The Pridefull fall of the Prejudice

by XanderLee

Summary

Eliza is in the final year of her degree, in Bennet halls with her sister and her closest friends, so everything should have been going smoothly right? The problem is - how does our favourite story about the Bennet sisters stand up to the modern day attitude?

Notes

Hello, I'm Xander Lee - am writing this modernised version of Pride and Prejudice as a writing exercise for myself and to enjoy writing. I hope you enjoy reading and I welcome constructive criticism.
"It is a truth Eliza, universally acknowledged, that a single man in the possession of a grand fortune, must be in want of a wife." Fran had taken, amongst other interesting attributes, to reading out the quotes she had - often miss quoted - out when she felt that the room at large needed a point of her wisdom. The bite of the apple that she took as if to mark her point did not confirm it any less in everyone's mind that Fran was trying to make a point to one of them.

Unfortunately for those present, the sharp keen gaze of Fran stared at them, as if they were supposed to be agreeing with her, or acting happy. Even Eliza, who had been mentioned by Fran, did not know exactly what it was she was supposed to say, even as the desperate older girl pouted at her as if everything was falling apart.

"Fran, in the modern climate a man can marry as young as he wishes depending on his wealth. Many men are rather in want for fun, not marriage." That seemed the safest option, and pretty much the only one Eliza could construct seeing as Jane was sat on top of her, reading a heavy set mathematics text book.

"Someone is renting Netherfield Park." Fran admitted, taking another pointed bite out of her apple. Eliza was almost sorry for the abuse it was taking just to prove a point. Although due to her lying on the sofa, with Jane sitting on top of her, the sarcastic eye roll remained unseen by Fran. Although Edmund, who was older even than Fran was winked across to the sisters before turning his gaze to Fran.

"So, you want to tell us who is renting Netherfield Park, or are you waiting for all of us here to beg?" It was no secret to any of those in the room, that Netherfield Park (although named falsely as it was merely a house with grand gardens), was only rented by university students who had the money at hand to force themselves away from campus. It had previously been rented by some form of Prince who felt as if the campus life was too 'ruffian' for him. Eliza had little hopes for this second occupant. However, the brightening light in Fran's eyes flashed as she leant across towards Edmund her intent clear.

"Well, I heard from a reputable source, that it is a man of sizeable fortune from family ties; he came down a few weeks ago to see it and got everything sorted, he has been around campus this week. He has just finalised it." Fran's large eyes glanced across to the pair of sisters, one still sitting atop the other, as if they should have been paying more attention to her.

In fact if she had bothered to fully look, Fran might have noticed that Jane was whispering to Eliza, and that in turn Eliza was chuckling, one hand over her mouth to hide the sound. Jane disliked the idea of being married off almost as much as Eliza did, although she was possibly more suited to the idea.

"What is his name?" Edmund had by then wrapped his arms around Fran from behind, in a motion sure to remind her of their relationship. While generally sweet to watch, Eliza could only see their hair bob, which made for the loving scene to look merely comical.

"Charlie, Charlie Bingley." Fran chose this moment to turn and grin at her boyfriend only to see the teasing smile fall from his face "He is single! I mean that for the girls!" Her words did little to displace the growing feelings of ineptitude within Edmund but nevertheless he did move forwards, smirking at her as he took her apple away.
"Number one, since when are they, our girls?" He indicated the two girls on the sofa and the slightly ajar door of Lydia. "And number 2, how does that affect them anyway?" His soft tones and equally soft smirk did nothing to quell Fran's happiness.

"Ed, really? Can I not just be thinking of trying to set them up together?" Fran giggled softly tilting her head to the girls as if that was the obvious choice. Fran had it easy; she had met Ed in their first night of university and they just fitted. She seemed to think that forcing two people into a confined space would make them fall in love.

It had worked for her after all.

The only problem was, that well, they worked because they fitted. No matter how they had gotten together, it would always have happened.

"Please, stop that train of thought there! No one needs to set us up with anyone." Eliza was of the thought that romance was overrated. Or rather the longing for it was. That only lead to failed marriages and pregnancies where the mother realised just how unprepared she was. Eliza, while not as mathematically minded as her sister, did love researching statistics.

