

# **Romancing Mister Bridgerton Study Guide**

**Romancing Mister Bridgerton by Julia Quinn**

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# Plot Summary

"Romancing Mister Bridgerton" by Julia Quinn is about a young lady who lives in London in the early 1800s. Penelope has loved Colin since she was 16. Now, years later, she was decidedly a spinster. She had come to terms with the fact that the two of them are not suited, but she still appreciates their friendship. Back home from his travels, Colin began to see Penelope in a new light. Meanwhile, the Ton are escaping boredom by trying to determine who Lady Whistledown is. Colin and Penelope uncover the truth about the mysterious society paper writer.

Penelope has been in love with Colin for years. The two have become friends and they are comfortable together. They are at a ball, talking with each other, when Lady Danbury announces that she is going to give 1,000 pounds to the person who unmasks Lady Whistledown.

As the Bridgerton and Featherington families discuss the Society Papers, it becomes apparent that the Lady could be anyone. Several of the family members have an interest in writing. One of these writers is Colin. While he was traveling, Colin kept a journal. Penelope sees it and loves his writing.

The two become very good friends and he comes to Penelope with his concerns that Eloise is Lady Whistledown. She disagrees with him, but he points out that someone else might accuse Eloise and words are very powerful. To make his point, he says that if he publicly stated that he seduced Penelope, she would be ruined, even if they never even kissed. This gets them both thinking about kissing and Penelope asks him to kiss her.

The kiss rocks his world. He is completely mentally confused about his attraction to her and so he leaves. A few days later, at a ball, he plans to apologize to her. However, the focus of the ball is Cressida's announcement that she is Lady Whistledown. This shocks everyone, and Colin loses his opportunity to apologize.

He goes out the next day to apologize to Penelope and sees her getting into a hack. Colin follows her to a bad section of the city and sees her leave an envelope behind a prayer book. Confronting her, he opens it and discovers that she is Lady Whistledown,

They continue to fight as they head back home, but the fighting turns into something else, and as Penelope gets out of the carriage, Colin proposes to her. Everything seems perfect, especially on the evening of their engagement ball. Then, couriers come in with a new Lady Whistledown column. They were supposed to do that at a ball the next evening, but Penelope's editor decided this would bring more publicity. Colin is furious, and he brings Penelope upstairs as soon as they get a chance. They argue some more, and during that argument, he realizes he loves her. They make love.



The two get married, and things are going well until Cressida shows up to blackmail Penelope. She has figured her secret out. Colin takes care of the situation by announcing what his wife did while they are at a ball.



# Prologue - Chapter 6

## Prologue - Chapter 6 Summary

"Romancing Mister Bridgerton" by Julia Quinn is about a young lady who lives in London in the early 1800s. Penelope has loved Colin since she was 16. Now, years later, she was decidedly a spinster. She had come to terms with the fact that the two of them are not suited, but she still appreciates their friendship. Back home from his travels, Colin began to see Penelope in a new light. Meanwhile, the Ton are escaping boredom by trying to determine who Lady Whistledown is. Colin and Penelope uncover the truth about the mysterious society paper writer.

In the Prologue, Penelope Featherington fell in love for the first time two days before her 16th birthday. It was 1812, and everything seemed wonderful. The man she loved, Colin Bridgerton, felt exactly the same way. Well, he wasn't exactly in love, but she felt as if her earth shook, and he felt the same. She knew this because he had fallen off a horse. She was walking in Hyde Park with her mother and her older sisters, and she saw two riders coming her way. The wind lifted her bonnet off her head and right into the face of one of the riders. He fell off his horse into a mud puddle.

Instead of lashing out at her, he laughed. That was when she fell in love. Her mother was very annoyed at her, but instead of rebuking Penelope, she hurried to make things up with the all important Lady Bridgerton, who had come over to join them, along with her daughter Daphne.

Penelope was left with her dreams, and they were to remain dreams - not reality- since she wasn't the type of girl who attracted men like Colin. One year and two days later, on her birthday, Penelope made her debut into London society. Her face was always broken out, and she was heavier than she should have been. She didn't want to come out and begged her mother to let her wait another year, but her mother wouldn't hear of it.

She knew that she was smart, kind, and funny, yet she was unable to show that side of herself to other people. Instead, she came across as quiet, boring, and unattractive. It didn't help that her mother refused to allow her to choose her own clothing. Instead, she made Penelope wear brightly colored clothing, which made her look horrible. Her mother thought the colors made her look happy. That very same year, a mysterious (and fictitious) Lady Whistledown began publishing "Society Papers."

The paper was delivered to subscribers three times a week, and it held all of the society gossip. Penelope was highlighted in the papers. She was called an unfortunate girl who looked like nothing more than an over ripe citrus fruit. Even though Penelope was failure at attracting suitors that season, she did manage to make some friends. Lady Bridgerton took a liking to her, and through her Penelope met her daughter, Eloise. The two became very good friends, and Penelope spent a lot of time in the Bridgerton



household. As Eloise talked about her brother, Colin, Penelope found herself even more in love.

By her second season, Penelope had lost some weight, but she still wasn't very attractive. As the years progressed, she had more seasons, and still didn't get a husband. Her sisters found husbands so she was left alone, a spinster who would take care of their mother as she grew older.

One day Penelope was going to have tea with Eloise, her mother, and her sisters, and she was walking through the Bridgerton house. She heard the three elder Bridgerton brothers, Anthony, Benedict, and Colin, having a conversation. Colin was declaring that he was "certainly not going to marry Penelope Featherington!"

Right after he said that, the brothers saw her, and everyone looked horrified. She mentioned that she never asked Colin to marry her. He apologized for hurting her feelings, and she tried to placate him. Anthony insisted on walking her home, and they talked about the situation. As they were talking, Penelope mentioned that Colin should go away and travel. His mother was trying to foist marriage upon him, and he wasn't ready.

The next day, the society papers mentioned that Penelope had been seen with three of the Bridgerton brothers. She said that if Penelope managed somehow to drive one of the brothers to the altar, it would mean the end of the world as they knew it. The years passed, and Penelope became a chaperone rather than a debutante, and Colin traveled the world. On his infrequent visits into town, they talked comfortably, developing an easy friendship.

In Chapter One, Portia was reading the society papers, and she discovered that Colin was back in town. She immediately began scheming to marry her youngest daughter, Felicity, to Colin. Penelope knew her mother had given up on marrying her off. She was making increasing references to growing older and having Penelope care for her. Penelope told her mom that Felicity was too young for Colin, and she also pointed out that her sister loved Mr. Albasdale, a man with a perfectly respectable fortune. Portia agreed, but admitted that it would be such a coup if one of her daughters married Colin.

