

# **Death Comes to Pemberley Study Guide**

**Death Comes to Pemberley by P.D. James**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



# Contents

<a href="#">Death Comes to Pemberley Study Guide.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">Prologue, Book 1, Chapters 1-5.....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Book 2, Chapters 1-5.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Book 3, Chapters 1-6.....</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Book 4, Chapters 1-7.....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Book 5, Chapters 1-11.....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Book 6, Chapters 1-6, Epilogue.....</a>	<a href="#">24</a>
<a href="#">Characters.....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">Symbols and Symbolism.....</a>	<a href="#">32</a>
<a href="#">Settings.....</a>	<a href="#">34</a>
<a href="#">Themes and Motifs.....</a>	<a href="#">36</a>
<a href="#">Styles.....</a>	<a href="#">40</a>
<a href="#">Quotes.....</a>	<a href="#">42</a>



# Plot Summary

Death Comes to Pemberley picks up six years after Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy from *Pride and Prejudice* have wed. They have two young boys and are happily married. Elizabeth is welcome in the library at Pemberley and enjoys her life. As is custom, they host an autumn ball at Pemberley annually, which originated with Mr. Darcy's mother, Lady Anne.

As the house buzzes with preparations for the ball, Lydia Wickham (Elizabeth's sister who is not invited to the ball because of her husband) arrives at Pemberley unannounced. The chaise she arrives in was seen driving erratically on her approach. She is in a state. She screams that her husband, and Darcy's long-standing rival, Wickham has been murdered.

Darcy, Fitzwilliam, and others, including Henry Alveston, a young lawyer who is secretly wooing Darcy's sister Georgianna, set out to find Wickham's body. It's a foreboding night and the wind howls. When they arrive in the woodland, what they discover isn't what is expected. Wickham is alive and kneeling over the corpse of Captain Denny. He cries that he is responsible for Denny's death.

An investigation into the murder is launched. After alibis are collected from all at Pemberley and the cabin in the woodland, Wickham remains the only suspect. Darcy has conflicting emotions about Wickham's guilt. At once he is just in his long-standing dislike of Wickham, yet he cannot convince himself that Wickham is capable of murder.

An inquest is held and it is determined that Wickham should stand trial for Captain Denny's murder. In an effort to get a fair trial, the trial is moved to London. Darcy, among others, is called to testify. He recounts what he saw the night Captain Denny was killed, and reiterates that he doesn't think Wickham is capable of murder. Much is made of the long-standing feud with Wickham and how Wickham and his wife, Elizabeth's sister, were not invited to the autumn ball at Pemberley.

Ultimately, Wickham is found guilty of murder and sentenced to the gallows. After the verdict is read, a distraught Eleanor Younge flees the courtroom and flings herself in front of an oncoming horse carriage to kill herself, although her motives are unclear.

Before Wickham is sent to the gallows, a letter arrives at the court and the deathbed confession of William Bidwell is read. Though Bidwell has been bedridden and dying for some time, he encountered Captain Denny, mistaking him for Wickham. It is revealed that Wickham had an affair with Bidwell's sister Louisa and Louisa ended up pregnant. Louisa was sent to stay with her sister and her husband until the baby was born. Thinking that the child would be raised by Louisa's sister as her own, Wickham thought the matter of the child was resolved. When Louisa's sister refused to raise the baby, Wickham arranged to have the child adopted by Eleanor Younge. When Wickham was sentenced to death, Eleanor assumed that the child would never be hers. Devastated at



the impending loss, Eleanor committed suicide before she could live to see Wickham pardoned. The child is adopted by another family.

Following Wickham's pardon, arrangements are made to for Wickham and Lydia to start a new life in America. Darcy helps to pay their passage to America, knowing that if Wickham and Lydia were to stay in England, Darcy would remain financially responsible for them both.

With Wickham and Lydia gone, and Alveston's true feelings known to Georgianna and the others, life returns to form as spring arrives in Pemberley. During an afternoon stroll, Elizabeth informs Darcy that she is expecting another child.



# Prologue, Book 1, Chapters 1-5

## Summary

The prologue begins with background information on the characters from *Pride and Prejudice*. It introduces Meryton, the town from which the Bennett family originally hails. Chapter one begins with preparations for the annual Lady Anne's ball at Pemberley. The invitations have gone out, and missing from the invite list is Elizabeth's sister and her husband: Lydia and George Wickham. Elizabeth and Mrs. Reynolds, their trusted housekeeper, review the guest list and plans for the party. Thomas Bidwell, the head coachman who lives with his family in a small cottage in the woodland of the property, polishes the dozens of candlesticks. Elizabeth and Darcy's two sons are introduced: Fitzwilliam, five, and Charles, two. Mrs. Reynolds and Elizabeth talk about the past and Elizabeth questions whether Lady Anne Darcy meant to match her son Mr. Darcy with Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Mrs. Reynolds deflects the question. As Elizabeth looks over the landscape, the narrator divulges that Mr. Darcy's great-grandfather became a recluse and had a cottage built in the woodland and lived there with his dog. Many of the servants think the woodland may be haunted.

Colonel Fitzwilliam, Mr. Darcy's cousin, arrives and is looking for a wife. He has his intentions set on Mr. Darcy's sister Georgiana. Col. Fitzwilliam doesn't think that Georgiana has a deep attachment to Henry Alveston, a lawyer. As the chapter concludes, Jane Bingley arrives much to Elizabeth's delight.

Chapter two discusses the Bingleys living arrangements after their marriage. Mr. Darcy advises that they buy instead of build because of Jane's pregnancy. They settle into Highmarten. The Bingleys and Darcys spend a decent amount of time together. The men have been friends since attending Oxford together and the sisters are close. Later Fitzwilliam speaks with Darcy about Georgiana's hand.

Chapter three is a brief chapter in which an all have gathered for an informal dinner on the eve of the ball. Henry Alveston is introduced and Elizabeth notices how he interacts with Georgiana and thinks about how handsome he is.

While dinner is served, Bidwell continues to polish the candelabras in preparation of the ball. As chapter four opens, the reader learns about Bidwell and his family. The undergardener's mother hanged herself after her son's death, but not before cursing the Darcy family. Bidwell doesn't believe in the curse or any haunting. Bidwell lives in the cottage with his wife, his daughter, Louisa, and his son, Will, who is dying.

Chapter five picks up after dinner and all the guests are in the music room. Georgiana is asked to sing and play the piano. Alveston joins her. Col. Fitzwilliam excuses himself from the group and tells Elizabeth that he's going for his nightly ride. As Georgiana rings for the maid and the footman is called to light the night candles, Darcy sees a chaise barreling toward Pemberley.



## Analysis

For readers who haven't read *Pride and Prejudice*, the prologue helps establish the order of characters and their relationship to each other. Of any section in the novel, the prologue most resembles Austen's writing style. While that style is adopted throughout, this section sets the tone.

The Bennets had five unmarried daughters, and because they lack a male heir, their estate went to Mr. Bennet's cousin, Rev. William Collins. Four of the daughters are eventually married off: the eldest, Jane, to Mr. Bingley, Elizabeth to Mr. Darcy, Lydia to George Wickham, and Mary to Rev. Hopkins. At the start of the novel, only Kitty remained unmarried. Darcy and Wickham have a long standing rivalry, as they once competed for Elizabeth's hand in marriage. This sets the course of the theme of gender roles in the novel.

While the reader likely views Elizabeth as a more modern woman compared to others, she still fulfills her role in society. She is, of course, Darcy's wife and assumes the responsibility that entails, including the preparations for the annual autumn ball. She also maintains an open rapport with other members of the family. Col. Fitzwilliam first makes his intentions known to Elizabeth that he plans to seek Darcy's approval before asking for her hand in marriage. Elizabeth keeps mum about how the decision should be left to Georgiana. Instead she questions whether Col. Fitzwilliam knows that Georgiana may be interested in another suitor, Henry Alveston. Her efforts to sway Fitzwilliam's actions are not lost on the reader.

Likewise, when Fitzwilliam speaks to Darcy, Darcy also mentions her fondness for Alveston. Col. Fitzwilliam dismisses it, but ultimately relents that the possibility exists that Georgiana and Alveston might be happy together. Fitzwilliam may have Georgiana's welfare in his interests, but he is focused on finding the option that best suits him and the estate. These intentions foreshadow a decision Fitzwilliam makes at a later time in the novel.

Bidwell's parents lived in the cottage and it was Bidwell's grandfather who found the bodies when Mr. Darcy's great-grandfather later shot Soldier, his dog, and himself. The rumor of the woodland being haunted stems from when an undergardener at Pemberley was convicted and executed for poaching deer. This story sets the precedent for the prospect of the woodland being haunted.

Bidwell worries about his family, including his daughter Sarah who lives in Birmingham with her husband and children. He worries as a father should, but there's not much indication that the worry stems from anything more sinister.

The wind is howling outside and the chaise is running recklessly. When the chaise arrives, a shrieking woman nearly falls from the coach. Elizabeth recognizes the woman as her sister Lydia. Bingley and Jane help Lydia into the house and Lydia declares that George Wickham is dead and that Denny shot him. Violent wind is used throughout the first sections of the novel to establish mood and atmosphere. The wind is described as



howling and violent. Likewise, Lydia blows into Pemberley howling in her own right. The wind signifies the arrival of violence and unrest at Pemberley.

The final chapter of the section demonstrates the blossoming relationship between Georgiana and Alveston. Suspiciously, Fitzwilliam excuses himself. This set up foreshadows how the relationships of the three ultimately fair. This is also the calm before the inciting incident sets the plot in motion.

## Discussion Question 1

Why is the background information regarding the marriages of the Bennet sisters important?

## Discussion Question 2

What does Fitzwilliam's dismissal of Georgiana's relationship with Alveston reveal about his character?

## Discussion Question 3

How does the rumor of the woodland being haunted amplify the murder mystery?