"I just don't get it, I don't get why you don't want to be in a relationship." Fran's eyes had begun to water, as if Eliza's words had shattered some vision that she had held of her, as if they had not known each other for 2 years, while living together.

"Romance novels have rotted her brain." Eliza could only mouth 'traitor' at Edmund when he spoke, the insufferable man winking at her before kissing Fran's cheek lightly. If he wasn't so damn pretty Eliza might have hit him for that remark.

"But, this is just like a romance book. A young handsome man stumbles into the path of a princess. Therefore, could you go and see him, as a welcoming... possibly invite him round?" Fran even went as far as to flutter her eyelashes at him, something that was not necessary considering the love struck look that filled Edmund's face.

"Why should I go?" Edmund asked, one eyebrow raising at Fran as if she would ever explain her mind as if she were sane. Even Jane looked up from the equation that had held her interest for so long, in order to stare at the couple expectantly.

"We are women, it will be less awkward if a man goes to see him first." Fran it seemed had really not realised that the feminist movement ever took hold, or that modern men were fine with being talked to by girls. Jane was sure that coming from a small town was to blame for Fran.

"Gender has nothing to do with it." While Eliza had managed to keep her mouth shut for this long, she was not one to hold her tongue when it came to opinions. Especially when she was defending her right to male friends.

"Eliza! It does, a man such as Charlie, would feel more welcomed if first seen by the man of the house...or halls...or flat." As Fran continued she sounded less and less sure of herself, her white teeth biting down into her lower lip. Her dark eyes glanced across to Edmund who sighed before patting her head as if it was something she needed.

"No, men such as him would prefer not to be met at his house, but rather casually. I assure you it will not be seen well to send Edmund!" Eliza had decided that while she could not use her own words to deny Fran's claims, she could indeed use the language which Fran preferred in order to get her point across.

"You know nothing of dating though." It was not the first time that Fran sounded incredibly rude
when talking to Eliza, but it was no less staggering to the girl the barbed comment was aimed at. The thing was, she had no experience in dating. She had many male friends, always had, but when any of them deigned to try and date her, she froze.

"But our Eliza knows a lot about men. She is friends with more men than girls, so she would be the expert." Edmund it seemed had not forgotten that his words had clout against Fran when she was riled up. He even smiled and leant down to ruffle Eliza's hair.

"But Lydia and Jane are the ones which must be pushed towards him not Eliza. They have the better chance, and you put way too much faith in her." Fran it seemed had not quite gathered that the tension in the room was solely aimed in her direction.

Fran after all was a simple girl from a small town, being the first who went to University at any point in time. To her own admission, she was the most successful she could ever be because she beat being in a small town. Now she wanted to marry Edmund and live with him, as a life plan. Eliza, Lydia, and Jane seemed to be her test subject daughters.

"Someone has to." With those three words the energy in the room darkened and even Eliza pulled herself up so that she could glance to Edmund as his words hung in the thick atmosphere. The only sound that Eliza was able to make to show her appreciation for the small comment was a choked sound that came from the back of her throat, her eyes wide.

"Maybe if she spent time on her appearance, she would be a better prospect. Men like girls who take care of themselves." That was the comment that went from insulting to stupid, and Eliza was not one to deal with stupid people. She stood, pushing Jane to the floor, stopping only to scoop up her bag before she stormed down the corridor and into her room.

"Eliza!" The door still slammed, and Fran found herself under the glares of both Edmund and Jane. Jane had even gone as far as to drop her book, tears that so far remained unshed glistened in her wide eyes.

"You just had to go there didn't you? Sometimes I think you were stuck in the wrong century." As unlikely as it was, it was Jane who spoke, flicking her gaze between her sisters door and Fran's face, trying to work out where she was needed most in that moment.

Of course she knew exactly why Eliza was reacting as she was, and she also knew that Fran didn't. It was not exactly fair to judge her by the standards that Jane set herself.