Eloise came to visit Penelope, and Penelope quickly hid the book on Greece that she was reading. Eloise told Penelope that her brother has just come back from his travels, and Penelope pretended that she was indifferent. Eloise began telling Penelope some of the stories of her brother's travels. Suddenly, Eloise decided it was time for her to go. She had just dropped by to tell her the news, but Penelope reminded her that she had already known about it from the Society Papers. Eloise wondered how that woman got her information. She pointed out that the woman must have made a mistake over the years, and she thought it would be interesting to find out who she was.

Before Eloise left, the two friends talked about setting up house together since they were both spinsters. Penelope shared the fact that her mother wanted to match Colin up



with her younger sister. They remembered their time out in society, and Eloise commented that at least now Penelope was allowed to choose her own clothing.

Colin decided that it was nice to be back in England. His brother asked him how long he planned to stay this time. He thought about how he generally traveled because he wanted to get away. He also wanted some sort of purpose or legacy. He told his brother that he would be there for the rest of the season at least.

In Chapter 2, during that season, it seemed popular to pretend that one was bored. Penelope was enjoying the season better than others because she was no longer expected to find a husband. She wasn't forced to converse, she was able to dress how she wanted, she didn't have to dance, and she could eat anything she wanted. She was enjoying some chocolate when Colin came up to her. As they talked, he realized how funny Penelope was.

He also realized that she wasn't the type who would attract suitors because one had to look deeper to find the good qualities in her. He asked her to dance, and she told him that he didn't have to do that any longer. She was officially a spinster. He protested, telling her that he actually wanted to dance with her.

After the dance was over, a woman called out to them. It was Lady Danbury, a woman everyone tried to avoid. Penelope, however, enjoyed talking with her. The old woman also enjoyed talking with her, and even commented that talking with the two of them was the most fun she had had that entire season. Since the season was so boring, she decided to liven things up. She offered 1,000 pounds to anyone who could unmask Lady Whistledown.

In Chapter 3, the news spread through the ballroom quickly, Penelope asked Colin if he knew who Lady Whistledown was. He had no idea. Eloise came to share the news with them, and she was disappointed to discover that they already knew about the bet. As they were speculating who the writer could be, Lady Danbury loudly asked Penelope who she thought it was. Penelope responded that she thought it was Lady Danbury herself. Everyone stared at her in amazement, and Lady Danbury started to grin then announced that she liked Penelope.

The next day, Penelope went to tea at the Bridgertons as she did every Monday. It was drizzling out, and she skated across the wet grass, singing. Colin called out to her and asked her if she was dancing in the grass. She denied it, and he joked with each other. Colin invited her to dance with him there. She didn't want to because she thought people might think that they were courting. This made him look at her differently as he wondered why that should be a problem. She highlighted the differences between them, and he realized she was right. He asked her why she was walking alone, and she pointed out that she was a spinster, and she lived just around the corner so it wasn't a problem. They both went off to have tea with the others.

In Chapter 4, as the family talked over tea, Eloise admitted that she wrote. She wrote a lot of letters. They were all having a discussion about grammar, and it led to a



discussion about Lady Whistledown. Colin pointed out that if his sister was Lady Whistledown, she would probably be filthy rich. Penelope said that was a good way to try to discern her identity. It would probably be somebody who had more money than she ought to have.

In Chapter 5, two days later, Penelope was going to Eloise's house so that the two could go shopping together. When she got there, she discovered that her friend wasn't there. She decided to wait, and while she was waiting she noticed a journal. It was Colin's, and it was lying open on the table. She began to read it and was enthralled.

Colin came in, and he was upset that she was reading his journal. It was the first time he lost his temper with her. He turned around to get his belongings together, and accidentally cut his hand. He sat down, and Penelope tried to help him stop the bleeding. He apologized for getting upset with her.

As Colin was thinking about Penelope, he realized she was very intelligent. He also remembered his sister telling him that Penelope was an avid reader. She told him that the writing in the journal was wonderful, and that made him very happy. Colin realized that he didn't really want the bleeding to stop because he knew that when it stopped, she would leave.

In Chapter 6, the two continued to talk about his journal, and Penelope teased him about his handwriting. He thought back to when he wrote the part of the journal that Penelope had read. It reminded him how much he enjoyed writing. He thought about how he wanted to fill his hours with a sense of purpose, and he asked Penelope what she did. She said that she read a bit, and she was envious of him for his travels. He told her that it wasn't enough because a man couldn't travel forever.

The conversation turned to Lady Whistledown. Penelope pointed out that the woman had likened her to an overripe citrus fruit. He told her that he wanted to tell her something because he thought she would understand. Colin told her that he was tired of being thought of as an empty-headed charmer. She defended him and she also pointed out that he had more than he realized. He was young, wealthy, and a man who could do anything he wanted.

Colin felt terrible all day. His hand hurt him, and he was confused about how he felt about Penelope. He was remembering how years ago his mother had been pestering him to get married, and on one particular day she had suggested marrying Penelope. She kept talking about the girl until Colin finally left the country. When he returned, he thought his mother was going to speak about it again, and he announced very loudly that he wasn't going to marry Penelope. That was when he discovered that Penelope had been standing in the doorway. As he thought about Penelope now, he realized that he needed to apologize for his behavior that day. That meant he had to attend a musicale that evening, since he knew Penelope was going to be there.





## Prologue - Chapter 6 Analysis

In the Prologue, as the book opens, the reader gets to meet Penelope for the first time. Immediately, the reader gets a sense of how deeply she loves Colin, yet understands that he doesn't love her back. The reader also understands that while he is wealthy and good looking, that isn't what attracts her to him. She's attracted to the fact that he was in an uncomfortable situation and didn't get mad. Instead, he laughed about it.

The author introduces family members and their positions in society. Penelope is awkward socially, yet her mother tries to push her into the public eye so she can get a husband. Colin's family is a large family, and while they have a high position in society, they are not pretentious. Eloise and Penelope become good friends, which sets up a situation in which Penelope is frequently in Colin's household. This leads to an occasion in which Penelope's feelings are greatly hurt when she overhears Colin having a conversation with his brothers and saying that he will not marry her. She pushes her feelings aside and tries to make them feel better about the scenario after they discover she overheard them.

The prologue also introduces the Society Papers. This is a newspaper that comes out three times a week, telling people all the gossip associated with the elite. Nobody knows who the author of these papers really is.

In Chapter 1, the years have gone by and Penelope is still unmarried. Colin continues to travel around and isn't home much. Eloise and Penelope are still very close friends, and they discuss setting up house together since they're both spinsters. Penelope finds out that Colin is back in town, and her mother is ecstatic, hoping to marry Penelope's youngest sister off to the man. Penelope doesn't like this idea at all. It's obvious that she is so decidedly a spinster nobody even considers her as marriageable material anymore.

