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PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

by Jane Austen

Adapted by Sara Pascoe

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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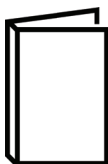
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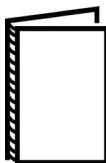


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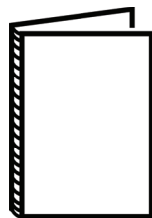
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SARA PASCOE is an actress, writer and one of the most accomplished comedians in the country.

A multi-award-winning stand up, Sara has filmed her own comedy special: *Sara Pascoe Live from the BBC* and both guest starred on and hosted episodes of *Live at the Apollo* (BBC). Sara starred throughout the second series of *Taskmaster* (Dave) and is a regular guest on *Frankie Boyle's New World Order* and on shows such as *QI* and *Have I Got News For You?* (BBC).

As an actress, Sara has an impressive array of TV credits including the BAFTA nominated *Twenty Twelve* (BBC2), *W1A* (BBC2), *Campus* (C4), *The Thick of It* (BBC2) and *Being Human* (BBC3).

Sara's debut book *Animal* was published in May 2016 (Faber & Faber) to widespread critical acclaim. Sara's second book *Sex Power Money* (Faber & Faber) and radio series *Modern Monkey* (BBC Radio 4) are due for release in 2018.

Pride and Prejudice, adapted by Sara Pascoe, based on the novel by Jane Austen, commissioned by Nottingham Playhouse, was first performed in a co-production between Nottingham Playhouse Theatre Company and York Theatre Royal, at Nottingham Playhouse on 15th September 2017 with the following cast and creative team:

ELIZABETH / TEACHER ELIZABETH	Bethan Mary-James
JANE / MODERN JANE	Rebecca D'Souza
MARY / MODERN MARY /	
MISS DE BOURGH / MRS HURST	Rachel Partington
KITTY / MODERN KITTY / CHARLOTTE LUCAS /	
MODERN CHARLOTTE / MISS DARCY	Alice Haig
LYDIA / MODERN LYDIA / MISS BINGLEY /	
MRS GARDINER	Olivia Onyehara
MRS BENNET / MODERN MRS BENNET /	
LADY CATHERINE DE BOURGH / HOUSEKEEPER	Kerry Peers
MR DARCY	Matt Whitchurch
MR BINGLEY / MR COLLINS	Matthew Romain
MR WICKHAM / MODERN WICKHAM /	
MR GARDINER	Alex Sawyer
MR BENNET / GRAHAM	Adrian Irvine

Director	Susannah Tresilian
Designer	Carla Goodman
Lighting Designer	Mark Howland
Music By	Emmy The Great
Sound Designer	Drew Baumohl
Video Designer	Andrew Bullett
Movement Director	Adele Parry
Assistant Director	Justine Sharp

SCENE BREAKDOWN

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to a world of women, especially my younger sisters who married before me and my mother who preached independence above all. I thank Katie and Vanessa for being the funniest and most curious humans, Susannah and Emmy for creating this opportunity and extending my every understanding of what we were making. I thank Dawn Sedgwick that I never need wait for a man with property.

I'm so grateful to have been born to a society that's freed its women enough that we may change it more.

Love to all the maids. X

For my sister, Cheryl Elizabeth.

CHARACTER LIST / ROLE BREAKDOWN

ELIZABETH
TEACHER ELIZABETH
DARCY
JANE
MODERN JANE
MR BINGLEY
MR COLLINS
MR BENNET
GRAHAM
MRS BENNET
MODERN MRS BENNET
LADY CATHERINE
HOUSEKEEPER KITTY
MODERN KITTY
CHARLOTTE LUCAS
MODERN CHARLOTTE
MISS DARCY
LYDIA
MODERN LYDIA
MISS BINGLEY
MRS GARDINER
MARY
MODERN MARY
MRS HURST
MISS DE BOURGH
MR WICKHAM
MODERN WICKHAM
MR GARDINER

ACT ONE

Scene One: Home

Piano music plays and a woman's weak, reedy voice sings as a drawing room builds around her. The song is a tragedy, about a sad old woman who is unmarried in her thirties. Sung by LYDIA who is confident and inept. KITTY stands next to her at the piano, MARY reads a book on a sofa, ELIZABETH and JANE are playing chess and whispering. MR BENNET reads a newspaper at the table.

Sound effects door slam. A crash.