## Vocabulary

alacrity, sustenance, augmented, propitious, escapade, desertion, degradation, assiduous, fabrication, ingenuity, credulity, forbearance, felled, approbation, incredulity, prudent, coterie, adroit, lorgnettes, sardonic, averring, caustic, palpitations, unpropitious, recalcitrant, vicar, vicarage, conjugal, amity, iniquity, ostentation, rudimentary, conducive, benighted, equanimity, antecedents, vulgarity, onerous, arboretum, recluse, pelisse, taciturnly, avarice, penury, prodigal, blasphemy, despots, paradigm, raucous, phaeton, apparition, presaged, cursory, acquiesce, descant, desultory, chaise, spectral



## Book 2, Chapters 1-5

### Summary

At the opening of chapter one, Elizabeth reaches out to her sister and Lydia rejects her in favor of Jane. Darcy speaks with Pratt about his account of what happened. Pratt says he doesn't know where Wickham and Captain Denny are, but that Lydia's screaming was startling the horses and then they heard the gun shots. As Lydia is being taken upstairs, she charges Mr. Darcy and demands to know why he hasn't gone to find Wickham and Cpt. Denny. Mr. Darcy, Alveston, and Pratt all prepare to go on the expedition to find the men. Col. Fitzwilliam returns.

Chapter two opens with information about the upkeep at Pemberley. The estate is well-cared for, but the woodland didn't receive much attention. Darcy, Alveston, Col. Fitzwilliam and Pratt take the Piggott's chaise to the woodland because it has more room. With lanterns in hand, they start their trek through the woods. Darcy thinks about Wickham. They pass the cottage and take the stretcher with them just in case. When they reach a small clearing, they discover Wickham kneeling over Captain Denny's body, blood on his hands, and shouting that he's killed his friend.

Chapter three returns to Pemberley and Dr. McFee has arrived and given Lydia a sedative. Elizabeth and Jane watch the chaise arrive. Col. Fitzwilliam tells Bingley to inform Lydia that her husband is alive and Captain Denny is dead, though he wasn't shot. Darcy and Col. Fitzwilliam bring Captain Denny's body in and lay it on the gunroom table.

Chapter four reveals that while Darcy is one of the magistrates at Pemberley, he is unable to take part in the investigation. Elizabeth concerns herself with explaining Lydia's presence at Pemberley and how Lydia isn't one to be discreet. Sir Selwyn Hardcastle is brought in as magistrate, though Darcy would have preferred Dr. Clitheroe to serve. Darcy and Hardcastle respect each other, but a generations-longstanding animosity existed between the families as a result of a servant at Pemberley being found guilty of stealing a deer from the Selwyn's deer park and was hanged.

Darcy goes to meet with Hardcastle about the murder. Hardcastle speaks of how Wickham was a good child who grew into a man who could never hope to achieve the lifestyle he aspired to. He also addresses the rumors about Wickham and Darcy and Elizabeth. Hardcastle asks if Dr. McFee has examined the body; he has not. Before Darcy leaves, Sir Selwyn asks him for his account of what transpired when he found Wickham in the woods. He tells him how he found Wickham and that Wickham said he had killed him. Sir Selwyn takes that as a confession, but Darcy thinks otherwise.

Chapter five is a brief chapter. Elizabeth goes to check on Wickham. Jane and Bingley are with him. She finds that Mrs. Reynolds has washed the blood from Wickham's face under the direction of Jane.





## Analysis

At the opening of the section, Lydia declares that Wickham is dead and that Capt. Denny killed him. While Lydia heard the gunshots and knows something bad has happened, she doesn't know exactly what has transpired. Lydia is an erratic, emotional character and is in stark contrast to her sister Elizabeth (and Jane as well). There is a tremendous amount of tension between Elizabeth and Lydia and Lydia's entrance is meant to make the most impact on her sister. Lydia can receive the attention she craves.

Her erratic behavior detracts from her reliability. While it's clear that something has gone wrong, there's no way to ascertain what exactly. Her state doesn't entrust confidence in the other characters or the readers. To that end it sets in motion the way in which a woman's perspective can be dismissed. Because Lydia sets this precedence, it's easier for the reader to accept this development when a modern reader experiences this later on. When Dr. McFee is brought in to sedate Lydia, it gives the reader an opportunity to pause and move forward with the facts of the story uncluttered by emotion.

When Col. Fitzwilliam returns from his ride he learns what happened and comments to Darcy about the prospect of an expedition being launched on the word of a woman. It's not until he assesses that a man (Pratt, who also heard the gunshots) was also present that he decides that the search should go forward.

Darcy has a complicated relationship with Wickham that predates the novel. He is Darcy's rival in *Pride and Prejudice* and was also inclined to marry Georgiana at one point. Darcy struggles with Wickham's proximity to the family, particularly because Wickham's marriage to Lydia brings him into the family. Darcy feels a level responsibility for Wickham and resents it.

Elizabeth asks Darcy about how Denny died and if there is a possibility that Denny's death was an accident. Darcy tells her that the doctor will need to examine the body, but that he does believe that Denny was murdered. Regardless of the outcome, this establishes Elizabeth as a keen observer who is vocal about her thoughts on the matters at hand.

In chapter four, Darcy explains that Wickham had not been invited to the ball and that the Wickham's are never received at Pemberley. Hardcastle admits to knowing about Wickham's character, but both men aren't ready to assign murderer to Wickham. Hardcastle is, to a certain extent, concerned about the tenuous relationship between Darcy and Wickham. Darcy dismisses the rumors and insists there isn't a link between his relationship with Wickham and the murder. Hardcastle states that it can't be dismissed outright because the crime happened on Darcy's property. Hardcastle demonstrates his fairness by acknowledging that he will wait for the facts before making any conclusions.

In chapter five, Elizabeth wonders if cleaning the blood from Wickham is the right decision. She is right to think that Sir Selwyn would want to see him as he was when he



came back from the woodland. In seeing Wickham, Elizabeth reflects on her memories of him and feels humiliated by how she once viewed Wickham's character. While Elizabeth is being hard on herself, it ultimately demonstrates that, like Hardcastle, she is one who will consider the facts.

## Discussion Question 1

Why is it important for Elizabeth to question elements of the case, such as the possibility of Denny not having been murdered?

## Discussion Question 2

How might Darcy's past relationship with Wickham influence the investigation? Is this relevant?

## Discussion Question 3

What does the fact that Elizabeth feels humiliated by her prior feelings for Wickham indicate to readers about her character?"

## Vocabulary

postilion, encumbrance, fissures, cloistered, impious, occluding, ignominy, chimera, conjure, magistrate, conjecture, garrulity, enmity, rapprochement, conscientious, edifice, stentorian, salient, variance, invidious, fetters, besotted, perfidy



## Book 3, Chapters 1-6

### Summary

Hardcastle arrives at Pemberley along with Dr. Belcher, the medical advisor. Hardcastle asks Darcy why Wickham's face has been washed. Hardcastle leaves until morning, declaring that only Dr. McFee be able to see Wickham if needed. Otherwise, no one else is permitted in the room with Wickham. Next, Hardcastle and Belcher go to view Captain Denny's body, along with Darcy. Denny's right eye is black and rigor mortis has set in. Belcher determines that in addition to being hit in the eye with a bottle, Denny suffered a fatal blow to the back of the head. Denny's body is then taken by the mortuary wagon. Darcy and Hardcastle discuss the impending inquest. After Hardcastle and Belcher have left, Elizabeth approached Darcy to get something to eat. In the dining room, Col. Fitzwilliam suggests Darcy sleep in the library where he will also be sleeping to be closer to the door in the event someone returns to Pemberley.

Chapter two finds the two men in the library. Mrs. Reynolds and Staughton have prepared the room with blankets and pillows, and stoked the fireplace. Darcy finds restless sleep and wakes to find Col. Fitzwilliam standing by the fire with an envelope in hand. Col. Fitzwilliam burns the letter. Darcy thinks of the unexplained night ride. Darcy offers to go and Fitzwilliam tells him that he shouldn't go because of his past relationship with Wickham. Fitzwilliam goes and returns about ten minutes later. He reports that Wickham remains sleeping, but is restless. Darcy and Fitzwilliam discuss the impending inquest. Darcy then goes to have breakfast with Elizabeth.

As chapter three begins, Jane helps Lydia dress. Lydia flings herself onto Wickham and Jane pulls her away. At breakfast, Lydia bargains that if she and Wickham had been invited to the ball this wouldn't have happened. Lydia and Elizabeth do not get along and haven't since childhood.

Chapter four returns to how Elizabeth spent her night with sleep and nightmares and waking to find that Darcy was not at her side. She thinks about why Fitzwilliam suggested he and Darcy sleep in the library. Unable to get back to sleep, she needs to cancel the ball and notify fifty households. Because Georgiana wouldn't know anything about what has transpired with the killing, she decides that she should tell her before anyone else has the opportunity. At seven, she goes to Georgiana's room to tell her. Georgiana first suspects that Elizabeth has something to tell her about Alveston. Georgiana reassures Elizabeth that she harbors no residual feelings for Wickham, even though she once thought she was in love with Wickham when she was young. The women then talk about Alveston and his relationship with Georgiana. Georgiana tells Elizabeth that there is no secret engagement. At breakfast, Elizabeth, Darcy, Georgiana, and Alveston discuss the cancellation of the ball. Georgiana offers to write the notes and have Elizabeth sign, and Alveston offers to take a horse and help deliver the cancellation notices to the guests.



Chapter five is a brief chapter where Elizabeth finds the staff in their starched aprons and the house smelling of baking and other aromas preparing for the ball. She considers what should be done with the food so that it doesn't go to waste.

Chapter six marks the return of Hardcastle. He meets with the Darcys and then questions the staff. Betsy Collard, a housemaid, comes forward and tells Hardcastle that she saw the ghost of Mrs. Reilly in the woodland while she was with Joan Miller. Finally, Hardcastle takes Wickham into custody.

## Analysis

Chapter one introduces Dr. Belcher. He is regarded as a strange man with rumors of strange proclivities and experiments. One of the servants jokes about she wouldn't let him touch her because one couldn't know where his hand had been last. His character gives some comic relief, but it also an attempt to acknowledge the changes in post-mortem examinations as science evolves.