The author is setting up the stage for the romance in this novel. Penelope is now older and more comfortable with herself. She is still in love with Colin, but he still doesn't know that. He has been traveling, but now decides to stay in town for the season. This will give them time to get to know each other better.

In Chapter 2, Colin and Penelope see each other for the first time in a long time. They slip into easy conversation, and Colin begins to recognize how funny she is. He enjoys spending time with her. The reader understands more about her background and their friendship as they discuss whether or not they are going to dance together. Penelope is very blunt about the fact that she knew that he danced with her in the past because he was just trying to be nice to her, not because he really wanted to. Now he tells her he really wants to.

In Chapter 3, the story becomes more intriguing as Lady Danberry announces the reward for uncovering Lady Whistledown. The reader will also note a unique bond between Penelope and Lady Danberry. As the chapter ends, Penelope and Colin are teasing each other. Once again, Colin begins to look at Penelope differently,



appreciating who she really is. And once again, she points out how different they are in the eyes of society. Together, they go off to have tea with the family.

In Chapter 4, as the family members discussed writing over tea, it becomes apparent that there are several people who could possibly be Lady Whistledown.

In Chapter 5, even though Penelope has been close to Colin's family for many years, she still doesn't know everything about him. She comes across his journal, and she is enthralled with his writing style. When he comes in, and he finds her reading the journal, Colin is very upset.

This is important for several different reasons. First, it shows that he is human and not just the perfect, charming man society thinks that he is. It also shows that he is very sensitive about his writing. His anger shows that he is comfortable enough with Penelope that he will tell her exactly what he was thinking. Finally, it shows how he remains true to his character as he calms down then apologizes for the way he reacted. As Penelope read the journal, she had more insight into his character. They discuss his writing, and it creates a bond between them.

In Chapter 6, as they continue talking about his writing, Penelope teases him. This reminds the reader that they have a past together. Colin wants to share something with her that he hasn't told others. This demonstrates growing affection and trust. She doesn't blindly give him the answer she knows he wants to hear, however. Penelope speaks her mind and tells him to quit feeling sorry for himself.

After she leaves, he reflects on the day, and he realizes that he is beginning to see Penelope completely differently. He remembered the horrible day years ago when he hurt her feelings. Now he realizes he doesn't want her to leave, and he's going to go to an extremely boring event that evening just so that he could see her again and apologize for his behavior that day.



# Chapters 7-12

## Chapters 7-12 Summary

In Chapter 7, Penelope was wondering how she ended up at the Smith-Smyth musicale. It was a horrible event because the girls had no musical talent, and it was painful to watch. Still, she always ended out there somehow. Not only that, but she always ended up in the front row. Eloise and Felicity joined her, and Lady Danbury interjected herself into their conversation when they began to talk about Lady Whistledown. The girls were wondering why the gossip columnist never picked on the Smith-Smyth girls. Lady Danbury said it was because the writer had a gentle heart.

Lady Danbury mentioned that she thought that Penelope might be Lady Whistledown. Penelope was surprised because no one had even thought to accuse her of that before. She found it flattering. Leaning toward, she once again told Lady Danbury that she thought that the older woman was Lady Whistledown. The older woman didn't deny it.

As the musicale began, Colin came in and sat with them. The concert seemed to go on for an agonizingly long time. Afterwards, Penelope was drinking lemonade when Colin came up to her and apologized to her for his behavior earlier. He told her that he realized that there were many things in his life that he ought to be thankful for. She apologized for her part in the disagreement as well then told him that if he wasn't happy in his situation, he should do something about it. In her opinion, he should publish the journals. As the evening ended, both Colin and Penelope realized they couldn't remember a better evening.

In Chapter 8, two days after the musical, Penelope was delighted to discover that Colin had come to visit her. She got out of bed and dressed in record time then went down to talk with Colin. He told her that he wanted to talk with her seriously about Eloise. He thought she was Lady Whistledown.

They both agreed that she was the nosiest person they knew. Colin pointed out that she was always writing things down, and there were constant ink stains on her hands. She locked herself in her room for hours on end. Still, Penelope didn't think that it was Eloise.

Colin wasn't reassured. He thought that if she was, and it was found out, it would be a disaster. She would be ruined. Over the years, the writer had made enemies because of the things she wrote. Penelope pointed out that there were hundreds of people in London and Lady Whistledown could be anyone of them. The writer could even be Colin himself. He was a good enough writer.

Hearing Penelope say that he was a good writer made Colin very happy. For a few moments he was distracted, then he went back to the subject at hand. He pointed out that it didn't matter whether or not Eloise was Lady Whistledown. If someone pointed his



finger at her, she would be ruined. When Penelope said that Eloise wasn't Lady Whistledown, Colin asked how she would prove it.

As an example he told her to suppose that he told everyone that he had seduced her. Colin said it wouldn't matter if they had never even kissed, she would be ruined. It was the power of the word. After he said that, he forgot about gossip and all and could only focus on the fact that he wanted to kiss Penelope. She seemed startled then asked him if he would kiss her.

In Chapter 9, Colin couldn't believe that he heard her correctly, but he thought it was a very good idea. It was an amazing kiss that rocked his world. When they parted, she thought he had done it out of pity for her. He was so overwhelmed by his feelings that he left without explaining how he felt.

By the time he got home, he was in a very bad mood. He went for a walk, and it began to rain. Colin realized he was near his mother's house so he went in there. While he was there, he confronted Eloise about being Lady Whistledown. She denied it, and was angry at him for even thinking to accuse her.

In Chapter 10, Lady Whistledown wrote in her column that after 11 years of writing, she was going to stop. It was the talk of the town. When the women were discussing it, Eloise was missing from the conversation. This worried Penelope, especially after she learned that Eloise hadn't been doing well ever since she had fought with Colin.

Lady Danbury called out to her and told Penelope that she had been looking for her all evening. As she was talking, the older woman noticed that Penelope was distracted and said that she was probably looking for Collin. She told Penelope not to worry over him, they would find her someone else. Penelope realized that the older woman was taking her on as a project.

Lady Danbury talked about getting old and said that she didn't like a lot of people. Still, she wanted to see Penelope happy. Penelope reminded her of herself.

As they were talking, they noticed people whispering and motioning to the place with the musicians were. Cressida was going to make an announcement. Penelope and Lady Danbury shared a mutual dislike of the woman. Colin came over to join them, and he was annoyed about the fact that Cressida was calling attention to herself as well. The woman got up to speak and informed everyone that she was Lady Whistledown.

