzwilliam Edward Alexander, are you suggesting your mother is lying?’

Edw gulps. Only use full Christian name only when irritable. Am excessively irritable at the moment. Then he straightens and looks straight at me, ‘If I’d been with Aunt Wickham and Grandmama for an hour, I’d be unwell too. But I’m sure she’s better now.’

Impudent boy.

Ruffle his hair and say, ‘Run upstairs and tell Molly to bundle you up properly. Both of you, now.’

Eliz not so indisposed as all that, and spend an hour safe distance from house w/ wife and children laughing & throwing things. Decide quite worth houseguests & some missing silver after all.

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