"Fran, I think you need to learn tact. Eliza still has feelings, and comparing her to her sister is not going to make her like you." That of course was the problem, that while Eliza may have tolerated the makeup and talk about all things feminine, she was not like them. Edmund seemed as always to have worked out exactly what needed to be said, and Jane hugged him tight for a moment before running off to try and comfort her sister.

"I was merely stating facts, anyone can construed them however they want." Fran giggled once more, flicking her hair in a way that was akin to a 1950's woman flirting. "It is not your decision of who falls for who, and it is not your right to make Eliza run."

"I was speaking out loud, I didn't think that she minded." Edmund ran his fingers aggressively through his hair, getting progressively more annoyed at Fran's ignorance at the happenings around her.

"Well she did, so while you try and repair the damage caused, I shall be out."

It was with those sharp parting words, that Edmund left Fran all alone in the flat common room.
Her smile slowly beginning to fade away as she looked down blushing. It was a fact that if Fran was alone, with no one to simper over, she could actually think about what she said.

The remainder of the apple was left untouched on the counter beside her.
Chapter 2: Edmund's Introduction

Chapter Notes

Chapter 2 is here, this is shorter than the last one as I am copying the chapter lay out in the original text. I hope to add more to the characters later and at the bottom of the chapter there will be notes that define the characters ages. Thank you for reading.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

For the few days following the confrontation flat 1.2 of Bennet Hall remained a mine field. With silence spreading whenever Eliza and Fran were seen in a room together. In those short days Jane had knitted a scarf, and painted a scene from Eliza's favourite book, yet still her sister hadn't attempted a smile.

It was a state that was as taxing for Jane as it was for Eliza. Jane had never really been at odds with her twin, and indeed it was difficult to imagine why she was too blame as well. Still it was a dark evening with Lydia half splayed across the counter tops, Fran cuddling on the sofa with Edmund, Eliza reading through the dog-eared pages of her favourite books, and Jane who was trying to add some more touches to her drawing. There were a few empty seats that only served to remind them of the problems that had arisen.

Mary's room was the middle room in the corridor, she had been with them in Bennet Hall for the previous year, but she had only been there a week this year before she was called away due to a study that was turning up at home.

Lydia was having another online relationship and so was stuck in her room, this time it did seem as if she was deliberately hiding the gender, leading the rest of the flat to believe she was conversing with a female. After two years of dealing with Lydia they all knew her pretty well.

Eliza barely went out of her room except for classes, meal times and when Jane begged at her door for more than 10 minutes.

The only normal one was Edmund and he was waiting patiently for the others to finish their moping, a smirk lighting his face as Fran pouted looking as if she was about to be die for the icy atmosphere and lack of the girls being introduced to 'Charlie'.

"Do you all have good clothes for tomorrow night?" He asked conversationally. He had learnt that girls were usually prepared from Fran, but with girls such as Eliza and Lydia he needed to ask.

"Why? What's happening tomorrow night? I thought tomorrow was game night?" Jane asked, tilting her head to the side from her position, her gaze trailing over to the couple on the sofa. Her hand halted in adding facial features to the girl she was drawing beside a lake, used to accidently making marks when she looked away from her work.

"There is some talk that Charlie will be out at 360 tomorrow night to welcome him to University." Edmund smiled as he sat up dragging Fran with him so that they could see the sisters and Lydia, who were staring at him blankly.

"But we cannot just turn up there!" Lydia it seemed finally had a head on her shoulders, although
considering she was texting Eliza was not sure that this was entirely due to the situation at hand.

"360 is a rocker club right?" Eliza asked, and suddenly gazes snapped towards her. Eliza shifted in her seat narrowing her eyes as much as she could while still being able to see "It's not exactly our scene."

"No club is our scene." Jane added, turning her head to look towards Fran and Edmund, biting into her lower lip at the thought of clubs.

"He won't even know us!" Fran contributed, her hands waving in the air as if it was the worst thing that could happen.

"You can't get to know anyone in a club. Unless it's the inside of their mouths." Lydia added, and her comment drew a snort from Eliza. Jane smiled at Lydia over Eliza's head, thankful for making Eliza laugh.