In Chapter 11, Colin had been in a bad mood for several days before he entered the ballroom. He was nervous about seeing Penelope again. After Cressida made her announcement, everyone was shocked. Lady Danbury seemed ill. When Cressida came to her to receive the reward, Lady Danbury told her that she didn't believe it was her. She asked Penelope what she thought, and Colin noticed how uncomfortable Penelope looked, being the center of attention.

He asked if she wanted to leave, and she said "yes," but suddenly changed in front of him. She said that she thought Cressida was lying, and said that she always liked Lady



Whistledown, and it would break her heart if it ended out being someone like Cressida. Lady Danbury turned to Cressida and asked for proof. Cressida said she would have the proof within a fortnight.

As Cressida went off Penelope pointed out that it was interesting that Cressida was looking for the reward. The author should be quite wealthy. After sharing this observation, she told her sister it was time to go home. Colin helped her out by having their carriage brought around. He didn't realize that he had never had a chance to apologize to her. All he could focus on was the fact that he had spent almost five minutes holding her hand.

In Chapter 12, when he woke up the next morning, Colin realized he hadn't apologized to Penelope. He decided to go over and see her. On his way over, he noticed Penelope climbing into a hired hack. He followed her out of curiosity. She was going to a dangerous part of the city, and it made him angry. He followed her as she went into a church and watched as she pulled out an envelope and tucked it behind a prayer book.

Penelope saw him as she was leaving and tried to pretend that everything was normal. She told them it was a church for writers and publishers. He went over and picked up the envelope that she left, and she begged him not to look at it because it was her secret. He opened it anyway knowing that she had seen his private writing. To his shock, he realized that she was Lady Whistledown.

He told her he was extraordinarily angry. Upon his questioning, she explained how she came to be the society papers writer. She had planned to stop after the last column, but she couldn't bear to have Cressida claiming to be her.

## Chapters 7-12 Analysis

In Chapter 7, the reader sees and understands more of the common bond between Penelope and Lady Danbury. They're both very empathetic and will do their best to support others in similar situations. They know what it's like to feel extremely uncomfortable in society and still find themselves forced into the public forefront.

The conversation once again comes around to Lady Whistledown. Lady Danbury sees her as someone who has a kind heart. This is shown by way she hasn't written anything harsh about this the girls in the past.

After the musical, Penelope and Colin spend more time together. They both apologize to each other for their discord regarding the book and the writing. Penelope encourages him to make something of his life if he is so unsatisfied. She also encourages him to do this by promoting his writing, which she knows is important to him.

In Chapter 8, Colin is very close to his family, and he realizes that his sister might be Lady Whistledown. His relationship with Penelope has developed far enough that he goes to her with his concerns. He points out the evidence regarding Eloise, and she tries to placate him. They are able to speak openly and honestly with each other. This is



shown when the topic revolves around seduction, and Colin realizes that he is drawn to Penelope. He isn't the first one to make a move, however. It's she who asks him to kiss her.

In Chapter 9, even though Colin thinks that Penelope had a wonderful idea, the kiss is much more than he ever expected. Up until this point in the book, he has done everything he could to escape matrimony and being tied down to one woman. Now, things seem so perfect with Penelope that it completely disorients him. She thinks that he kissed her out of pity and feels badly about that. In reality, he felt so overwhelmed with his emotions that he couldn't tell her what he was really thinking so he just left. This puts a strain on their friendship.

In Chapter 10, Penelope is so distracted by everything that happened with Colin that she can't focus clearly when she is at the ball. Lady Danbury comes to talk with her, and they have a heart-to-heart conversation about men, their pasts, their connection, and how Lady Danbury is aging. When Colin joins them, the awkwardness of their meeting after the kiss is pushed aside due to the important announcement from Cressida.

In Chapter 11, Lady Danbury is shocked and isn't very pleased about the fact that she is going to have to give the reward money to a woman that she doesn't like. She doesn't trust the girl, and she publicly brings Penelope into the conversation in which she expresses doubt over Cressida's claim. At first, Penelope wants to stay out of the limelight, but in front of everyone's eyes, she matures and stands up for herself, stating her opinion boldly. She's gaining confidence in her own self. Colin finds himself even more attracted to Penelope.

In Chapter 12, the next morning, Colin rushes out to visit Penelope and apologize to her. When he sees her get into a hired hack, he is curious. As it goes to a bad part of town, he discovers that he is angry. He doesn't want her putting herself at risk. Out of curiosity, he follows her and discovers her secret. She isn't who he thought she was, and he feels betrayed, angry, hurt, and embarrassed. Penelope chose her own vulnerability by pointing out that she had meant to stop writing the column, but she couldn't handle having someone like Cressida taking credit for what she does as Lady Whistledown.



# Chapters 13-18

## Chapters 13-18 Summary

In Chapter 13, Colin couldn't believe Penelope wouldn't let Cressida get away with claiming that she's Lady Whistledown. He thought it was perfect that Cressida would take the blame so Penelope's reputation wouldn't be ruined. Penelope said that she had spent the last decade knowing what would happen if people found out. She knew how serious the repercussions were, but she didn't care. People acted as if she wasn't around anyway. Those who did talk with her pitied her, including his family.

Penelope admitted how hard she worked on her writing, but he puts her down. She accused him of running off whenever responsibility was involved. He couldn't believe she was talking with her like that, and she pointed out that there was more to her than anyone, including herself, thought.

He asked her what she meant when she said he always ran away, and she said he traveled to escape marriage. He was older now, and he needed to settle down. Colin pointed out that she was older, too, and she wasn't married. Penelope said it was different for women. They had to wait to be asked. This made him return to the Lady Whistledown topic, pointing out that revealing her identity wouldn't get her more suitors.

Penelope wondered if the sadness inside her wasn't about Lady Whistledown at all. It might have been because Colin was so angry with her, and any dream she had of connecting to him was over. He was furious, telling her that society was going to become even more serious about unveiling the author after this column was printed.

They were at an impasse, and Penelope was doing her best to let Colin know that the issue was bigger than Lady Whistledown. She lost her temper and raged at him, letting out all the years of hurt that had built up over the way Cressida treated her. Colin asked if she was all right, and she sighed. He thought this meant she agreed not to publish the letter, but she corrected him on that.

Penelope pointed out that the truth hadn't hurt Cressida's reputation, and Colin said it was because the two women were different. This hurt Penelope, and she told him that she thought he had been able to see beyond the ugly duckling. He told her she was beautiful and kissed her. As he was kissing her, he realized that he wanted to mark her as his—a thought that surprised him.

He made Penelope feel beautiful. As he kissed her, she felt that everything was right. They almost made love in the carriage, but Colin noticed that it had stopped. As she stepped out of the carriage, he proposed to her.