Hardcastle isn't pleased that blood has been removed from Wickham's face. Darcy takes responsibility for it, as he would likely do in all matters at Pemberley, but Hardcastle puts blame on the women. While his assessment is accurate, it also saves Darcy the embarrassment.

When Fitzwilliam suggests that he and Darcy spend the night in the library, Darcy finds it peculiar. At the start of chapter two, Darcy has followed suit and joined him in the library. This reinforces the theme of gender roles. Darcy must match Fitzwilliam or be viewed as weak. The theme of relationships can be seen when, during the night, Darcy is restless without Elizabeth at his side. He wakes in time to witness Fitzwilliam burn a letter. This strikes him as unusual, but doesn't necessarily make him suspicious. He knows Fitzwilliam well, and while the horse ride and the letter may appear out of character, Darcy doesn't experience much alarm. Darcy has never known Fitzwilliam to be deceitful. This also allows Darcy to comply with Fitzwilliam's suggestion that they check on Wickham in the morning, regardless of Hardcastle's instructions.

In chapter three, Lydia's desire to look her best for her husband before going to see him is representative of the theme of gender roles. Lydia continues to demonstrate her flair for theatrics by flinging herself onto Wickham's sleeping body when she sees him in the morning. She weeps openly and Jane must pull her away.

Jane's relationship with Lydia seems to be more civil than Lydia's relationship with Elizabeth. When Jane reflects on the time she overheard Lydia speak ill of Elizabeth to one of the housekeepers at Meryton. She accused Elizabeth of being jealous, claiming that Elizabeth would have rather married Wickham if he had had money to his name. This false accusation is designed to make Lydia feel better about herself. While Elizabeth is the mistress at Pemberley, Lydia is without a home and reliant on others' generosity to support her and Wickham.



Elizabeth continues to demonstrate her curiosity and observation by wondering whether anything will be revealed about Fitzwilliam's ride. She is also tasked with telling Georgiana about what has transpired. She feels it's her obligation to tell her before she learns via gossip or even Lydia. When she explains to Georgiana what happened, Georgiana begins to weep. This shows the how the theme of guilt extends beyond the obvious individuals such as Wickham. Even though Georgiana didn't know Denny, she thinks about how happy she was with Alveston in the music room at the same time that Denny was being murdered. She is overcome with survivor's guilt.

Elizabeth and Georgiana speak candidly about their past relationships with Wickham. Georgiana remembers how she thought she was in love with Wickham when she was younger and how Wickham promised to live with her as brother and sister until the marriage. Elizabeth tells her that Wickham had intended to marry Georgiana. While Georgiana concurs, she notes that Wickham was only interested in the money that came with the marriage. This foreshadows a later relationship for Wickham that doesn't end well. When the conversation turns to Georgiana's relationship with Alveston, Georgiana states that nothing can be determined about their relationship until after the murder mystery is resolved. This circles back to the theme of companionship and loneliness. Georgiana will welcome the absence of companionship in the wake of something more pressing.

During chapter five, Elizabeth speaks in front of the staff. Again, her observation skills prove useful. She senses that the staff is unsettled in light of the tragedy. She takes this opportunity to reassure them that this is just another storm that Pemberley will weather. Her words are met with some applause. In this way, Elizabeth asserts herself in a role that one would expect to come from the man of the house. She demonstrates her equality with Darcy with this act.

Chapter six finds the staff being questioned by Hardcastle. Their alibis and statements need to be verified, as Hardcastle is one to do his due diligence. Betsy claims to have seen the ghost in the woodland and Joan admits to the sighting as well. Instead of believing the women – be it a person or a supernatural entity – Hardcastle reprimands the women for leaving Pemberley unescorted after dark.

## Discussion Question 1

Why is it important that Elizabeth take charge of the household matters?

## Discussion Question 2

What does Lydia's declaration of Elizabeth's jealousy reveal about the sisters' relationship?



## Discussion Question 3

What does Hardcastle reprimand Betsy and Joan for? What does this action/response tell readers?

## Vocabulary

gibbets, acolytes, effusion, audacious, carafes, abdication, premonition, surreptitious, subterfuge, antagonize, acrid, presaged, ribald, inquest, disparate, querulous, sanguine, cynicism, disparage, diatribe, syllabubs, vouchsafe, divining, admonition, catechism, gyres



## Book 4, Chapters 1-7

### Summary

Chapter one begins with the news of Captain Denny's murder making its way through the community and among the Sunday morning congregation. Darcy speaks with Fitzwilliam and Alveston about how they'll all be required to testify during the inquest. Alveston offers his legal services, but because of his status as a witness, he's unable to represent Wickham or Pemberley. Darcy extends the offer for Alveston to stay at Pemberley. Alveston has only just met Wickham and his impression is based solely on evidence. He speaks of Wickham's alcohol consumption and the rumored argument that took place between the men before Denny got out of the chaise. Denny is a bigger man than Wickham, so he likely didn't leave because he felt Wickham a physical threat. He also questions the whereabouts of the weapons. They discuss moving the trial to London if Wickham is to stand trial after the inquest. Alveston recommends Jeremiah Mickledore for Wickham's attorney because he is reluctant to leave London.

At the start of chapter two Elizabeth has just finished letters to her family. A letter is delivered to Darcy from Lady Catherine. She also encloses a letter from Mr. Collins, a clergyman. Mr. Collins' letter reveals that his wife Charlotte is expecting their fourth child. There is also a letter from Charlotte; Charlotte and Elizabeth were childhood friends.

Chapter three finds Elizabeth and Georgiana taking food to the Bidwell's at the Woodland Cottage; Alveston accompanies them, but waits for them outside. The Bidwell's son Will is sickly and dying; they are hopeful that the food will entice Will's appetite. Elizabeth speaks with Mrs. Bidwell about the night of the murder. The Bidwells heard the shots, but nothing else. Elizabeth suggests that the family move up to Pemberley until the matter at hand is resolved, but Mrs. Bidwell doesn't want to move Will. Louisa, the Bidwell's daughter is also staying at the cottage and has a baby with her, which is thought to be the child of the Bidwell's other daughter. The crying is bothersome to Will, but he enjoys seeing the new baby. They find initials carved into a tree: "F. D \_\_\_ Y". Both Elizabeth and Alveston comment that the carving looked fresh. Alveston suggests the initials stand for Denny, but Elizabeth states that Denny hadn't been in the woodland prior to the night of his death.

In chapter four, Darcy goes to visit Wickham at Lambton prison. Wickham looks more like himself when Darcy sees him and his confidence has returned. Wickham tells Darcy that the Bingleys brought Lydia to visit.

Darcy returns to Pemberley in chapter five; Elizabeth and Georgiana haven't returned. He finds Elizabeth's father, Mr. Bennet, in the library. The two men discuss the inquest. Mr. Bennet tells Darcy that Elizabeth wrote to say that Fitzwilliam will be soon returning to military service and that Alveston is expected to return to London after the inquest. Darcy tells Mr. Bennet that Wickham will have good legal counsel and Mr. Bennet is





appreciative. At the close of the chapter, Elizabeth returns and is delighted to see her father.

The inquest is held in a room at the King's Arms Inn. Darcy speaks with Dr. Clitheroe about the case and Captain Denny's next of kin, an elderly aunt. Dr. Clitheroe comments that no strangers were reported in the area and he mocks the servants who claimed to see a ghost in the woodland. Wickham enters, flanked by two prison guards. The coroner, Jonah Makepeace presides. Testimony is given by Nathaniel Piggott from the Green Man Inn, George Pratt, the coachman, Colonel Fitzwilliam, Alveston, and Darcy. The judge asks Wickham about his confession over the body and Wickham claims that he felt responsible for Denny's death. The judge doesn't ask any further questions and turns the case over the jury. The jury deliberates and finds that Captain Denny was killed by a fatal blow to the head from Wickham. Darcy asks Dr. Clitheroe if the verdict will be the same at trial.

Chapter seven is a brief chapter in which Darcy and Elizabeth spend the winter awaiting the trial. Mr. Bennet continued to stay with them at Pemberly until Mrs. Bennet calls him home. Darcy and Elizabeth both turn to work with repairs on the estate and a few dinner parties for close friends at the visits from the Bingleys. Wickham is transferred to a prison in Derby and the Gardiners invite the Darcys to stay with them at Gracechurch Street for the duration of the trial; they accept. The Bidwells grandchild Georgie returns to stay with his mother and Louisa Bidwell appears happier.

## Analysis

In chapter one, Darcy details his impression of Wickham: he's handsome and popular with women and has never shown a violent side. Alveston remarks that Wickham would likely turn to violence in self-defense. Fitzwilliam recalls Wickham's military service during the Irish Rebellion. Just as he extended the courtesy of giving someone the benefit of the doubt to Fitzwilliam earlier, Darcy offers a similar reaction to Wickham. It would be natural for Darcy to think the worst of Wickham; it's an easy temptation. Darcy modulates his reaction to the murder and thinks of what he knows about Wickham. There isn't a precedence for Wickham to turn to violence. For all his faults, Darcy can't accept that Wickham would commit murder. This demonstrates how Darcy is a voice of reason and allows the reader to assess the situation fairly instead of jumping to conclusions. Likewise, this prepares the reader to believe Mrs. Bidwell when she reinforces the sentiment by stating her belief that she doesn't think that Wickham is a murderer.

In chapter three, Elizabeth and Georgiana leave and take a walk with Alveston. Georgiana speaks of her great, great grandfather and leaving flowers at the grave of Soldier, his dog. The story of the grandfather and dog is repeated here for emphasis. It foreshadows the reveal of how the murder took place. Alveston also gives Georgiana a posy at this time. She puts it on Soldier's grave. This further demonstrates their bond and the affection that Alveston has for her. While the outcome of their relationship is on hold, the actual courtship is not. The group also discovers the initials carved in a tree on





the property. They remark that the carving looks fresh and discuss what "F. D-----Y" may represent. This element ties into the theme of identity. The logical explanation would be "F. Darcy", but given what the reader knows about Darcy's character and Elizabeth's subsequent confusion about the carving, it is safe to consider this a red herring. It may implicate Darcy, but foreshadows the reveal of what really transpired.

