

## Darcy's POV Part 3

### At Sir William Lucas's Card Party Part II

Unable to prevent himself from being in her presence, Darcy strode across the crowded room with purpose. However, as he approached, Miss Lucas whispered something in Miss Elizabeth's ear which caused her comely brow to cloud and he quite forgot what he had intended to say.

"Did you not think, Mr. Darcy, that I expressed myself uncommonly well just now, when I was teasing Colonel Forster to give us a ball at Meryton?" she asked, a challenge in her eyes.

Though she had saved him by speaking first, her comment revealed that she had noticed him staring, and eavesdropping on her conversation. His stomach twisted and he urged his brain and mouth to engage in some kind of intelligent response.

"With great energy; but it is a subject which always makes a lady energetic." The minute the words were out of his mouth, he regretted them. Would she take them as a criticism? Was he suggesting that ladies' thoughts were no deeper than the next ball?

"You are severe on us," Miss Elizabeth responded with a pretty curl on her lip and a curious glint in her fine eyes.

"It will be *her* turn soon to be teased," said Miss Lucas. "I am going to open the instrument, Eliza, and you know what follows."

A kaleidoscope of emotions fanned across Miss Elizabeth's face as she responded, "You are a very strange creature by way of a friend! I would really rather not sit down before those who must be in the habit of hearing the very best performers."

"Elizabeth, you underrate your talents. I have heard you play and it is very pleasing."

"Charlotte you are too kind. But I am not so disciplined in my practice as I should be. I will make many errors which will clang like cymbals in the ear of those present."

"Nonsense! Play something simple that you know well. It is past time for some music to enliven our party."

"Very well; if it must be so, it must."

Miss Elizabeth glared at him before moving towards the piano forte which caused a disturbing reaction in his chest. Nonetheless, he was impressed by Miss Elizabeth's humility; so many young ladies were overly eager to impress with their deficient talents.

"There is a fine old saying, which everybody here is of course familiar with—'Keep your breath to cool your porridge,'—and I shall keep mine to swell my song," she said, over her shoulder.

This was the first time Darcy had heard her play and it soon became evident that she was not as talented as his sister Georgiana, when it came to playing, but her voice was light and pleasing when she sang, and her performance afforded him the opportunity to gaze upon her at his leisure.

After performing two songs, she denied several entreaties to continue which was further evidence of her modesty, ceding the seat to her younger sister Mary.

Mary, the only plain one in the family, proved to be more talented in playing the instrument but her voice was shrill and much less pleasing.

He was validated in his opinion by her own younger sisters, who after enduring several verses, demanded that she play some Scotch and Irish airs for dancing.

His spirits sagged. He much preferred conversation to dancing.