In Chapter 14, Penelope was so surprised by his question that she fell out of the carriage. She landed at his feet. He asked for her reply as they went into the house. She didn't answer him immediately, and he asked to see her mother. Penelope tried to



warn him about something, but he didn't notice. He was too busy going to the drawing room where the butler said Mrs. Featherington was. Too late, he noticed that it was occupied by a group of people. It was her entire family gathering together.

Her mother was thrilled to see Colin, and she kept trying to get him closer to Felicity. She also kept trying to send Penelope on errands. Finally, Colin exploded and said he wanted to have a private moment with the mother. She tried to send Penelope out of the room, but Colin said he wanted Penelope to remain. The mother was flabbergasted. After everyone was gone except for Penelope and the mother, he asked if she would grant him her daughter's hand in marriage. The woman clapped her hands and called for Felicity. When Colin asked her why he was calling Felicity, she was surprised. She thought that was who he wanted to marry.

He explained that he wanted to marry Penelope. Mrs. Featherington was shocked. Penelope interjected that she would like to marry Colin, and the mother told her she would have to be an idiot to say no. Colin told her to treat his future wife with a bit more respect. He defended Penelope, asking her mother if she really knew the girl since she was lovely, intelligent, and had a fine sense of humor. The mother told her daughter that she loved her and would miss her.

In Chapter 15, three days after they announced that they were getting married, Eloise said it was a shame Lady Whistledown had retired. She would have had a heyday with that. Penelope reminded her that the writer had said that it would be the end of the world as she knew it, and she would have to retire if Penelope ever married a Bridgerton.

Eloise was very happy that her best friend was going to be her sister, but she admitted that she was surprised about the relationship between Penelope and Colin. Penelope asked Eloise about the ink stains on her fingers, and Eloise told her it was from writing letters. She told Penelope that she was being nosy when Penelope asked who she was writing to.

Penelope knew that her friend was upset and asked her to tell her about it. Eloise said that she was very happy for Penelope, and she wasn't jealous, but she had dreams that they would be spinsters together. Colin came in, and they began talking about the wedding. Jokingly, Colin suggested that they elope, and Penelope got excited about the idea. They knew that wouldn't work with the mothers, though.

After joking around some more, Eloise left the room, closing the door behind her. Colin took advantage of the privacy to start kissing Penelope. It was going to be a month until the wedding, and they knew the waiting was going to be hard.

In Chapter 16, Colin was walking around, and he realized that he was close to his sister's house. He went in to talk with her, and they talked a bit about the wedding. He asked her how one knew when they were in love. The question surprised her, and she told him that she didn't know how to explain it. One just knew. He knew that Penelope





was the right woman for him, and that their marriage would be a good one, but he was unsettled by the fact that he didn't know exactly what he was feeling.

The Bridgertons threw an amazing engagement ball. Everything seemed perfect, and Penelope was extremely happy. Cressida was there because they didn't want to cause gossip by cutting her, and Colin said that he wanted Cressida to be forced to watch Penelope's triumph. Lady Danbury called out to Penelope, thrilled with the fact that Penelope got Colin just by being herself.

There was a commotion at the door, and someone called for everyone's attention. Ten young boys raced around the room tossing papers. It was Lady Whistledown's final column.

In Chapter 17, Colin was famous for many things, but he was not famous for his temper. Many people could have sworn that he didn't even have a temper, but this time he was furious. Everyone else was excited. The column said that the writer had fully intended the last one to remain her last. However, due to events beyond her control, she had to write once more. She let everyone know that Cressida was a scheming impostor.

Colin's brother caught everyone's attention and reminded them of their purpose there that night—the engagement. It should have been a perfect moment, but both Colin and Penelope felt miserable. She and Colin danced together, pretending that everything was all right, but they both knew it wasn't.

Penelope was very upset with her publisher. She knew he had done this to maximize exposure and circulation. Colin led Penelope out a side door upstairs to the private quarters. It was the first time she had ever seen Helen's room.

They argued once again over the column, and Colin told her how worried he was that someone would want to hurt her. She reminded him that she couldn't let someone else take credit for her life's work. This made him realize that she had life's work while he didn't, and he was jealous of her. When she went to leave, he asked her to stay. At that moment, he suddenly knew that he loved her. She agreed to stay.

In Chapter 18, they didn't stop with the kiss. They made love, and it was wonderful. She told him that she had loved him for years, and he said that he knew that. He also told her that he loved her. She said he didn't have to say that just because she did, and he said that he knew that. He also pointed out that he never would have said the words if he hadn't meant them.

## Chapters 13-18 Analysis

In Chapter 13, Colin is so angry he swears. This is just not done in front of women, so it really signifies his distress and his comfort level with Penelope. It also makes even more of an impact when he compliments her during their argument. This chapter is pivotal in their relationship because Penelope sees a negative side of Colin. He isn't her perfect ideal. A bit later, she loses her temper with him. It shows that she knows how to



stand up for herself, and instead of rejecting her, he appreciates her all the more. He realizes that he wants her to be his. By the time he proposes to her, they know that they are compatible physically, and they also have seen each other at their worst and still feel attracted to each other.

This chapter also offers insight into Penelope's past and her feelings. She was deeply wounded by the way Cressida treated her. In reality, she doesn't care whether or not people know that she was Lady Whistledown, even though she worked hard on the column. It isn't the notoriety that made her want to come clean. She just doesn't want someone as nasty as Cressida getting the credit.

In Chapter 14, Colin is quick to follow his proposal with proper protocol so he goes to talk to Penelope's mother. He doesn't realize that her entire family is gathered together, but this is significant because it shows how they all treat Penelope. Everybody loves her, but nobody expects much of her. She's just there to help their mother. The mother is shocked that he wants to marry Penelope even though Colin arrived with Penelope, and even after he asks her to marry her daughter with Penelope at his side. She doesn't seem to see the value in her daughter. Colin defends Penelope, showing that he really does appreciate her beauty—in and out.

In Chapter 15, Eloise and Penelope are so close to each other that they can share practically anything with each other. This is one reason why it is so perfect that they are going to be sisters as well as best friends. Still, the entire situation is difficult on Eloise. Penelope knows that her friend is struggling with something, but she doesn't know what. After Eloise talks with her, she realizes that her impending marriage is difficult for her friend because her friend had thought that they would be single together as they grew old.

Eloise has some secrets of her own that she isn't willing to share. This shows the reader that although the two are extremely close, they don't share absolutely everything. This also foreshadows Eloise's reaction for when the truth comes out about Lady Whistledown.

Colin comes in and joins the girls. It's obvious that they all enjoy each other's company. As they talk about marriage plans, they joke around about eloping. Once again it is emphasized that Penelope is not out for fame or glory. She is just fine with the idea of eloping. Still, they know how important the wedding is for their mothers, and they are willing to go through a big ordeal to make their mothers happy. Family is important to them.