Darcy's prison visit to Wickham in chapter four is a brief visit. Darcy thinks about Wickham's appearance and the contrast between the disheveled man he found in the woods and how his confidence has returned. It seems odd that a man would appear confident while in prison and about perhaps soon to be on trial. In some respects, this may be posturing on Wickham's part. He may be projecting a look of confidence to Darcy so as not to appear weak in front of his rival. Similarly, while the reader should be able to trust Darcy's observations of Wickham, the confidence is observed by Darcy. Whether this is Darcy's way of coping with the gravity of Wickham's situation or to convince himself that Wickham will be fine remains to be seen.

Wickham reveals to Darcy that the Bingleys brought Lydia to visit him. Because of his wife's uncontrollable state, Wickham suggested that she only be allowed to visit for short stretches of time and only when he asks to see her. Both Darcy and Lydia's visits to Wickham help to reinforce the theme of relationships in the novel.

Chapter six details the inquest. Testimony is given and the jury finds Wickham responsible for Denny's death. There is enough evidence for Wickham to stand trial. Darcy asks Clitheroe whether the same verdict is likely to be reached and Clitheroe responds 'not necessarily.' Before his departure, Clitheroe says to Darcy: "Fiat justitia ruat caelum." It's a Latin legal phrase which translates to "Let just be done though the heavens fall." Referencing this phrase, Clitheroe reminds Darcy that this court proceedings are not about relationships or social standing, but rather to remind him that it is about justice. If Wickham is guilty, then he should be found guilty. If Wickham is not, then that should be the outcome. This also foreshadows a twist after the verdict is finally read at trial.

As the section comes to a close, winter has arrived in Pemberley. By acknowledging that the characters are spending a specific length of time, particularly the winter, awaiting the trial, it gives the reader insight into, not merely how long it will be before the trial, but how long it will feel. Short days and long nights make for ample time anticipating what looms ahead. The repairs to the estate help to pass the time. They participate in small dinner gatherings, but it would be bad form for the Darcys to engage in large social gatherings. The Darcys demonstrate the isolation that Wickham must surely feel while he is confined in prison. While what they experience pales in comparison to what Wickham must be going through, it gives the reader an opportunity to identify through characters that are more likely relatable.

## Discussion Question 1

What does Wickham's returned confidence reveal about his character?



## Discussion Question 2

Are Elizabeth's intentions altruistic when she visits the Bidwells, or does she have an ulterior motive?

## Discussion Question 3

What does having the winter interlude between the inquest and the trial represent? Does it foreshadow an outcome?

## Vocabulary

maudlin, assize, nobbled, repugnance, sacrosanct, frisson, remuneration, abhorrence, indigent, fulsome, stratagem, detritus, envisaged, subventions, ingratiate, frivolity, superfluity, erratic, sodden,



# Book 5, Chapters 1-11

## Summary

Chapter one finds Darcy and Elizabeth arriving in London for the start of Wickham's trial. Darcy feels detached and like a stranger being in London now. Jeremiah Mickledore is Wickham's counsel. Chapter two opens with Alveston and Mickledore meeting Darcy and Elizabeth for dinner at Gracechurch Street. Unlike Pemberley, Gracechurch Street cannot be completely quiet because of the city noises. He thinks about his marriage to Elizabeth and remembers meeting Eleanor Younge. Elizabeth goes to bed after dinner and Darcy finds her asleep when he follows later.

Chapter three begins with Wickham pleading not guilty. Darcy sees Eleanor Younge sitting with the rest of spectators in the front row. In chapter four the trial begins in earnest. Darcy notes Eleanor's behavior in court and the way she watches the proceedings. Opening statements are made and the facts of the rescue party recounted. Chapter five focuses on Nathaniel Piggott's testimony. He is an innkeeper at the Green Man. He witnessed Lydia, Wickham and Denny having food and wine. Darcy is uncomfortable at Piggott's comment about Wickham never being welcome at Pemberley. He continues with his testimony and reveals that Denny had a pint of ale and that Wickham switched from ale to whisky. When they left, Wickham's voice was loud, but his speech wasn't slurred. Piggott states he didn't hear any quarreling, but that his wife, Martha Piggott, did. Martha is called to testify and Darcy asks why Martha Piggott wasn't called to testify during the inquest. Martha overheard Denny and Wickham begin to argue while she was in the privy: Denny said that Wickham would have no idea how a woman would feel.

George Pratt gives his testimony in chapter six. He claims that Denny left the chaise in a hurry and told Wickham that he was on his own. He isn't exactly sure of the words used. Wickham followed Denny out of the chaise and Lydia followed telling him to come back. The men went into the woods. Pratt didn't follow them because he wouldn't leave the horses or Lydia. He states that he heard three or four gunshots. Afterwards, he raced the chaise back to Pemberley while Lydia screamed the entire way. As they approached Pemberley, Col. Fitzwilliam joined them on horseback. Mickledore asks Pratt about Wickham and Denny's relationship and Pratt reveals that there wasn't any arguing, but that he might not have been able to hear them talking in the chaise because the wind was heavy that night.

Chapter seven begins with Darcy answering questions plainly and speaking of the night of the search party. He also speaks of how Col. Fitzwilliam (sometimes referred to as The Viscount Hartlep) coming back from his night ride in time to join the party and that Fitzwilliam was armed. He recounts finding Wickham kneeling over Denny's body. Darcy is asked about what he thought Wickham meant by saying it was his fault. Cartwright asks if Lydia would have been allowed into Pemberley if she arrived without invitation; Darcy says yes. Cartwright also asks if Wickham and Lydia had been invited to the ball.



Cartwright presses the question and Mickledore interjects, questioning the relevance of the question. Cartwright claims to have reason for the line of questioning and that it establishes the difficulty in the relationship between Darcy and Wickham. Mickledore interrupts again and asks Darcy if he is aware of any misconduct during the campaign in Ireland or with the law at all. Darcy admits that he knows of no such trouble. Darcy is then asked about Wickham's alcohol consumption on the night in question. Cartwright asks why Darcy didn't form a search party after bringing Denny's body back to Pemberley. At the close of the chapter, Col. Fitzwilliam is called to the stand. He is asked about the thirty pounds Wickham had on him the night of the murder. Fitzwilliam refuses to reveal the origin of the money. Mickledore asks if Fitzwilliam can assure the court that the money had nothing to do with murder and he does.

Wickham gives his testimony in chapter eight. He admits to saying what the other witnesses have testified and claims that he took the blame for Denny's death because their disagreement led Denny into the woodland. He claims that he was drunk and came upon Denny's body. After seeing a figure moving in the shadows, he fired warning shots after confirming that Denny was dead. Alveston tells Darcy that Wickham's testimony wasn't good, but Darcy thinks Wickham did enough to convince the jury. Alveston states that it comes down to the perception of guilt and that while Wickham may not be guilty of killing Denny, he feels guilt about something and that may influence the jury.

Chapter nine is a brief chapter that sends the jury off to deliberate. In chapter ten, the verdict is returned. Wickham is found guilty. Wickham declares that he isn't guilty. Darcy looks to where Eleanor had been sitting and can't find her. He rushes past Alveston and goes to look for her. In the street there is a commotion, a woman has flung herself in front of a moving carriage and been killed. Her hat was blown down the street and landed at Darcy's feet. Chapter eleven reveals Dr. McFee and Rev. Oliphant rushing into the courtroom with a confession. It was given to the two men by Will Bidwell on his deathbed. Mickledore reads the confession aloud. A commotion was heard in the chicken coop and Will got up to look, remembering Louisa talking about an officer assaulting her. Will saw an officer outside and then staggered out to confront him. He struck the officer's forehead with a fire poker. After the man stumbled back into the trees, he tripped on a stone and fell and struck his head on the dog's gravestone. The judge comments on the late arrival of evidence.

## Analysis

Book five covers Wickham's trial. It is a series of short chapters that focus on specific parts of the trial. Of the multiple sections of the book, this section contains the most chapters, with eleven. At this point in the novel, the pacing speeds up. Most of the chapters focus on a particular individual's testimony. It gives the reader the impression of a quick-cutting film device that most readers have likely experience in various legal programs. Additionally, when the pacing slows for the longest vignette in the section - Darcy's testimony - it calls greater attention to it.



At the start of chapter one, Darcy is anxious awaiting the trial. This continues with the mood established in the previous section with the long winter. It is now March and anxiety has accumulated over the winter months. Darcy is also aware of the ramifications of the outcome and how they may effect his life and life at Pemberley. If the verdict is not guilty, Wickham will likely need to come to Pemberley to stay. At the very least, Darcy will be financially responsible for the couple. Darcy isn't comfortable with the notion. He is already paying for Wickham's attorney to assure his best opportunity for defense. In a way, Darcy's attitude causes him to appear a cold and distant, even selfish to a certain extent. This likely isn't Darcy intent. He helps Wickham because it's his responsibility and responsibility is part and parcel of his identity. Additionally, caring for Wickham and Lydia will likely cause some strain for Elizabeth, Georgiana, and even Fitzwilliam. His reservations are rooted in the way he cares for his family.

In chapter three, Wickham is brought into the courtroom to enter his plea. In contrast to Darcy's earlier observation of Wickham in prison, Wickham now appears thinner and pale when he makes his appearance in court at the start of chapter three. This demonstrates the passage of time and repercussions of Wickham's situation. When the reader last saw him, he had just been found responsible for Denny's death and knew he would have to stand trial. When Darcy previously saw him, Wickham likely held onto the hope of not having to go to trial.

Darcy also observes Eleanor Younger's presence in the courtroom. In a way, Eleanor fits the mystery novel trope of the femme fatal. She is a dangerous woman, and those who are drawn into her circle, are often lured to danger. While much more of Eleanor's character is revealed later on, her presence in the courtroom is remarkable enough for Darcy to notice and contemplate.