"You cannot talk like that!" Fran it seemed had not yet gotten over how comfortable Lydia was with physical contact, and telling people about it. In fact Fran's cheeks were already bright red. "Have you ever been in a club Fran?" Surprisingly it was Eliza who asked this, raising an eyebrow in the woman's direction. At Fran's confused head shake she continued "They are definitely not places to meet people. It's too loud. 360 is no exception."

"But if we don't go he may see our presence as hating being social." Fran's fists even balled up, rubbing along her thighs acting as a stress reliever to the young woman. "Fran you are talking to me!" Eliza rolled her eyes and flopped forwards onto the table, Lydia took pity on her and lent across to pat her back.

"Talking to us, and social doesn't mean going out to clubs. We could just see if we meet him at cafés, or bump into him in town." Jane suggested, with a soft shrug. It was odd trying to defend everyone for her but well she could see why they should be introduced. Contacts were all that was needed in order to get a good job later in life.

"Assuming he would be open to talking to a random stranger, and that you would know him on sight dear Jane." Edmund smirked across to the eldest sister, his arm still lazily around his girlfriend pressing a kiss to her forehead as her brow furrowed in confusion.

"At least meeting like that would make us seem less imbecilic." Eliza added, her forehead still pressed onto the counter, her book pressed open by her chest that was resting upon it. Lydia patted her back again smiling sympathetically while checking her phone for texts.

"I just don't want to hear about this anymore! I don't care about Charlie or any clubs!" Fran hissed standing up and crossing her arms glaring at the girls as if they would be the ones to defend Charlie.

"That is a shame." All glances switched to Edmund as he stretched looking as smug as the cat who caught the turkey. "If I would have known that I would not have met with him this morning, assuring him that we would be going. He was so looking forward to meeting you all, making friends and such."

Eliza looked up to narrow her gaze at him, her smirk widening as Fran flew herself over to Edmund and hugged him tight as if he had just saved her life. Even Lydia had to admit that it was an overreaction.

"Does this mean clothes shopping?" Lydia asked, looking at the kissing couple as if they should pay attention to her first. Jane and Eliza were always glad that Lydia had the guts to tell the couple
to stop snogging in various places, especially doorways. They were an inconvenient couple to
have around in all honesty.

"We have all day tomorrow and we shall go out to buy our dresses! So no carbs, we don't want
you seeming fat for tomorrow." Fran giggled jumping around and clapping her hands as she
began to try and put away all the carbohydrates that were placed on view in the kitchen.

"You take my carbs away and you die Fran." For once Fran took Lydia's words seriously and she
nodded with a huff. Fran could only ever give in to Lydia, it was difficult not to when she was
acting like that. It also did not help that the twins were glaring at her too.

Chapter End Notes

Ages of those in Bennet Halls
Edmund: 25
Fran: 24
Jane: 20
Eliza: 20
Lydia: 19
I know I have not updated for a while and it was honestly difficult to make this chapter modern within the setting, and I also have started back at University. I hope you enjoy.

The flat the next evening, was full of the sound of the fresher's CD that Fran still had from her fresher's week. Eliza was stood in her room in front of the full length mirror that was hidden in her wardrobe staring at herself. Occasionally she moved to poke herself, glaring at the blue underwear that Jane had decided she was wearing. As pretty as they made her feel, it made most tops unwearable.

Lottie, who she had met in her first week of University was lying on her bed, in a similar state of undress, except she was wearing a leather skirt and was trying to decide between two tops to wear. The two girls had been through just enough together, mostly one drunken night where they ended up being dragged into bed by Jane in their underwear to care that currently they were only wearing their underwear.

"I swear Eliza, Charlie looks good." That came out of the blue.

Eliza looked around towards the dark-haired girl, tilting her head to the side, trying to work out how it fitted into their current predicament. She conveniently forgot that they were getting ready to go clubbing at 360.

"And you would know this because?" Eliza asked as she got over the initial shock of being told the random man she had never met may have been pretty. Her eyebrow raised as Lottie's dark cheeks blushed darkly.

