Some Small, Uncharted Star

by catie56 (catharsis)

Summary

Elizabeth Bennet knows, of course, what attraction feels like.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.

even in the farthest future, in the most distant universe, I would have recognized this voice, refracted, as it would be, like light from some small, uncharted star.

Dorianne Laux

Elizabeth Bennet knows, of course, what attraction feels like.

She and Jane giggled and whispered when Mrs. Long’s son visited from London. At twenty-seven, he was too old for fifteen-year-old Lizzy, and too poor besides, but his hair fell across his forehead just so, and he winked when he passed her in the street.

Jane makes her promise not to tell Mr. Bingley about Mr. Heddington, who visited the Gouldings for two weeks when Jane was nineteen. Elizabeth never admitted it—too proud of herself for forming a contrary opinion of the man—but when they saw him riding, whilst rolling her eyes as Jane gazed at his handsome face, Elizabeth was admiring the breadth of his shoulders.

On the subject of Mr. Wickham’s charming manners, too little cannot be said.

When she meets Mr. Darcy—or, rather, when she does not meet him—Elizabeth thinks his face is
much more attractive than his personality. Rejection from a good-looking but mean-spirited man is easier to bear than she expects, and she delights in reciting the tale amongst her friends.

She knows about attraction, about wanting a gentleman’s eyes to meet your own across a crowded table. She feels none of that for Mr. Darcy. Candlelight glinting in his dark eyes does not inspire her to raptures, and his smile does not make her blush. No, she wants to best him, to make him acknowledge that she is intelligent, beautiful, *interesting* and everything he said she was not. She wants to prove that he is a man with faults.

It is precisely this fascination that troubles her.

Elizabeth thinks Charlotte is laughing at her, maybe just a little, when she moves through the dance she once vowed she would never share with Mr. Darcy. Later, at Hunsford, when she again questions his motivations, her friend’s grin is too sly and knowing to be entirely comforting.

At Pemberley, she can hardly keep her eyes from flitting over to watch him, once he finally enters the room. The way he holds a teacup is unaccountably captivating.

When he returns to Longbourn with Bingley, when she is forced to stand with the other ladies, pouring coffee of all things, she is consumed with awareness of him. This, she thinks, cannot be love. It is too like desperation, too full of longing and agitation, too absent the tenderness she always expected to find in love. She resolves to let him go, this grave, silent man whose voice she wants to hear more than any other sound.

After all, she knows about attraction, and this feeling, the one that leaves her out of breath if she thinks about him too long, that makes her desire to speak with him and yet afraid to say too much, *this* is not anything she has felt before.

End Notes

Thanks to tree.

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