

Austen's humour: chapters 54-61

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 54:

'And, my dear Jane, I never saw you look in greater beauty. Mrs Long said so too, for I asked her whether you did not.

Chapter 55:

The Bennets were speedily pronounced to be the luckiest family in the world, though only a few weeks before, when Lydia had first run away, they had been generally proved to be marked out for misfortune.

Chapter 56:

'I am almost the nearest relation he has in the world, and am entitled to know all his dearest concerns.'

Chapter 57:

'Much as I abominate writing, I would not give up Mr Collins's correspondence for any consideration. Nay, when I read a letter of his, I cannot help giving him the preference even over Wickham, much as I value the impudence and hypocrisy of my son-in-law.'

Chapter 58:

... and he expressed himself on the occasion as sensibly and as warmly as a man violently in love can be supposed to do.

Chapter 59:

'So much the better. It will save me a world of trouble and economy ...I shall offer to pay him tomorrow; he will rant and storm about his love for you, and there will be an end of the matter.'

Chapter 60:

Dear Sir

I must trouble you once more for congratulations. Elizabeth will soon be the wife of Mr Darcy. Console Lady Catherine as well as you can. But, if I were you, I would stand by the nephew. He has more to give.

Chapter 61:

I wish I could say, for the sake of her family, that the accomplishment of her earnest desire in the establishment of so many of her children, produced so happy an effect as to make her a sensible, well-informed woman for the rest of her life; though perhaps it was lucky for her husband, who might not have relished domestic felicity in so unusual a form, that she still was occasionally nervous and invariably silly.