Opening statements are made and the trial begins. Much of the testimony repeats details the reader already knows: Lydia was screaming in the chaise, Wickham had been drinking, Denny and Wickham argued before the men disappeared into the woods. Familiar faces from the inquest testify: George Pratt, Nathaniel Piggot, Fitzwilliam, and Darcy. The surprise witness is Martha Piggott. Her testimony gives an alternate view of the men's argument at the inn. When Martha is asked why she didn't provide her testimony at the inquest, she remarks that she wasn't asked. This ties to the theme of gender and how women are not viewed as equal to men. Here Martha gives a critical piece of evidence, which may help Wickham.

Pratt's testimony focuses on the state of the horses. He reiterates about Lydia screaming, further demonstrating consistency in the account of her behavior. He also claims that Denny and Wickham weren't arguing, or if they were he wasn't able to hear them over the wind and the horses. This provides Wickham some leverage for reasonable doubt. While it's possible that Pratt was far more concerned with the state of the horses and annoyed by Lydia, his observation may help Wickham's case.

Chapter seven details Darcy's testimony. It is the longest stretch of testimony. Darcy recounts what he witnessed in the woods and is asked what he thinks Wickham meant



by stating that it was his fault. Darcy is reluctant to answer. He defends Wickham by stating that he looked like a man distraught over the death of his friend. Denny would otherwise be alive if the men hadn't quarreled, Denny got out of the chaise, and both men ventured into the woodland. The focus of the testimony shifts to Darcy's strained relationship with Wickham. When he is asked about whether or not Wickham and Lydia would have been invited to ball, he states that he wasn't in touch with them and didn't know their address. It seems a strange line of questioning and the court questions whether there is relevance to the line of questioning. Cartwright insists that it does, but Darcy is unnerved by it. This reaction likely stems from guilt Darcy may hold because of his feelings about Wickham. Darcy holds to the fact that he doesn't think Wickham did it. Cartwright also asks why Darcy and the others didn't go out after they returned to Pemberley to search for the killer if Wickham was innocent. Darcy didn't think there was a point, to which Cartwright draws the conclusion that the reason Darcy didn't was because he already had the killer in his house.

Only a brief account of Fitzwilliam's testimony is given and it focuses on the money in Wickham's possession after the murder. Fitzwilliam refuses to give the origin of the money. This shifts suspicion toward him, and perhaps away from Wickham in some capacity. Fitzwilliam's reputation and his lack of outward animosity toward Wickham helps in accepting his testimony.

Wickham's testimony is given in chapter eight. Nothing is made of Wickham's comment about seeing a shadowy figure in the woods. While he doesn't claim a ghostly appearance, it does harken back to what Betsy and Joan mentioned. It is possible that they saw a figure in the woods, but unable to identify the individual, they attributed it to the lore of the woodlands. This reiterates the theme of gender issues and how a man's account, even when on trial for murder, holds more credence than the observations of a woman.

Unsurprisingly, Wickham is found guilty of murder in chapter ten. No other outcome would have made sense given the evidence at hand. What is surprising is when Darcy notices that Eleanor has disappeared from the courtroom. He rushes outside and finds that a woman has thrown herself in front of a moving carriage. While it is not outwardly stated that Eleanor is the victim, she is the most likely subject to have done so. In her death, she is stripped of her identity and, to a degree, her importance. Almost immediately after her demise, Dr. McFee and Rev. Oliphant rush the courtroom with Will Bidwell's confession in hand. It is a dramatic development to which the judge even comments that too many trials experience a delay in evidence. This last minute plot twist is a familiar trope in the mystery genre and the judge's comment can be considered a meta-wink from the author to reader. It also gives the opportunity for the judge to comment that the court will not administer a death sentence to an innocent man. This demonstrates the theme of guilt and innocence and gives social commentary on the state of death penalty cases.



## Discussion Question 1

How does the author's choice to use short, fast-paced chapters throughout the trial effect the overall tone of the novel?

## Discussion Question 2

Given what the reader knows about Wickham's case, why does Darcy's testimony receive the most scrutiny?

## Discussion Question 3

What does Eleanor's suicide after the verdict suggest about her character?

## Vocabulary

gallows, bequeath, hubbub, panoply, erstwhile, Buddha, befallen, indulgence, folly, premeditated, disingenuous, acuity, imbibed, credence, supposition, deliberations, pallor, cacophony, pettishly





# Book 6, Chapters 1-6, Epilogue

## Summary

Alveston stays with Micklethorpe to assist with any issues with Wickham's pardon. Darcy returns to Gracechurch Street to be with Elizabeth, and a private chaise is hired for Wickham's departure from Coldbath Prison, as well as a decoy chaise when he is released. Darcy debates with Alveston whether Wickham should have been found guilty. Alveston thinks that based on the evidence presented that he should have. He also concedes that after learning the jury foreman had a connection to someone killed in the Irish Rebellion, he may have been biased against the military. They also discuss whether a dying man would be capable of delivering a blow to Denny's head.

Fitzwilliam arrives at Gracechurch and tells Darcy about his experience with a letter from Wickham for help. While he didn't want to help him, he felt an obligation to him because Wickham saved the life of someone under Fitzwilliam's command during the Irish Rebellion. Wickham told Fitzwilliam about his relationship with Louisa and the baby. He asked for money to help pay for Louisa's sister to raise the child. Wickham confided in Denny and Eleanor about the child and had Eleanor check up on the child by visiting the woodland. In doing so, Eleanor began to care for the child and expressed her desire to adopt him. Fitzwilliam reveals that the night before the ball, he went on his ride to go and meet with Eleanor about the child. He found the solution ideal because the child wouldn't be affiliated with Pemberley in any way. Darcy questions how Fitzwilliam could trust Eleanor since her opulent lifestyle must be funded by blackmail. The letter Fitzwilliam burned was Eleanor's letter expressing interest in adopting the child.

Chapter two reveals a letter from Rev. Samuel Cornbinder. A chaplain at the prison, he befriended Wickham. His brother Jeremiah has a horse farm in the New World and offers Wickham a job if he is acquitted. Darcy will be financially responsible for getting Wickham and Lydia to America.

Darcy tells Rev. Cornbinder that Wickham is arriving soon. He also asks about whether people make return trips from the New World. Cornbinder declares it unlikely as the passage is rough, unpleasant, and dangerous.

Chapter four gives Wickham's account of the affair with Louisa. They met in the woods and both were lonely. He found Louisa to be an intelligent woman, as well as loving. He didn't find the illegitimate child to be much of an issue, but Louisa didn't want the disgrace. Alveston asks Wickham if he ever revealed his true identity to Louisa: he did not and called himself Frederick Delancey. He details the arrangements for Eleanor to adopt the child and claims that Eleanor was the only woman who truly loved him. Louisa didn't want Eleanor to have the child and Wickham decided that he would take the child by force if needed. Fitzwilliam reveals that the child is with Louisa's sister and her husband.





Chapter five is a brief chapter in which Wickham's pardon comes through and Lydia joins her husband to begin their journey out of England. In chapter six, the Darcys return home. Mrs. Reynolds confides in Elizabeth that she has correspondence detailing that Louisa placed the baby with Robert Martin and his wife Harriet. They have children of their own, but cannot have any more and have agreed to take the baby in as their own. Louisa didn't want Wickham to ever find the child.

The epilogue concludes the novel. It is spring at Pemberley and Darcy and Elizabeth go for a walk. They discuss Georgiana and Darcy expresses regret over putting Georgiana under the influence of Eleanor, which led to Georgiana and Wickham's relationship. Darcy agrees that Georgiana should choose her own mate and that Alveston makes her happy. Elizabeth leads Darcy to Lady Anne's bench and reveals to him that she's expecting another child. They see Alveston and Georgiana holding hands.

## Analysis

While the previous section dealt with the whodunit portion of the mystery, many questions remain, particularly why. Book six seeks to answer that question and address the fact that with Wickham acquitted, he is now Darcy's responsibility. Darcy and Alveston discuss whether Will Bidwell would have been able to strike Denny in the head. It's a natural line of questioning, and may mirror the reader's own line of thinking.

Fitzwilliam gave Wickham the money in an effort to assist with Louisa's sister taking in the baby. Fitzwilliam's motivations stem from doing what's best for Pemberley and this harkens back to his original desire to ask for Georgiana's hand in marriage. Through the course of the trial and subsequent pardon, Fitzwilliam has been enlightened that what's best for the family or the estate, might not be the best outcome. This defeat also prepares Fitzwilliam in letting Georgiana go, foreshadowing the outcome of her relationship with Alveston. The reader also learns that the letter that Fitzwilliam burned after the body was found was written by Eleanor about adopting the baby. This leads to an understanding of why Eleanor committed suicide, but it also, like Lydia, paints her in a hysterical state. This contrast further keeps the men in a perceived notion of collected control.

Chapter two reveals the solution to Darcy's problem of having to support Wickham and Lydia. Rev. Cornbinder has arranged for Wickham to start a new life in the New World. The challenges of transportation assures Darcy that Wickham is unlikely to return. This gives Darcy his own happy ending to his relationship with Wickham, but it also gives Wickham a fresh start. Wickham touches many lives at Pemberley, Elizabeth, Georgiana, Fitzwilliam, Darcy, Louis, and others), this opportunity offers many fresh starts to all involved.

In chapter four Wickham finally gives his account of what happened. Had Wickham been forthright earlier in the novel, the reader might have been suspect of his truthfulness. In delaying the reveal, it gives the reader time to accept the truth. If one is viewed as a murderer for much of the novel, learning that Wickham had an affair and



illegitimate child pales in comparison. Wickham's story is also more in line with his personality. While it hardly makes Wickham appear like a good guy, it does explain his behavior.