In Chapter 16, although he knows everything that's happening is good, Colin is still confused about his own feelings. He doesn't really know what love is and if he truly loves Penelope. He knows that she is the right one for him, but he's not so sure that he loves her. Once again, his family is there to support him, and he goes to his married sister for advice. She reassures him, but also lets him know that there isn't a specific formula for love.



The engagement party is a very happy occasion for the families, and everything seems to be going extremely well. Eloise and Penelope are together, and Penelope is thankful that she has such a wonderful friend. Lady Danbury is thrilled to see Penelope marrying the man she loves, and she got his attention without trickery. It's the proverbial calm before the storm. Messengers come in with a newspaper. It's obvious that Penelope knows what all the excitement is about, and she isn't happy.

In Chapter 17, Colin is absolutely furious. He wants to lash out at Penelope, but he knows that he can't since they are out in front of others in society. The attendees at the ball think it's wonderful. They're happy to see Cressida put down, and they are also happy that their favorite writer is back with another column. Nobody seems to notice how upset Colin and Penelope are. The couple puts on a fake front, pretending everything is fine. However, as soon as he can, Colin takes Penelope away, and they go upstairs to his room.

It's the first time Penelope has ever been there, and it seems very intimate. But instead of being a happy occasion, it is very tense. Colin lashes out at her, fearing for her reputation and her own safety. She defends what she has done and insists that she isn't going to let someone else take credit for her life work. When she said that, Colin suddenly realized that he was jealous of her work.

Feeling as if they just aren't getting along, Penelope moves to leave. At that moment, Colin realizes that he is in love with her and asks her to stay. His sister's advice has been absolutely correct. Love isn't a formula. There is just a moment where he knows it was right.

In Chapter 18, Colin and Penelope work through their differences and make a physical commitment to each other. During the chapter, Colin shares the fact that he loves Penelope. At first she thinks he is just saying that, but he reassures her that it's true, and he knows he doesn't have to say it. A perfect evening that had gone wrong ends out right after all.



# Chapters 19 - Epilogue

## Chapters 19 - Epilogue Summary

In Chapter 19, Colin persuaded the mothers to push up the wedding date. Things were going well, but Penelope wanted to resolve the issue of Lady Whistledown. He told her to leave him alone because she didn't want to see him let out what he truly felt about it. She said she did want him to let it out. Colin said that every day he thought about what would happen if the truth came out because he wanted to protect her. He loved her.

She wondered if there was more to it than that. Penelope wondered if perhaps he was ashamed of her. This surprised him, and he realized that he was more jealous than ashamed. He avoided answering her.

The wedding was magical, and everything was wonderful except for when Lady Whistledown was mentioned. This made Penelope sad. She asked whether they planned to go on a honeymoon trip. He said he didn't want to leave because he wanted to be around for damage control if the truth about Lady Whistledown came out.

In Chapter 20, Penelope came home from shopping and caught Colin working with his journals. They discussed writing, but he wouldn't share his work with her. He realized he was scared, and later that evening he shared his writing with her. Colin watched her reactions as she read. Suddenly, he realized that she could actually help him since she was a writer as well.

They discussed writing again after she read, and he admitted that he thought her writing was wonderful. He admitted that he was jealous. Colin asked her about how she started the column, and she shared her story. It happened by accident. She also told him how she hid her income by pretending the family had received an inheritance.

In Chapter 21, Penelope was editing Colin's journals a week later, realizing how happy she was. Cressida came to visit her, and told her she made a critical mistake. When Penelope criticized her in front of the Ton, she used the same exact words Lady Whistledown used. Cressida was there to blackmail her.

In Chapter 22, when Colin came home later, she told him what happened and said it was all her fault. He comforted her then told her not to worry. He would take care of everything. Penelope wanted to help fix things and suggested that they ask Lady Danbury to be her. Colin told her not to do that. They had a week to come up with a solution.

Colin reminded her about his sister's ball that evening, and she wasn't sure she wanted to go. After reminding her, he left to go visit Anthony, his brother. When he arrived at his brother's house, he asked for help.



Penelope received a note from Colin telling her that he would meet her at the ball. She was to go to Number Five, and the ladies of the family would accompany her to the ball. When she met with them, they asked what was going on. Colin had instructed them to stick to her like glue. They got to the ball, and Eloise commented that there was magic in the air. Penelope agreed that it seemed as if there was a crackling energy such as the air right before a storm.

In Chapter 23, the family members were among the first to arrive, supporting Daphne. Colin hadn't arrived yet. Penelope wondered what Colin was up to, especially after she learned that he had told the others to keep her away from Lady Danbury. She thought that perhaps he had learned a new, horrible secret about Cressida and planned to double blackmail Cressida.

Colin joined them and took Penelope aside and began kissing her thoroughly. When they stopped kissing her, he told her that he figured out what to do about Cressida. He was going to make an announcement telling the truth. Penelope protested, but he insisted. When she said she would be ruined and so would he. Colin told her that he loved her, and as long as they were together he didn't mind what people said or did about them.

She pointed out that if the world turned against him, he would never get his journals published. He realized that the reason she didn't want the truth to come out was because she was worried about him. He reassured her, and pointed out that the family had influence in town. Anthony was going to show his support. Anthony was surprised and amused when he learned about it. Colin told Penelope that he was proud of her.

He led her out to a balcony and told her to be brave. Footman appeared, handing flutes of champagne to the guests. Simon quieted the orchestra players and directed everyone's attention to the balcony. Colin began his speech. He told them that his marriage surprised him because he couldn't believe it had taken him so long. He told everyone how amazing she was and how much he loved her then toasted her.

Colin kissed Penelope passionately in front of everyone as the Ton roared in approval. He called out that he had one last thing to say. Colin told them that he was going to leave the party early but before he left he wanted them to know his wife was the wittiest person in London. She was Lady Whistledown.

Everyone was silent, then someone started clapping. It was Lady Danbury. Others joined her—her family members. More and more people began clapping and cheering. The couple left, and no-one saw them for days.

In the Epilogue, Colin excitedly shared his book with Penelope. It was coming out in six months. He noticed that Penelope had been writing, and she admitted that she had begun writing a novel. It was going to have a happy ending because she couldn't write anything else.



## Chapters 19 - Epilogue Analysis

In Chapter 19, although both Colin and Penelope were planning to get married, there were still some unresolved issues between them. Penelope exposes her vulnerability by voicing her concern that Colin is ashamed of her. He never even thought of this, but instead of making himself vulnerable by exposing the truth of his jealousy, he avoids answering her. This is true to character as she pointed out earlier in the book, accusing him of traveling to escape realities he didn't want to face. The wedding goes well, but it's obvious that the Lady Whistledown issue is causing more trouble since it interferes with honeymoon plans.

