

Austen's humour: the first 12 chapters

Read through the following quotations from the novel and decide who is 'speaking'; what is being discussed; what, if anything, we learn about the speaker; where the humour comes from:

Chapter 1:

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.

Chapter 2:

Mary wished to say something sensible, but knew not how.

Chapter 3:

'I wish you had been there, my dear, to have given him one of your set downs. I quite detest the man.'

Chapter 4:

He did look at it and into it for half an hour, was pleased with the situation and the principal rooms, satisfied with what the owner said in its praise, and took it immediately.

Chapter 6:

'Jane should therefore make the most of every half hour in which she can command his attention. When she is secure of him, there will be leisure for falling in love as much as she chuses.'

Chapter 7:

Jane was therefore obliged to go on horseback, and her mother attended her to the door with many cheerful prognostics of a bad day.

Chapter 8:

When dinner was over, she returned directly to Jane, and Miss Bingley began abusing her as soon as she was out of the room.

Chapter 10:

He really believed, that were it not for the inferiority of her connections, he should be in some danger.

Chapter 12:

They found Mary, as usual, deep in the study of thorough bass and human nature; and had some new extracts to admire, and some new observations of thread-bare morality to listen to.