The theme of relationships is further explored with Wickham's reveal about his relationship with Eleanor. Eleanor would likely have been the greatest tie Wickham has in England. Her death, while tragic, frees him even of her. He also demonstrates how strong his allegiance to her was by stating that he would have forceably removed the baby from Louisa to give it to Eleanor. This demonstrates how little Wickham thinks of women and ties in with the theme of gender. Louisa is considered a second-class citizen unworthy of her child. Because Wickham has been established as a man who values money, it's easy to see why he would consider Eleanor a better choice to raise the child over the child's mother: she has money. In a way, this was Wickham's last resort to gain financial influence, even if it was for his child.

While it is thought that the baby was placed with Louisa's sister to raise as her own, the reader learns in chapter five that Louisa has made other arrangements. The child is being adopted by another family. Louisa's motivation for doing so is to prevent Wickham from ever trying to get to his child. This is a bold act by Louisa and demonstrates strength and determination. The reader may suspect that Louisa sacrificed her child out of spite or to harm Wickham, but this was a willful act of an independently-minded woman. And Wickham did comment on her intelligence.

An epilogue is included to wrap up the novel. The concentration moves away from the murder and all the subsequent drama that followed with Wickham. It is aptly set during the spring, symbolizes hope for new beginnings and a happy ending. Elizabeth reveals to Darcy that she's expecting and expresses hope that they have a daughter. Georgiana and Alveston are seen holding hands and Darcy is accepting of their relationship. The prospect of a daughter and witnessing of Georgiana choosing for herself resolves the negative connotations associated with women at varying points through the novel. The ending is optimistic for the future of women as two women interact with men who place value on the minds of women.

## Discussion Question 1

After learning of Fitzwilliam's and Wickham's accounts of the events that ultimately led to Denny's death, how does the reader's perception of the men change? Not change? Why?

## Discussion Question 2

What does Louisa's decision to hide the baby from Wickham reveal about her character?



## Discussion Question 3

Is the happy ending with Elizabeth and Darcy and the news that they're expecting another child a fitting end to novel?

## Vocabulary

implacable, solicitous, peripatetic, peremptorily, eradicable, severance, lamentable, auricular, inviolate, unctuous, indolent, amenities, connivance, sordid, jointures, vacillations, obdurate, insouciance, mews, inculcated, imbued, insolence, disabuse



# Characters

## Elizabeth Bennett Darcy

Elizabeth Bennet Darcy is the heroine of *Pride and Prejudice*, at the conclusion of which she weds Mr. Darcy. Her personality is a strong, literate woman who challenges those around her. A modern woman, she recognizes and admires men, such as Henry Alveston, who see women from more than just their physical attributes.

Many regard Elizabeth as a confidant and an influence with Darcy. Col. Fitzwilliam confides his intentions to ask for Georgiana's hand in Elizabeth prior to speaking Darcy. Similarly, Georgiana is forthright with Elizabeth about her relationship with Alveston. Elizabeth is an advocate for Georgiana to make her own decision when it comes to choosing a mate.

She is practical and generous, taking food intended for the ball to the Bidwell's so that it doesn't go to waste, but also in an effort to tempt Will Bidwell's appetite. Additionally, she is well-mannered and has succeeded in taking over Lady Anne's annual ball. Her sister Jane remains a close confidant.

In the past, she was interested in George Wickham. After Wickham is brought to Pemberley following Denny's death, she feels a sense of humiliation for how she previously felt about him. Her relationship with her younger sister Lydia – and Wickham's wife – is strained. Lydia is convinced that Elizabeth is jealous of her because she married Wickham and that she chose Darcy because of his money. This, of course, isn't true; Elizabeth very much loves Darcy.

Elizabeth and Darcy have two sons together. At the conclusion of the novel, she reveals that she's expecting their third child.

## Fitzwilliam Darcy

Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy: Darcy is a traditional man. He seeks to do the honorable thing and keeps his thoughts and emotions in check. While it's no secret that he harbors tremendous animosity toward Wickham, he maintains that he doesn't believe Wickham is capable of murder. Though he may help Wickham reluctantly, for example finding him a good lawyer and later paying his way to the New World, he does help him because he feels a sense of duty.

Darcy maintains a strong relationship with his wife Elizabeth. While he can be locked in tradition in his way of thinking, he can be brought around to thinking more liberally. He values Elizabeth's opinion and doesn't dismiss a line of thought because it is a woman's. He has his sister Georgiana's best interest in mind, and comes around to Alveston as a suitable mate for her. He ultimately relinquishes Georgiana's decision between Alveston and Col. Fitzwilliam to her.



Darcy is one of three magistrates at Pemberley, but defers to Hardcastle to handle the investigation. He testifies at Wickham's inquest and later at his trial. After recounting what he saw and heard when Wickham was found kneeling over Captain Denny's body, he reiterates that he doesn't think Wickham committed the murder. This is a persistent thought he has throughout the investigation.

When Rev. Cornbinder reaches out after Wickham's pardon, he contacts Darcy to arrange passage for him. Darcy harbors some resentment toward how much it will cost him to send Wickham and Lydia to America, but he's simultaneously relieved that they will be out of his life.

## George Wickham

George Wickham is the primary suspect in Captain Denny's death. After his wife Lydia shows up at Pemberley in hysterics claiming Wickham is dead, a search party goes looking for him. He is found alive and kneeling over Captain Denny's body crying that he's killed his friend.

Wickham is a handsome man with a charming reputation among women. In addition to courting Elizabeth, he also once promised to marry Georgiana. He doesn't have much money and it is thought that his willingness to marry Georgiana was in an effort to get the Darcy family money. He is reliant on the generosity of others, notably Eleanor Younger.

Wickham conducted an affair with Louisa Bidwell during his marriage to Lydia. The affair resulted in a pregnancy. After initial arrangements were made for Georgie, the child, to go and live as Louisa's sister's child fall through, Wickham makes arrangements for Eleanor to adopt Georgie.

Wickham stands trial from Denny's murder and is convicted and sentenced to death. He escapes the gallows after Will Bidwell makes a deathbed confession to killing Captain Denny. While in prison, however, Wickham befriends Rev. Samuel Cornbinder, a chaplain at Coldbath Prison. It is through his connection with Cornbinder and the generosity of Darcy, that Wickham is offered the opportunity to go the New World and start life over with Lydia.

## Georgiana Darcy

Georgiana is Darcy's younger sister. Both Darcy and Col. Fitzwilliam have guardianship over her. When she was young, she once thought she was in love with Wickham. She is in love with Henry Alveston and they suspend their courtship after Capt. Denny is murdered. She sings and plays the piano.



## Captain Denny

Captain Denny is the murder victim. After he discovered that Wickham and Lydia were going to Pemberley unannounced and uninvited, he quarreled with Wickham and stormed out of the chaise; Wickham followed. Captain Denny gets into an altercation with Will Bidwell and is mistaken for Wickham. Will comes after him because of the affair Wickham had with Will's sister Louisa. Captain Denny is struck in the face by Will, but suffers the fatal blow when he falls on Soldier's gravestone.

## Henry Alveston

Alveston is a handsome young lawyer from London and is discreetly courting Georgiana. Their relationship is put on hold during the investigation and trial of Wickham. Alveston is part of the search party that goes to find Wickham and Denny. He extends his legal advice to Darcy, although he is unable to represent Wickham or Pemberley because he is a witness. His interactions with Elizabeth and Georgiana reveal him to be forward-thinking when it comes to women.

## Louisa Bidwell

Louisa Bidwell is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bidwell and resides with them and her sickly brother Will in the Woodland Cottage. She conducts an affair with Wickham and becomes pregnant with his child. Her attempts to get her sister to raise the child fail, resulting in Wickham making arrangements to have Eleanor Younge adopt the child. When Elizabeth sees her during a visit, she barely recognizes Louisa, remarking that she looked old and tired.

## Eleanor Younge

Eleanor Younge was hired to be a guardian for Georgiana when Georgiana was younger. Wickham has maintained a relationship with Eleanor since first meeting her. A manipulative woman, she takes advantage where she can, blackmailing people, yet is discreet. She agrees to adopt Georgia, the child Wickham has with Louisa and becomes quite attached to the child. When Wickham is found guilty of murder, she realizes that she won't be able to adopt the child. She flees the courtroom and commits suicide by running in front of a carriage.

## George Pratt

George Pratt is the coachman driving the chaise the night of Denny's murder. He accompanies Darcy, Alveston, and Fitzwilliam when they search for Wickham and Denny. During his testimony at the inquest, he speaks at length about distress on his horses during the ordeal.

## **Rev. Samuel Cornbinder**

Rev. Cornbinder is a chaplain at Coldbath Prison where Wickham is confined in London. His youthful appearance belies the formality of tone in his correspondence to Darcy. Through his brother Jeremiah, he has arranged for Wickham to travel to the New World to work on a horse farm.



# Symbols and Symbolism

## Deathbed Confession

William Bidwell's deathbed confession appears as a letter that is read in court. The letter removes the heinousness of Capt. Denny's death and symbolizes how the rest of the characters are detached from the crime committed.

## Irish Rebellion

Throughout the novel, references are made to Wickham's participation in a military campaign during the Irish Rebellion. At once this involvement becomes symbolic of Wickham's capability of committing an atrocity, but it also gives him ownership of guilt. The author uses this to demonstrate how it is possible for Wickham to commit murder and the reader can suspect him of the crime, but establishes a justification for why Wickham may appear or feel guilty when he is innocent of the crime at hand.

## The Woodland

Capt. Denny's death occurs in the woodland. It symbolizes a dark place where people can get lost if they're not careful, sometimes to fatal consequences.

## Wind

The wind symbolizes the impending violence at Pemberley. Gusts of wind howl when doors open, beat against the windows, and rage against the chaise: all marking the arrival of something dangerous.

## Soldier's Gravestone

Ultimately, the gravestone is the murder weapon, or at least the item that causes Capt. Denny's death. Because Soldier was killed by his master before he committed suicide, Soldier is a victim of his proximity to a darker force. Similarly, Capt. Denny, a soldier, fell victim to mistaken identity as he approached the cottage. Capt. Denny died because of his proximity to Wickham's problems.