MRS BENNET *(offstage)* Yes!

MRS BENNET *enters. She whispers loudly enough for the whole world to hear.*

(whisper) He has taken it.

MR BENNET Has he? Who?

MRS BENNET *(whisper)* Bingley.

MR BENNET What was it?

MRS BENNET *(too annoyed to whisper)* Netherfield Park.

MR BENNET *(joking)* And to where has he—

MRS BENNET *(ignoring him)* Unmarried. Large fortune. Twenty servants, four horses, *that we know of...*

MR BENNET What's his name?

MRS BENNET Four or five thousand a year Mrs Long says.

LYDIA Five thousand?

JANE Is he handsome?

LYDIA When shall we see him?

MRS BENNET Girls girls, be calm and sensible. You know your father must go first.

KITTY When will that be?

LYDIA And then the rest of us?

ELIZABETH Remember, Jane first.

JANE Me first.

ELIZABETH (*to LYDIA*) She has most to recommend her.

LYDIA But then me.

MRS BENNET (*to MR BENNET*) Then Lydia truly.

KITTY When will he go?

MR BENNET He?

ELIZABETH Perhaps Jane should go with him.

MRS BENNET Hush Lizzy, that just isn't done.

MR BENNET I'll send Lizzy with a letter. Easy.

ELIZABETH/MRS BENNET Daddy?/Not Elizabeth!

ELIZABETH Why not me?

MRS BENNET Why must you vex me Mr Bennet?

MARY What *colour* were the horses?

MRS BENNET My poor nerves.

MR BENNET My poor ears listening to your poor nerves.

JANE Perhaps Mrs Long can introduce us?

MRS BENNET (*to JANE*) She has those nieces, she is—

LYDIA Of course.

MRS BENNET Selfish!

KITTY Blasted nieces!

MRS BENNET (*sweetly to MR B*) You will visit my dear?

MR BENNET I won't.

MRS BENNET FOUR THOUSAND!

LYDIA Or five!

MRS BENNET I'm sick! My nerves! You tear me to pieces.

MR BENNET I will not go, as I need not attend the man.

MRS BENNET Put your daughters' needs before your own –
what? What is it? Pride? Laziness?

MR BENNET If you would just give me a second—

LYDIA Why should we give you *anything* Daddy?

KITTY When you do nothing for us?

ELIZABETH It would help if you just—

MR BENNET I'm trying to explain—

ELIZABETH Not for me, but for Jane.

JANE I would only marry for a *very* great love!

LYDIA (*to JANE*) *Five. Thousand.*

MR BENNET I won't go over to introduce myself...

LYDIA/MRS BENNET/KITTY/JANE Weasel!/Monster!/Pig!/My
heart is broken!

MR BENNET ...that would be silly...

MRS BENNET JUDAS!

MR BENNET ...for I have already been.

Beat. Then a wave of sweetness.

LYDIA Dotty old bear...

ELIZABETH Well done daddy.

ELIZABETH *kisses her father and exits.*

JANE You really are wonderful.

LYDIA We may go?

MRS BENNET Why on earth didn't you say?

MR BENNET Where's the fun?

MRS BENNET What an excellent father you have.

MR BENNET I rather liked Mr Bingley.

MARY And the horses?

MR BENNET We met by accident as he explored the land. Very polite and interested he seemed.

JANE Did he ask about us?

LYDIA Is he taller than me?

JANE Will he expect our call?

KITTY Does he know the soldiers?

MRS BENNET Now everybody come on, time for calm. Sit down.

MRS BENNET *sits for a split second before jumping up again.*

Bring me your best dresses and we'll see what needs doing!

Lights dim. The sound of chalk on a blackboard. Lights up on a section of the stage while the ball scene is created around them. A TEACHER is writing fluidly, the sentence becomes legible seconds later. She reads it aloud.

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

ELIZABETH *underlines the words truth, man and wife. She turns to the audience and as if addressing a class of children.*

Can anybody tell me what "heteronormative" means?

*Blackboard swings away, **TEACHER ELIZABETH** becomes **ELIZABETH** with the removal or addition of wig/costume or another physical signifier. This continues with the doubling throughout the play – sometimes changes are very quick so best to keep details small and differentiate with performance.*

Scene Two: Village Ball

The girls fetch fabric and hats, this becomes a form of dance, some of them can be holding tailcoats or top hats as partners. More people enter until the stage is full and the drawing room dismantled. Music will signify time passing throughout the scene, speeding up in between dialogue. MRS BENNET is talking to an older woman (she could be a mannequin or made from props).