In Chapter 20, Colin finally allows himself to become vulnerable by sharing his writing and his insecurities with Penelope. For the first time, they work as a true team, and Colin realizes that they can both be better off by focusing on each other's strengths. He shows real interest in her, without judgment or jealousy, as he asks about the history of Lady Whistledown. By the end of the chapter, it's clear that Penelope is a strong, independent woman, and Colin admires this. While he wants to protect her, she is still capable of watching out for herself.

Chapter 21 holds the climax of the book. The secret is exposed, and Penelope isn't certain how to deal with it.

In Chapter 22, Penelope and Colin are truly united as a team. Instead of hiding her problems, Penelope shares them with Colin. He doesn't judge her. Instead, he comforts her and tells her that he will take care of things because he loves her. Although it doesn't say it outright, the reader knows that Colin has been looking for a sense of purpose, and now he has one. Penelope has enough faith in him to be able to relax a bit to see what he will come up with.

In Chapter 23, the entire family works together to support Colin and Penelope even though they have no idea what's going on. This shows how solid the family bond is. When Colin tells Penelope what his plan is, she doesn't want to go through with it, yet she trusts him. He doesn't let her down. As they talk, he realizes that while he was trying to protect his wife, she was trying to protect him. Colin publicly expresses his love for and his pride in his wife. The family and Lady Danbury continue to support the couple even after the truth is out.

In the Epilogue, all the loose ends of the plot are tied up. The marriage is solid, Colin's dream is coming true, Penelope is back to writing, and a baby is on the way.



# Characters

## Penelope Featherington

This is a funny and smart young woman who doesn't know how to let others see her good attributes when she is in public. She isn't beautiful, and she is somewhat quiet. Only the people close to her realize how wonderful she is. She is delighted to officially become a spinster because she doesn't like to dance, and she loves the freedom of dressing how she wants to and eating what she wants. She is envious of the way men have so much more freedom than women.

This character is in love with Colin. She was originally attracted to him because she appreciated his kindness. Later, she loved the way he traveled a lot, and she really loved reading the stories in his journals about his travels. This character is a writer herself. Unbeknownst to even those closest to her, she is Lady Whistledown.

## Colin Bridgerton

This is a kind young man who is wealthy, handsome, and kind. He has a devil-may-care jokester quality that makes women fall in love with him, but he doesn't seem arrogant. Not wanting to get tied down by matrimony, this character travels a lot. On one visit home, he begins to see his friend Penelope in a new way.

She is quiet, but he notices how funny she is. As they spend time together, he realizes he doesn't want her to leave. This character doesn't want people to think of him as an empty-headed charmer, and he loves to write. With Penelope's prompting, he lets others read his work, and he becomes a published book writer.

## Lady Whistledown

This is the fictitious name for the person who writes the Society Paper

## Eloise Bridgerton

This is Colin's younger sister. She is Penelope's closest friend and a spinster.

## Violet Bridgerton

This is Colin's mother. She has eight children and badgered Colin to marry Penelope to the point that he left the country.



## **Portia Featherington**

This is Penelope's mother. She is a pushy, matchmaking mother who tries to get wealthy husbands for her daughters.

## **Felicity Featherington**

This is Penelope's youngest sister. Their mother hoped she would marry Colin.

## **Kate Bridgerton**

This was Viscount Anthony Bridgerton's wife.

## **Anthony Bridgerton**

This was Colin's older brother. He was the seventh Viscount Bridgerton and the head of the Bridgerton family.

## **Daphne Bassett, Duchess of Hastings**

This was Colin's sister and confidant. She had four children.

## **Hyacinth Bridgerton**

This was Felicity's best friend. She was the youngest Bridgerton and was known for her curiosity.

## **Lady Danbury**

This was an elderly, opinionated duchess who most people tried to avoid, but Penelope enjoyed her. She seemed to look at Penelope maternally. The old woman offered 1,000 pounds to anyone who unmasked Lady Whistledown.

## **Cressida Twonbley**

This beautiful widow was petty and mean. She needed money and claimed to be Lady Whistledown.

## **Prudence Featherington Huxley**

This was Penelope's eldest sister.



## **Phillippa Featherington Berbrooke**

This was Penelope's older sister.



## **Objects/Places**

### **Mayfair**

This was where Penelope lived.

### **Number Five**

This was the official London residence for Anthony and his family.

### **Berkely Square**

This was where Penelope walked between her home and the Bridgerton home.

### **Hyde Park**

This was where Penelope was walking with her family when she fell in love with Colin.

### **Bonnet**

The wind blew this into Colin's face, causing him to fall off his horse into a mud puddle.

### **Lady Whisteldown's Society Papers**

This was a popular gossip newspaper. Nobody knew who wrote it.

### **1,000 pounds**

Lady Danbury offered this to anyone who could unmask the author of the Society Papers.

### **London**

This was where Penelope went for the Season in hopes of getting a husband.

### **Journal**

This is what Colin left out, and Penelope read it. That made him very angry, but she was enthralled by it.



## **Letter Opener**

This is what caused Colin to bleed. Penelope helped him stop the bleeding.

## **Prayer Book**

This was what Penelope put her writing in so it was kept secret. Someone would pick it up after she notified the paper that she was leaving it there.

## **Smith-Smyth Musicale**

This was the awful event Penelope attended annually. She identifies with the awkwardness.

## **Bloomsbury**

This is where Colin lives. It's not in a very popular part of town, but he likes it.

# Themes

## Writing Comes in Many Different Forms

Everyone wants to know who Lady Whistledown is. This is the mysterious person who has been writing the Society Pages, delivering all the latest details regarding London's elite. After Lady Danbury challenges the Ton to unmask the writer, several characters seem like they might fit the bill. One of them is Eloise, who enjoys writing letters. She joins her family in a hot debate over grammar during tea time one afternoon. Her family members become suspicious after she spends long hours locked in her room. When she comes out, her fingers have smudged ink on them. They wonder if she is Lady Whistledown.

Colin is another writer. He kept a journal during his travels, and as he watched Penelope read his work, he remembered how good it felt to put the pen to paper and express himself through the written word. Colin had writing talent. Penelope was completely enamored with his writing, claiming that she could feel his descriptions. An editor must have agreed with her since Colin had his writing published as a book.

Then there is Penelope herself. The reader discovers that she truly is Lady Whistledown. During the years she seemed to be a wallflower, she was observing others and writing about it. Her wit and astute mind captured the attention of her readers, making them all addicted to her Society Pages.

## People Often Aren't Who They First Appear to Be

Many people aren't what they appear to be, and it takes time getting to know a person to discover who they are really are. Sometimes people are truly just discovering themselves as well. This is what Colin discovers as he spends more time with Penelope.