## Lady Anne's Bench

The bench is reference in the epilogue of the novel. Elizabeth points out the bench to Mr. Darcy when they're out for a walk. The bench was where Lady Anne would rest during her pregnancy with Mr. Darcy. It's also where Elizabeth tells Darcy that she's





expecting again. The bench symbolizes the bridge between the past and future and how the future remains hopeful.

## **The Autumn Ball**

The autumn ball is a tradition begun by Lady Anne. It symbolizes the status of the Darcys and the preservation of tradition.

## **Eleanor Younger**

Eleanor Younger is a strong woman who does what she has to do to get by. She symbolizes the chances and compromises people must make.

## **The Woodland Cottage**

While the cottage is part of the Pemberley estate, it is removed from the main house. It is symbolic of the life of privilege that the Darcys lead. While unfortunate things have happened on the estate – Darcy's great-great grandfather committing suicide and Denny's murder – it is detached from the main house. It demonstrates how bad things can happen around the Darcys, but they remain protected from the worst. It symbolizes their privileged and protected world where Darcy and Elizabeth can be happy.

## **The Ghost in the Woodland**

The possibility of a ghost lurking in the woods is a red herring in the story. It symbolizes doubt and how, much as Wickham's guilt appears to be true, there is room for speculation.



# Settings

## Meryton

Meryton is the village where the Bennet family resides. The village is a small area in Hertfordshire and functions as a marketplace. Netherfield Park is the most remarkable house in the village, but isn't noteworthy in comparison to other places. Longbourn, the Bennet family house is located there. It is Elizabeth place of origin and is noted in the background information given in the prologue.

## Pemberley

Pemberley is the Darcy estate and where a much of the novel takes place. It is a vast estate that includes the woodland where Captain Denny is killed. Also on the property is a cottage that was built by Darcy's great-great grandfather. An autumn ball is held at Pemberley annually. Inside there is a vast library that Elizabeth and Darcy both enjoy.

## Highmarten

Highmarten is the residence of the Bingleys. After Mr. Bingley and Jane married, Darcy advised Mr. Bingley to purchase a house, rather than build one because Jane was already expecting. Darcy found the house for them. It is near Pemberley and it enables Jane and Elizabeth to visit each other regularly.

## The Woodland

The woodland is where Captain Denny meets his death. It's also where Darcy's great-great-grandfather killed himself and his dog, Soldier. Soldier's gravestone is located in the woodland. Some of the servants report having seen a ghost lurking behind trees.

## Old Bailey

After the inquest concludes, a petition is filed to move Wickham's trial away from Pemberley and into London. The trial takes places at the Old Bailey in London. Darcy and Elizabeth travel to London for the trial and Darcy is called to testify. There is a large hall that leads to the courtroom. The courtroom is filled with many people, men and women all fashionably dressed, to watch the proceedings.



## **Lambton Prison**

The prison in Lambton is the location where Wickham is held during the inquest. The prison looks more menacing from the outside in an effort to discourage crime.

## **King's Arms Inn**

A large inn where the inquest is held, this is run by Thomas Simpkins and his wife Mary. The room is large enough to hold an orchestra and a dance floor, but the space has been dedicated to more practical purposes since the country is at war.

## **Gracechurch Street**

Gracechurch Street is the London home of the Gardiner family and is where the entirety of book six takes place. The Gardiners invite Darcy and Elizabeth to stay with them during the duration of the trial. Subsequently, it is the location of the reveal of Wickham's relationship with Louisa and Eleanor's plight to adopt the illegitimate child Georgie.



# Themes and Motifs

## Gender Roles

Throughout *Death Comes to Pemberley*, gender roles are examined. From the opening of the novel, the reader is reminded of the plight to marry off the Bennet daughters as is witnessed in *Pride and Prejudice*. In the prologue, the reader learns that of the five daughters, four have found themselves a husband. This assignation of man to a woman reinforces the woman's need for a partner to have a place in society.

It is easy to recognize women as second-class citizens, and this is indicative of the time period in which the novel is set. Col. Fitzwilliam makes a point of discussing Georgiana's hand in marriage with Darcy, dismissing her obvious preference for Alveston. Martha Piggot's testimony isn't given during the inquest because she wasn't asked. While Darcy tends to the matters at hand regarding Captain Denny's death, Elizabeth is left to deal with matters of the household, e.g. canceling the ball and ensuring the staff that everything would be fine.

Elizabeth is more of a modern woman, and a character that modern readers might be more apt to identify with. She speaks freely with her husband and advocates for Georgiana's independence in making her choice for marriage. Her forthrightness doesn't extend to all men, however. When Col. Fitzwilliam speaks with her about Georgiana, she keeps her thoughts to herself.

The ghost in the woods is thought to be of Mrs. Reilly. While it's natural to dismiss the supernatural, it is the presence of a female entity that causes problems. Two female servants claim to have seen the ghost, but their observations are dismissed and are chastised for being in the woods after dark without a male escort. This suggests that perhaps their observation would have been taken under consideration if a man was able to corroborate it.

Similarly, when Lydia arrives at Pemberley, she is in hysterics, claiming that her husband has been murdered. Fitzwilliam calls into question why Darcy would believe a hysterical woman, but because George Pratt, the coachman, also heard the shots, Fitzwilliam views Darcy justified in mounting the search party.

The theme of gender roles is not limited to just the women. When Fitzwilliam suggests he and Darcy sleep in the library to be closer to the entrance in order to protect the house, Darcy follows along even though he doesn't find it necessary.

## Love & Relationships

While love may not seem like an obvious theme in a murder mystery, it is present throughout the novel. Different couples represent different types of love and how it affects relationships.



The most prominent love is between Darcy and Elizabeth. They have been married for six years and have two children and another on the way. They are respectful of each other's opinions and work together and independently of each other. When Elizabeth suggests things about the case, such as the possibility that Denny might not have been murdered, Darcy doesn't readily dismiss her theory, even if he ultimately reassures her that his instinct is that he was. Elizabeth may want to vocalize her feelings about Georgiana choosing a mate for herself, but defers Fitzwilliam to Darcy out of respect. When they are apart they miss each other and reflect on their relationship.

While Fitzwilliam may be interested in asking for Georgiana's hand in marriage, Georgiana's clear preference is Alveston. Their courtship is respectful and earnest. While the two are smitten with each other, they are also respectful of the more pressing matter at hand: the murder investigation. Georgiana's tells Elizabeth that her courtship with Alveston will have to wait, while Fitzwilliam discusses the matter with Darcy during.

Lydia and Wickham's marriage does have the same foundation of mutual respect that Elizabeth and Darcy's does. However, Lydia loves Wickham in her way, or at least the way in which she thinks her love should be demonstrated. She dresses up for Wickham the morning after the murder and flings her body onto his, even though he remains unconscious. She visits him in prison, even though Wickham decides to scale back her ability to visit him.

Wickham isn't faithful to Lydia and doesn't show fondness toward her. Throughout the novel, Wickham's previous exploits are noted: he intended or marry both Elizabeth and Georgiana, and he conducts an affair with Louisa Bidwell. His truest relationship with a woman is actually with Eleanor Younge. He is faithful to her, defending her even from Darcy's criticism. He also looks to entrust her with raising his illegitimate child Georgie.

Sibling relationships are also prominent. Elizabeth and her sister Jane are quite close and a foil for Elizabeth's relationship with Lydia. Darcy looks to help his sister Georgiana find happiness in her marriage. Finally, a sibling relationship exists at the forefront of the murder at hand: Will attempts to defend his sister Louisa's honor when he mistakes Denny for Wickham.

## Companionship vs. Loneliness

The theme of companionship and loneliness can be found throughout the novel. The source of the Wickham's affair comes from their shared loneliness, Louisa from being alone and Wickham feeling alone in his marriage. When Louisa becomes pregnant, the affair becomes more complicated and ultimately results in Denny being mistaken for Wickham and paying the price.

Wickham and Eleanor also share a need for companionship. Eleanor wants to adopt Wickham's baby. This is her opportunity to raise a child and experience that kind of companionship. When Wickham is convicted, Eleanor sees the possibility to adopt the child as futile and this leads to her taking her own life.



Elizabeth and Darcy are faithful companions to each other. They both value their marriage and the time they spend together. When they are apart, they miss each other, waking in the middle of the night and reaching for the other when they're not there. Elizabeth also has strong relationships with her sister Jane, with Georgiana, and has even come to rely on Mrs. Reynolds as a confidant.

While the relationship between Darcy and Wickham is a strained one, Darcy does feel some obligation to him. Though he does not like him, he advocates for the parts of his character he believes in, such as not thinking Wickham capable of murder. When Wickham is first put in prison, Darcy does go to meet with him. Darcy likely views this as an obligation, but he does offer his companionship in the act of doing so.

## **Guilt vs. Innocence**

The question of Wickham's guilt is the most obvious example of how the theme of guilt and innocence are represented in the novel. Wickham declares that he has killed his friend, but also pleads not guilty. The inquest finds him worthy of standing trial, he is subsequently convicted and sentenced to death, but is ultimately exonerated. While Wickham may not be guilty of murder, he does shoulder the burden of guilt: guilt over the affair with Louisa and guilt for causing the argument that ultimately led Denny to his death. There also remains some question of whether Wickham has guilt over the time he spent fighting in the Irish Rebellion.

Darcy is also a character who grapples with the burden of guilt. Darcy is righteous man who seeks to do the proper and honorable thing in a given situation. However, when it comes to Wickham, Darcy struggles with his responsibility. He feels guilty for thinking that Wickham might have killed Denny, but disconnects from his tendency to think the worst of Wickham and decides that he doesn't believe Wickham would be capable of such a heinous act. He also must deal with the prospect of Wickham and Lydia becoming financially dependent on him in the event that Wickham is found innocent. He doesn't want the expense of supporting him, nor does he want to arrange for Wickham to have the best defense, still he comes through for him. His guilt is in understanding that he doesn't want to do it.

