

"pride and prejudice": lady catherine and elizabeth bennet

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In Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, Lady Catherine and Elizabeth Bennet are absolute opposites.

Jane Austen portrays Elizabeth Bennet as an intelligent, independent, yet strong character, in a soft and feminine manner. The cruel and dominating personality traits are left for characters such as Lady Catherine. In Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, Lady Catherine and Elizabeth Bennet are absolute opposites.

Elizabeth is a realistic and masterful character, which makes all her qualities of strength and independence intensify and create an ideal stability between her emotions and what is reality.

Her passion and overwhelming capability to stand her ground is just an introduction into her ability to be able to oversee the weak, the naïve and the dominating. Elizabeth proves her daring abilities in her meeting with Lady Catherine, which leads to a battle between respect and independence. Elizabeth tested Lady Catherine's desires for personal information by holding back her true story, and Elizabeth suspected that she was "the first creature who had ever dared to trifle with such dignified impertinence"(124-125).

Elizabeth is a character who has enough courage to acknowledge her faults and her inaccuracy. After reading Darcy's letter, she distinguished the fact that she had judged him incorrectly. She scolded herself for her inaccurate opinions and for being blinded by her thoughts. She wasted no time in facing up to the unpleasant truth about herself "How despicably I acted. Till this moment I never truly knew myself"(156). Her character is greatly respected

and creditable for admiration. She is a character that is undeniably strong and intellectual, and at the same time fascinating.

Lady Catherine is introduced into the novel as an exceedingly wealthy character. She has a desire to let others know of their inferior rank. Lady Catherine takes pleasure in involving herself in other people's affairs. Without any hesitation, she recommends her advice whenever she feels necessary. She believes it is part of her right to inform people of how they should conduct their lives. She voices her opinion periodically throughout the novel, and makes her opinions clear,

You know I always speak my mind, and I cannot bear the idea of two young women traveling post by themselves... I have the greatest dislike in the world of that sort of thing... I am glad it occurred to me to mention it...(pg. 158-159).

One of Lady Catherine's most evident characteristics is her necessity and enjoyment of receiving flattering compliments. She loves to hear compliments from others because it allows her to keep her authority intact. Lady Catherine isn't full of independence and strength because she thrives off other people's inferior status. " Lady Catherine will not think the worse of you for being poorly dressed. She likes to have the distinction of rank preserved" (Mr. Collins, p. 120). Lady Catherine is an uncomplicated character that feels disgusted by others who try to contradict her.

Throughout the novel it is evident that the characteristics of Elizabeth Bennet and Lady Catherine, are at many times, repealed against each other. Most noticeable to the novel is that Lady Catherine seems to completely lack

the capacity for reflection and self-awareness, while Elizabeth masters these traits and is able to use them to strengthen her personal traits. The two personalities of Lady Catherine and Elizabeth are so offset that it creates a feel of constant hostility between the two characters. Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, represents the qualities of independence and lack of self-awareness between the two characters, Lady Catherine and Elizabeth Bennet, who differ completely.