MRS BENNET A party of twenty! Well that excuses his being away all this time, SIXTEEN LADIES? Why would he bring all those women when I...when there is, I mean when there are so *many* girls here. Unmarried young girls. It's, I mean he's greedy I should—

MRS BENNET *rushes off.* **LYDIA, KITTY, MARY, JANE and ELIZABETH** *awkwardly waiting at side of dance.*

LYDIA Even though I am the youngest, I am still the tallest and so perhaps he will ask me to dance first.

ELIZABETH That wouldn't be fair Lydia.

KITTY (*to LYDIA*) We shouldn't stand with Lizzy and Jane just in case—

JANE I am not going to cry Kitty!

ELIZABETH Which one is he?

LYDIA We were supposed to meet him *before* tonight, not hanging about like this.

KITTY We could be anyone, any stranger, rather than the man's closest and most special neighbours.

LYDIA I'm going to move nearer.

KITTY *I'm* going to move nearer.

LYDIA and KITTY *pathetically attempt to get in the eyeline of BINGLEY.*

ELIZABETH It is a crushing shame that the man has been away to London all this time.

JANE But he had to go gather his party.

ELIZABETH Pardon me Jane, I wasn't criticising, I... So what do you think?

MARY It's like nobody even realises there's a war on.

JANE He seems very smiley.

MARY Exactly.

ELIZABETH And of good height.

MRS BENNET *pushes in-between JANE and LIZZY.*

MRS BENNET Mrs Long said he'd brought twenty, sixteen of whom were young women.

ELIZABETH SIXTEEN!

JANE Who are they?

MRS BENNET BUT Mrs Lucas said he arrived yesterday with only ten, and over half of the Ladies were Gentlemen...

JANE Still...

MRS BENNET Wait – there is news of a richer man! A Mr Darcy! Twenty thousand a year!

MRS BENNET *gestures at MR DARCY, LYDIA is currently trying to get his attention.*

ELIZABETH He's even taller!

JANE Mama, who are the women?

MRS BENNET And that's the thing, all five are sisters!

JANE Thank G— I mean, how wonderful to be five sisters. And for us to have so many new acquaintances to make.

They hush as BINGLEY and CHARLOTTE dance over. They watch as they thank each other. Music changes.

CHARLOTTE seems demure and sweet as she approaches the group. She checks over her shoulder that BINGLEY has gone before speaking excitedly.

CHARLOTTE Two sisters, not five. One of them married. It's just the four of them at Netherfield.

MRS BENNET You heard about Mr Darcy?

CHARLOTTE Twenty grand a year!

CHARLOTTE and MRS BENNET both laugh. CHARLOTTE hugs JANE and ELIZABETH.

How are my favourite neighbours?

The music stops for a moment and MARY speaks very loudly:

MARY Daddy's got gout.

BINGLEY comes over and asks JANE to dance. A new song plays. ELIZABETH, MARY and CHARLOTTE take up their partners. As they dance away, MR BENNET approaches limping and merry. MR DARCY slouches nearby noticeably listening.

MR BENNET 'Twas a night like this.

MRS BENNET What?

MR BENNET Twinkle at me my Wife, twinkle at me, give me a wink.

MRS BENNET You're going to snore later.

MR BENNET They're in place now. All the young people mixing like butterflies. Leave them to it I'd say.

MRS BENNET If he would just take one, at least one.

MR BENNET You've done everything you can.

MRS BENNET But he must. If we get a match for Jane, or Lydia, and she'll be so nearby.

MR BENNET You're perspiring my dear.

MRS BENNET All that money, and the house...

MR BENNET I know, but let us enjoy an evening?

MRS BENNET And once one is matched, she can help with her sisters, and once they are all matched, I can relax. And only then—

MR BENNET Perhaps we—

MRS BENNET ...can I die. Quietly. My work being done.

MR DARCY looks appalled and moves away. Song changes. ELIZABETH sits down. MR BENNET pulls MRS BENNET to him and they dance closely.

MR BENNET I'm sorry.

MRS BENNET It's not your fault.

MR BENNET If only we'd been blessed with a boy.

MRS BENNET Or the early one, if he'd lived.