Georgiana experiences guilt as well. When Elizabeth tells her about Denny's murder, she's moved to tears. She has never met Denny, but is emotionally moved because she feels guilty when she realizes that while a man was being murdered, she was singing and playing music with Alveston. Her guilt stems from how people go on about their lives not knowing what horrible things might be happening simultaneously.

Finally, Georgie, the illegitimate child Wickham and Louisa demonstrates theme of guilt and innocence. As an infant, Georgie represents innocence in its purest form, but was ultimately born out of guilt.



## Identity

The theme of identity can be traced throughout the novel. The primary way is how mistaken identity leads to Captain Denny's death. As Denny approaches the woodland cottage, Will Bidwell mistakes him for a soldier Louisa once claimed assaulted her. Will's intent isn't killing him, but rather to protect his family.

Wickham has been having an affair with Louisa who misleads Will into thinking a soldier assaulted her. However, Louisa is unaware that her lover is George Wickham. Rather, Wickham has misled her into thinking he's someone called Frederick Delancey. The affair results in a child, Georgie. Louisa takes the child to her sister thinking she will be able to raise it. The child is denied knowing his true parentage because Wickham has misrepresented himself. Once the affair comes to light and Louisa learns his true identity, she arranges for another family, Robert & Harriet Martin, to raise the child as their own. This prevents Wickham from ever finding his child.

Eleanor planned to adopt the child, but following Wickham's conviction, she commits suicide. The reader does not get confirmation of Eleanor's suicide right away, but instead suspects her identity.

Lydia's identity is defined by her relationship to Elizabeth and Wickham. She rejects Elizabeth whenever she gets the chance. She feels as if she's stolen or perhaps won something from Elizabeth by marrying Wickham.

Darcy's identity, and to a certain extent, Fitzwilliam is tied to his status and responsibility at Pemberley. Darcy takes responsibility for what happens at Pemberley, such as claiming he washed the blood from Wickham's face before Hardcastle could see him. Hardcastle know this to be untrue, but Darcy takes ownership of it anyway. Further, he takes responsibility for Wickham, even if reluctantly. It is the right thing for a man of his stature to do and his identity is wrapped up in it.



# Styles

## Point of View

Death Comes to Pemberley is a traditional cozy, murder mystery told from the perspective of a third-person, omniscient narrator. The narrator does not make commentary on the thoughts or actions of the characters. The focus remains on the events that take place, which is expected in the murder mystery genre. As such, the narrator is deemed reliable and unbiased to the facts of the case.

Because of the nature of gender roles of the past, when the focus shifts away from the central story, the focus becomes decidedly feminist and explores how feminine roles are marginalized, for example: when Darcy asks Alveston during Martha Piggott's testimony why she hadn't given evidence during the inquest when it is a crucial element during the trial. This is also evident when Alveston advocates accepting women's minds, and how Elizabeth considers it Georgianna's choice rather than Darcy's when it comes to choosing a mate.

The novel is linear in its focus. It begins on a tumultuous autumn night and concludes the next spring. The time span is likely six to nine months. The weather, particularly the wind, is used to build tension during the scenes in connection with the murder. The mystery is resolved, Wickham's pardon granted, and the opportunity for Wickham's new life in America all happens in the spring.

The time jumps that take place are linear and don't cause confusion. Flashbacks aren't employed. Some background information is given in a fair amount of detail, such as the story of Darcy's great-great grandfather living in the woods with his dog, and later committing suicide. Another example is when Wickham finally reveals the details of his affair and the adoption arrangements for the child he had with Louisa.

## Language and Meaning

The language in Death Comes to Pemberley is fairly straightforward. Because the author is adopting Jane Austen's writing style, which is most evident in the prologue, the language can be proper. There is very little slang through the novel and the dialogue conveys the status of the posh upper class. When George Pratt, the coachman, gives his testimony, his dialogue is less formal, conversation, and grammar less polished to reflect his social standing.

While Elizabeth can be direct in her opinions, often she remains reserved in her speech. The narrator, however, gives the reader insight into what she's thinking, and what she might say were she to speak her mind freely. An example of this is when Fitzwilliam confides in Elizabeth about his intentions toward Georgianna and how he plans to speak with Darcy about it. Elizabeth thinks that the decision should be Georgianna's, but instead defers the conversation to Darcy. While a contemporary reader may feel as





though Elizabeth should speak freely, her reluctance to do so is reflective of the time and the defined gender roles of the era in which the novel takes place.

The tone is consistent throughout the novel and narrator provides no commentary on the characters or events. Dialogue is present throughout the novel, particularly concentrated during the inquest and trial. Testimony given by the characters is done through dialogue. It is presented in familiar courtroom banter between the lawyer and whoever is on the witness stand.

The sentence style, while initially imitating Austen, adopts a faster pacing as the inquest and trial take place. This is most evident in dialogue exchanges. Sentence length is varied, although longer, complex sentences are used throughout to slow the pacing and offer more detail or enhance the mood of a given a scene.

## Structure

The structure of *Death Comes to Pemberley* is a linear storyline of a murder mystery. Prior to the novel's beginning, P.D. James provides an author's note, apologizing to Jane Austen for taking her characters and setting them in a murder mystery. The novel begins with a Prologue, which gives the reader background information about the characters, which proves most beneficial for those readers who have not read *Pride and Prejudice*. Because of this, it is not necessary to read *Pride and Prejudice* prior to reading *Death Comes to Pemberley*.

The prologue most similarly resembles the style of Austen. As the novel progresses, it devolves into a classic mystery style. By the time the reader reaches Book Five, *The Trial*, the pacing quickens. It has the most chapters (11), but the chapters are short. Most are devoted to the testimony of one particular character. These chapters appear as vignettes of the trial.

In addition to the prologue, the novel is divided into six books, and an epilogue. The books are roughly similar in length and each one represents a different timeline in the novel. Book One is titled "The Day Before the Ball" and the five chapters within detail that night, including the revelation of the murder. Book Two "The Body in the Woodland", Book Three "Police at Pemberley", Book Four "The Inquest", Book Five "The Trial" all cover the referenced time periods. Book Six "Gracechurch Street" identifies the place in which the resolution of the mystery unveils. The epilogue has no subtitle and turns to a more domestic tone, similar to that of the prologue.

The novel follows many conventions in the murder mystery genre. It is considered a cozy mystery – a mystery in which the setting is rural, often set in a home, during which the violence takes place off stage. Other mystery conventions used include the red herring, most notably the references to the ghost or woman who appears in the woodland, as well as the investigation, inquest, and trial. It also includes the trope of the conviction of an innocent man and the last minute reveal of the killer's true identity, as well as the innocent man's pardon.



## Quotes

It had been a revelation to Elizabeth that there were men who valued intelligence in a woman.

-- Narrator (Book 1, Chapter 1 paragraph 2)

**Importance:** The quote speaks to how progress is being made - and in some cases not - by placing emphasis on the mind of the woman versus her appearance or subservient roles in society.

It is some centuries since we accepted that a woman has a soul. Is it not time that we accepted that she also has a mind?

-- Henry Alveston (Book 3, Chapter 4 paragraph 37)

**Importance:** The quote shows Alveston as a modern man who is willing to adapt to changes in social perceptions of women.

Since guilt is more commonly felt by the innocent than by the culpable, the atmosphere was less of expectation than anxiety.

-- Narrator (Book 3, Chapter 6 paragraph 4)

**Importance:** Understanding how people react in the face of stressful situations reveals a lot about their character. It also assists in establishing reasonable doubt for Wickham's guilt.

Hardcastle clearly felt that he was encroaching on feminine and uncertain ground.

-- Narrator (Book 3, Chapter 6 paragraph 7)

**Importance:** The uncertain ground identified here implicates the changing roles women play in society.

A murder in the family can provide a frisson of excitement at fashionable dinner parties, but little social credit can be expected from the brutal dispatch of an undistinguished captain of the infantry, without money or breeding to render him interesting.

-- Narrator (Book 4, Chapter 2 paragraph 3)

**Importance:** The quote is an attempt at humor. It speaks to the absurdity of being so close to something so vile, and mocking how gossip can run rampant in society.

There's no horse likes going into the woodland in a full moon - no human neither.

-- Pratt (Book 5, Chapter 6 paragraph 39)

**Importance:** The quote adds ambiance, mood, and a sense of foreboding to the testimony.



Disaster in the witness box is usually the result of saying too much, not too little.  
-- Henry Alveston (Book 5, Chapter 7 paragraph 53)

**Importance:** Alveston speaks to how people may over share in an effort to call attention away from their guilt.

He may not be guilty to this murder but he is burdened by guilt.  
-- Henry Alveston (Book 5, Chapter 8 paragraph 6)

**Importance:** Alveston's comment allows the reader (and Mr. Darcy) to understand how guilt can manifest in a person. Wickham may appear guilty, but the guilt in question may not fit the crime at hand.

You were putting yourself in the power of a woman you knew to be corrupt and who was almost certainly a blackmailer.  
-- Darcy (Book 6, Chapter 1 paragraph 24)

**Importance:** Mr. Darcy is a reasonable man with some forward-thinking views on women. His comments about Eleanor Younge are especially pointed because he isn't one to object to a strong woman, rather he sees her for who she is.

Certainly his virtues outweigh his faults, and my brother is not so unreasonable as to expect perfection.  
-- Rev. Cornbinder (Book 6, Chapter 3 paragraph 4)

**Importance:** Forgiving Wickham's faults is key. This lets readers know that it's okay to move past any animosity toward Wickham.

Personal desires and private happiness must always come second to this almost sacred responsibility.  
-- Darcy (Epilogue paragraph 26)

**Importance:** Mr. Darcy remains a man who holds a code and understands and accepts his place in society.

They had been traveling under the eerie light of the full moon which seemed to be sailing before them like some ghostly companion, at one moment lost and then reappearing.  
-- Narrator (Book 2, Chapter 2 paragraph 3)

**Importance:** This sets the tone for traditional mystery atmosphere. It establishes a foreboding mood to play into the red herring of the ghost-like figure in the woods.