

# Foil between mr.darcy and mr.wickham



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Path to Elizabeth's Heart Criticism and manners determine the image given to a person from society. The satire, "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen, portrays the social life of young women who marry for love or money. The Bennet family becomes the center of attention through the conversing between Jane Bennet with Mr. Bingley, and Elizabeth Bennet with Mr. Darcy. Women married the wealthy for security and fortunate living. However, the men devise their own ways of courting women.

Mr. Wickham and Mr. Darcy become foils of each other, through their many acquaintances with Elizabeth. First impressions create prejudice of a person, which cannot be easily changed. Elizabeth's first encounter with Mr. Darcy is during a ball, "Mr. Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall, handsome features, noble mien... the gentlemen pronounced him to be a fine figure of a man" (6). His physical features reflect his wealth, as well as the description of a fine figure of a man.

However, his physical features were not the only characteristics that were revealed during their first encounter, "his manners gave a disgust which turned the tide of his popularity; for he was discovered to be proud, to be above his company" (6). Mr. Darcy's conversations with strangers were turned into declarations of superiority and detestation. Elizabeth saw this as an ungentlemanly manner which led her to hate Mr. Darcy on her first encounter with him that night.

Mr. Wickham on the other, "was the happy man towards whom almost every female eye was turned and the agreeable manner in which he immediately fell into conversation... that the commonest, dullest, most threadbare topic might be rendered interesting" (52) Elizabeth also notices Mr. Wickham's

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charm to making friends as well as his gentlemanly manner of conversing with others. She also takes an interest in what Mr. Wickham has to say, due to the conformational bias of Mr. Wickham's history with Mr. Darcy supporting her opinion of Mr. Darcy.

She instantly trusts Mr. Wickham only because of his manners and first impression of being of good manners. Mr. Darcy also states that, " Mr. Wickham is blessed with such happy manners as may ensure his making friends" (63). Mr. Wickham is agreeable but he also has no interest in the poor, because he only makes friends with those that will benefit him at the moment, and cast aside anyone who has played their part. The contrast between the men creates irony, because she she eventually marries the man whom she detest at first rather than the man who was agreeable at first. However, her impression on him changes once she receives the letter from Mr. Darcy.

He reveals Mr. Wickham's true nature during his visit in Pemberley was, " unquestionably my sister's fortune, which is thirty thousand pounds; but I cannot help supposing that the hope of revenging himself on me was a strong inducement. "(137) This changes Elizabeth's impression on Mr. Wickham and it influences her to review all that she had thought and said to Mr. Darcy. She states that she did not understand herself any more, causing her to realize the mercenary attention Mr. Wickham had given to Miss King. She could not call upon the traits to defend Mr. Wickham besides his manners.

The roles of Mr. Wickham and Mr. Darcy have switched, Elizabeth visits Pemberley and reunites with Mr. Darcy, " they soon drew from those

enquiries the full conviction that one of them at least knew what it was to love... overflowing with admiration was evident enough,"(175). Revealing the true feelings that Elizabeth has for Darcy and the evident admiration from Darcy, Austen portrays an ideal love scene from the dreams of a woman during the era. The foils of Mr. Darcy and Mr. Wickham emphasises the prejudice of society and first impressions which cover the truth. The history between Mr. Darcy and Mr. Wickham display a forked path to their own personalities.

Mr. Wickham was the son of Mr. Darcy's father's steward who was " of a very respectable man, who had for many years the management of all the Pemberley estates," (135). The juxtaposition of being the son of the lord and the son of the steward who worked under him, displays the contrast of Mr. Darcy's and Mr. Wickham's personalities. Darcy would have been educated by his father or schooling, and thus he spent years alone, with his sister, after his father died, meanwhile Wickham learned his manners from being a steward under Pemberley.

Their own paths formed the personalities which they have become. Another example appears within Darcy's letter, Mr. Wickham " had some intention... of studying the law, and I must be aware that the interest of one thousand pounds would be a very insufficient support therein" (136). The legacy of one-thousand pounds that Mr. Darcy's father left to Wickham was not enough to allow Wickham to survive through his years. Darcy gives Wickham three-thousand goalsto allow Wickham to attend law school, however the law soon declined and was not a profitable field to enter.

Coming back to Darcy for assistance, Wickham gets denied of money. Wickham seeking vengeance, “ he so far recommended himself to Georgiana, whose affectionate heart retained a strong impression of his kindness to her as a child, that she was persuaded to believe herself in love, and to consent to an elopement” (137). Wickham was after the fortune on Miss Darcy as revenge for not helping him through his years of distress. Contrast between evil intentions and pure hearts exposes the satire behind Austen’s writing.

The irony of falling in love with a corrupted man while being pure at heart, emphasises blinding love. Darcy’s and Wickham’s history with each other reveals the different paths which both of them take. Jane Austen expresses her views of social life of the poor and the wealthy through Darcy’s and Wickham’s first impression on Elizabeth. Her prejudice and pride blinds her from realizing the truth behind Darcy and Wickham. The foils of the agreeable Wickham and discerning Darcy, portrays society as a loveless defect with only money on their minds.