They think and dance.

MR BENNET 'Twas a night like this...

MRS BENNET What?

MR BENNET When I first saw you puppy. I'm reminded of it, the awkwardness and polite smiles and clumsy dancing – and then, in lilac my—

MRS BENNET Plum. It was plum.

MR BENNET ...love. So shy seeming, yet your eyes met mine and never left.

MR BENNET stops to look at MRS BENNET, he touches her face. She looks back at him.

MRS BENNET It was nothing like this. The people that night were of much poorer quality.

Song changes. Couples move around the stage.

WHY IS ELIZABETH NOT DANCING?

ELIZABETH *sits reading a book, a couple of feet from*
MR BINGLEY *and* **MR DARCY**.

MR DARCY Can we leave now?

MR BINGLEY *roars with laughter, ELIZABETH looks over*
at them.

Surely you've danced with them all.

MR BINGLEY Some more than once, while you've danced with—

MR DARCY I hate dancing.

MR BINGLEY ...my sisters.

MR DARCY I don't know anybody else here.

MR BINGLEY Get to know them, by dancing and talking and—

MR DARCY Pardon me, I misspoke. I do not *wish* to know
anybody here.

MR BINGLEY Some of the girls are—

MR DARCY Money grabbing?

MR BINGLEY ...beautiful.

MR DARCY You were dancing with the only decent one.

MR BINGLEY Miss Bennet. She's absolutely—

MR DARCY She smiles too much.

MR BINGLEY ...*lovely*. Ever so sweet that one, and she's clever
and—

MR DARCY She'll do for country.

MR BINGLEY Don't look, she has a sister – just behind us, you
could ask her.

MR DARCY *looks.*

She's not *quite* as pretty as her sister.

MR DARCY I'm sure she'll make some pig farmer very happy.

MR BINGLEY Sorry Mr Metropolitan.

MR DARCY She'll not need a spade with those arms.

MR BINGLEY You're worse than usual this evening.

MR DARCY These wedding-hungry hill-dwellers have put my back up. Let's—

MR DARCY/MR BINGLEY ...go/dance!

Music changes, MR BINGLEY goes back to JANE for second dance, MR DARCY is approached by MISS BINGLEY.

MISS BINGLEY My sister dances with her husband.

MR DARCY The scandal.

MISS BINGLEY You'll keep me company?

MR DARCY Much obliged.

A couple of feet away MRS BENNET rushes over to ELIZABETH and snatches the book from her hands.

MRS BENNET Get up and dance this instant.

ELIZABETH I can't force a man to ask me.

MRS BENNET (*gesturing to MR DARCY*) Him.

ELIZABETH I'd rather sit out the rest of the night! The rest of my life!

MRS BENNET Stubborn creature.

ELIZABETH (*whisper*) I don't care Mama, and you mustn't, but the gentleman referred to me as an—

MR DARCY ...Aberdeen Angus.

MISS BINGLEY You're ever so silly that's a male.

MR DARCY They should not have put a dress on him.

MISS BINGLEY (*laughing*) And what about her?

MR DARCY Another Friesian.

MISS BINGLEY You're wasted in drawing rooms.

MR DARCY Indeed.

MISS BINGLEY You belong in the menagerie.

MR DARCY I wish your brother would hurry up and—

MISS BINGLEY Dance his legs off? Find a wife?

MR DARCY Heaven forefend! Not here.

MISS BINGLEY Do you take this – Shire horse to be your lawful wedded—

Focus returns to ELIZABETH and MRS BENNET.

MRS BENNET ...windy wallets over there, ruining the ball for everyone. Why come then?

ELIZABETH We're lucky it is not *he* set to be our neighbour.

MRS BENNET Behaving like they're better than us when it is widely known their fortune comes from industry.

ELIZABETH I'll not tarnish Mr Bingley with his associations, at least I'll try.

MRS BENNET He cannot take his eyes from Jane's!

ELIZABETH How can one friend be so warm and kindly and the other...? NO, that's enough. I'll not think of him any longer.

MRS BENNET Let us tear Jane away, let Mr Bingley feel the drabness of a ball without the most beautiful woman.

ELIZABETH You're very good at this mother.

ELIZABETH gets up to walk over to JANE.

MR DARCY I can't bear this meat market a second longer.

MISS BINGLEY Tell my brother I am faint. He cannot deny us then.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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