"He is in the Science of Computing class with me." Ah. That explained the blush. Lottie had been watching Charlie in the class.

A moment of silence fell as Lottie pulled on a pale pink bra-lette top, trying to hide from Eliza's accusatory glare. It took a moment before even Eliza huffed and moved up pull on a dark purple dress with gold stitching in the shape of flowers. It was a bit too fancy though and she huffed hitting the mirror.

"Wait, so what degree is he doing?" Eliza asked trying to distract herself as she ran through the few dresses she had available to herself. Eliza, if you hadn't guessed, was not exactly the kind of girl who wore dresses, or acted girly.

"A masters in computer science." Lottie seemed to have grown bored of watching her friend flail and had stood answering Eliza as she began to look through Eliza's wardrobe. Instantly the dresses were dumped on the floor and Eliza was shooed away while Lottie looked through the wardrobe intent in her search.

"So he must be smart then, no wonder his parents pay for Netherfield." Eliza whispered softly, thoughtful at the kind of man that could be that intelligent, yet pretty enough for Lottie to bother mentioning it.
"Working with computers? I can't wait to meet him!" the door to Eliza's room opened and closed, as Jane walked in her eyes flickering over the two girls present. Jane it seemed had herself just tried to look pretty with a white pleated skirt and a white vest top. She just looked like a normal Jane. It suited her well enough.

"People who work with computers can rarely work with people Jane." Eliza shrugged as she stood once more leaning up to hug her sister. After all, she had only ever seen socially inept people do well within the realms of computers. Even Lottie was difficult to be around sometimes. If only she weren't so darn pretty.

Lottie murmured something to herself, which Eliza took as affirmation, as she pulled out a pair of sequin shorts that had been gotten as part of a Halloween costume for 'Evil Tinkerbelle' in first year.

"He is actually really good at communicating Eliza." Again, Lottie wasn't exactly the best at communicating herself, so this did not fill Eliza with any confidence in Charlie's character.

"Just because you being stuck in a lab affects your social skills doesn't mean that everyone's is." Jane added, wringing her hands in front of her as she got glared at by Eliza.

It was true though, Eliza worked in a lab, admittedly more in a social context but a lab was a lab. It still was considered anti-social by most people.

"Just trying to get everything into perspective. He is a rich kid who does computing, something has to be off." Eliza places both hands on her hips, raising an eyebrow at the pair who had invaded her room.

"Or we go to one of the best universities in the country." Jane shrugged as she spoke, flushing lightly as Eliza blinked at her owlishly. She hadn't really thought of it that way. That they actually went to a good enough place to attract that kind of man.

"Dancing in a club with an entitled rich kid... perfect night out." Eliza rolled her eyes, her lips slipping into a slight pout. She would much rather be playing a game on her computer, than pandering to some spoilt brat.

"He doesn't know Ellie! 360 is only known to be a rocker club after people have gone there, or had a sister who got dragged there." Lottie glanced meaningfully to Jane, who at least had the dignity to blush.

That night had not gone well. That is the best thing you could say about it, in all honesty.

"Yes, hence how I know that everyone in there is a complete creep!" Eliza hissed shaking her head as she pulled at various accessories to add to her outfit.

"Yet still you are getting dressed up?" Lottie asked looking over Eliza critically, noting the leather cuffs, and fishnet tights. Not something that Eliza typically wore. Ever.
"I haven't started on you yet Lottie!" Eliza hissed pulling out the black boots she had ready, the ones that stopped at her knee and hugged her calves. You know the pair, that you got to try and be rebellious but you had nowhere to wear them. Eliza was human too.

"Look, dress up as hot as you can, get this Charlie to fall for you and then reject him. Show Fran up." Lottie finally made sense. Of course it would make everything more humiliating when he did not look in her direction anyway, but still...the thought was pleasant.

So it was with a fear of rejection while trying to look pretty, than with an expectation to find her version of Edmund that Eliza was dragged into the club later that evening by Jane. The elder twin in question had also tried her best to appear physically appealing although for a very different reason than her younger sister.