Most of the Ton see Penelope as a plain girl who is socially awkward. They don't realize how smart and funny she is. She has a strength in her that she doesn't even know herself until Lady Danbury draws it out of her. As Colin spends more time with her, he recognizes the fact that she is actually beautiful. It's just not an obvious beauty.

Lady Danbury also sees the beauty and strength in Penelope, and the girl is one of the few members of society that isn't afraid of her and actually enjoys her. While others are hesitant to be around the brusque woman, Penelope appreciates her humor and caring and bluntness.

Penelope seems to have a gift for seeing the truth about people. This contributes the reality that she actually could be Lady Whistledown. While most people see Colin as an empty-headed charmer, Penelope sees his kindness and talent in writing. It is she who



persuades him that he can do something with his writing that will make others happy. Under her prodding, he publishes his first book.

## Friendship and Romance

Although this is a romance novel, the book promotes friendship as a strong theme. During her first season, Penelope got to know Colin and his sisters. She became very good friends with them, especially with Eloise.

She and Colin were friends over the years, and he danced with her so that she wouldn't feel alone in the balls. It was a basic sort of friendship, however. Her real close ties were with Eloise in the other sisters and mother.

Because of this friendship, it was natural for Penelope to constantly be around in Colin's house. It also made it natural for him to talk with her when they were out in society after his travels. Now that they were getting older, he started seeing her in a new light. This friendship was already a basis for something more. Her love of writing and his talent for writing drew them together, giving them a common interest, which only deepened their friendship. As they spent more time with each other, Colin and Penelope became more romantically involved.

As Penelope's relationship and friendship with Colin turned into a full-blown romance, her relationship with Eloise shifted. The other girl realized that they were not going to grow old and become spinsters together, and this was hard for her. Because they were so close, Penelope understood how her friend was feeling, and they were able to work through their emotions and develop an even closer bond because of their honesty with each other. Now, in addition to being friends, they would also be sisters.



# Style

## Point of View

"Romancing Mister Bridgerton" by Julia Quinn is written from a third-person and subjective point of view, and the subjectivity changes between Penelope and Colin regularly. This gives the reader an overview of the story, and it also gives the reader insight into what each of the main characters is thinking and feeling. There are times when the switch in subjectivity occurs within a page.

The point of view is important because outward growth in the relationship is slow. However, due to the subjective glimpses of each of the main characters, the reader witnesses progressive internal growth. This makes the characters more relatable and realistic.

## Setting

This novel takes place in London in the early 1800s. It was an era filled with formalities and a time where women did not have the same freedom as men. The wealthy enjoyed wonderful parties, but a woman couldn't become wealthy on her own without marrying well. This is pivotal to the story because it shows why Penelope never had the opportunity to get herself a husband—she had to wait for someone to propose to her. This was difficult since she wasn't outwardly extremely attractive, and others didn't take the time to really get to know her.

She had talent and brains, but she couldn't show share her better attributes to the world because it wasn't for a woman to become part of the work force. This is also pivotal to the story since she achieved her fame anonymously.

## Language and Meaning

Since this novel took place in the early part of the 19th century, the author used some of the linguistic tendencies of that era. Still, it was mixed with language used today so a reader felt the uniqueness of the time but didn't have a hard time reading it. This is shown in sentences such as the one in which Penelope considered her husband. The sentence describing him talked about his rakish and mischievous ways and called him a good and noble man. In the novel, when the men swear they use words like "bloody." It shocked everyone when men swore in the company of women or when women themselves swore.

## Structure

"Romancing Mister Bridgerton" by Julia Quinn begins with a dedication followed by acknowledgments and a page of contents. The book itself has a prologue, 23 chapters, and an epilogue. These are followed by a blurb about the author, a list of books by the author, copyright and publisher information. The chapters range in length. Some are approximately 15 pages long while others are around 30 pages long. Many of the chapters begin with a note from Lady Whistledown.



## Quotes

"Miss Penelope Featherington's unfortunate gown left the unfortunate girl looking like nothing more than an overripe citrus fruit" (Prologue, p. 6).

"One would think," Eloise said with a snort, "that a vital component of charity and grace is the ability not to draw attention to one's possession of them" (Chapter 1, p. 28).

"Actually, I'm an excellent liar. But what I'm really good at is appearing appropriately sheepish and adorable after I'm caught" (Chapter 2, p. 37).

"It's odd how the 'ton' seems to entertain themselves by pointing out how unentertained they are" (Chapter 2, p. 47).

"One thousand pounds..." It seemed the entire ballroom had hushed into reverent silence. "...to the person who un.masks Lady Whistledown" (Chapter 2, p. 48).

"Isn't it nice," the older lady said, leaning in so that only Penelope could hear her words, "to discover that we're not exactly what we thought we were" (Chapter 3, p. 54).

"There wasn't a woman alive who could go from point A to B without stopping at C, D, X, and 12 along the way" (Chapter 6, p. 99).

"And so, on an otherwise unremarkable Friday afternoon, in the heart of Mayfair, in a quiet drawing room on Mount Street, Colin Bridgerton kissed Penelope Featherington. And it was glorious" (Chapter 9, p. 135).

"People are like fine wines. If they start off good, they only get better with age" (Chapter 10, p. 157).

"Really, what was the use of being a gentleman when ladies insisted upon doing things for themselves" (Chapter 10, p. 157).

"'For God's sake, Penelope,' he said, grabbing her hand and yanking her down. 'Are you going to marry me or not?'" (Chapter 11, p. 180).

"He wanted her to love this, to love him, and to know, when they were lying in each other's arms, sweaty and spent, that she belonged to him. Because he already knew that he belonged to her" (Chapter 13, p. 215).

"'I love you with everything I am, everything I've been, and everything I hope to be.' 'Colin...' 'I love you with my past, and I love you for my future.' He bent forward and kissed her, once, softly, on the lips. 'I love you for the children we'll have and for the





years we'll have together. I love you for every one of my smiles, and even more, for every one of your smiles" (Chapter 22, p. 338).

"I do want it. It is my dream. But it's a dream you gave me...And getting my work published, well, it doesn't hold a candle to my real dream, which is spending the rest of my life with you" (Chapter 23, p. 361).



## Topics for Discussion

When did Penelope fall in love with Colin? What attracted her to him?

Compare and contrast Penelope and Colin. What do they have in common? What is different?

Describe the relationship between Lady Danbury and Penelope. Discuss why they might feel this way about each other.

Discuss why Colin was always traveling and how he felt when he returned to London.

Compare Penelope's family and home life to Colin's.

What plans did Colin and Penelope come up with to deal with Cressida's blackmailing?

How did the unmasking of Lady Whistledown demonstrate Colin and Penelope's dedication to each other? How did the Ton respond?