Charlie had of course been there since before the club opened, having rented out the space for the night, he had even gone as far as to arrange the volume of the songs to be played so that he could talk to his company. Charlie was either incredibly sweet or an idiot for choosing a club in the first place.

Yet the moment he found Jane it seemed that the others at the party had fallen from his view. He was silently glad that the girl who was clinging to her left, assuming they must have been acting as each other's wing girls.

"You do not like such gatherings?" He asked carefully, smiling down at the timid girl, who jumped at the question before blushing lightly.

"Oh, I do, but I have to look out for my sister." He had been technically correct, although in his mind sisters tended not to get along as well as these two appeared to. In fact Jane was still looking round in search of Eliza.

"Don't worry, there are extra security here encase anything untoward happens." Charlie told her with a soft smile, suddenly glad for the paranoia that his parents had installed within him.

"Untoward? I haven't heard that before." Jane allowed her gaze to flicker over him, assessing him interestingly. No one spoke like that, let alone a man in a club when talking to a lone lady.

"I shall try and modernise my phrasing for you then." A light flashed in Jane's eyes as he spoke once more, realising just who the handsome man in front of her had to be, and just why Eliza had ran off as she did.

"That would be appreciated thank you." Jane challenged blushing as she looked down, trying not to show just how nervous she was, or that she was silently wishing Eliza to break her favourite book. Not that she would ever tell Eliza that fact.

"Your sister looks more uncomfortable than you do, is she more of a hermit than you?" Charlie it seemed was not through with his discussions with Jane, indeed he only seemed to grow more intent.

"Roughly equal I think, she just hasn't had enough Dutch courage yet I'm afraid." Jane hoped this would be enough of an answer to satisfy the boy she had heard so much about.

"Have you?" Yet again, her plan of acting intelligent and elegant could all fall apart with that one question.

"No! I can't dance after drinking anything, family trait."
"Then would you care to dance with me?"

"Considering you actually took the time to ask? I think so."

In the last few hours he had mingled with those around the room, but he had withdrawn slowly towards Darcy, his hand slipped into the hold of Jane.

"Darcy, I am delighted to introduce you to Jane, she is friends with Charlotte." Charlie's hand tightened on Jane's as the scorching eyes of Darcy glanced across to her, with an accusatory glare. It was more than enough to make the timid girl pull her hand from Charlie's with an anxious smile.

"I-I see Eliza, I shall catch you later yes?" She asked breathlessly, wandering across away from the two old friends and into Eliza's awaiting hug. Predictably Eliza only had a glass of water in her hand, desperate to keep her head level.

"Skittish little thing isn't she?" Darcy asked with a voice so dripping with malice that it wasn't difficult for anyone to see his dislike for the evening. Especially one Eliza who had been watching the man who had stolen her sister.

"Timid rather than skittish I think. Skittish is normally meant for horses?" Charlie spoke quickly and kindly, flashing a bright white smile in Jane's direction, causing an uncharacteristic blush to bloom across her features.

"If you say so."

"Do you have to be a downer? You cannot find one girl to try and dance with?" Charlie was ever the optimist and he immediately began to point out various girls that seemed not to have found a man to plaster their affections to yet.

"The type of girls that go to these events are not my forte." A sigh filled the pause before Darcy began once more "I have no wish to meet any of these girls."

"Darcy, I will have you dance! Or at least talk with a girl!" Again Charlie patted Darcy's arm as he looked for an acceptable girl, ending up with his eyes set on Jane's sister. Surely their tastes were not so different that the sister would not suffice?

"You chose the only acceptable girl in the building." His gaze flickered to Jane and Eliza before he huffed and turned back towards Charlie.

"Jane is amazing, but her sister is there! They are both well read from what I have heard, and she is pretty."

"She is tolerable, if that is the kind of girl you go for."

"Tolerable by your standards?"

"Who else's matter?"

Now considering what is known of Eliza and the fact she thought that she would at least make an impression, these scathing comments were nothing short of insulting. It was only through Charlotte managing to find ice cream and romantic comedy movies that Eliza managed to smile and talk about Charlie to Jane the next day.
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