

PREFACE

The piece that I've included below is an excerpt from the final project that I proposed and completed for an honors contract linked with a Jane Austen course that I took in the English Department. The project involved studying Austen's writing style through the content that we read in the course and then imitating it in an original novella that could fit into her contemporary time and setting. Using notes that I wrote from class, notes on my own time while reading the novels, and some outside research on Austen's time period and culture, I infused as much of her as I could into this tribute.

This excerpt is important to my portfolio because it showcases my versatility and adaptability to unfamiliar writing styles and concepts. I wanted to provide an example of fiction that took me outside of my comfort zone, but which still illustrated my writing skill. I've excerpted this piece because, for one, the original is novella-length (about 10,000 words), and, second, because this particular section does not contain dialogue and thus allows me to display my descriptive skill through exposition.

ADA (excerpted)

By Jamie Hu

PART 1

Ada Coleridge, astute, elegant, and practical in the way that loneliness and age can make a realist of any hopeless romantic, was convinced that it would be against all sense and reason for Miss Liana Prynne of Teller House to marry Lucian Donnelly. Granted, she had only known Liana for a few months, and Mr. Donnelly for even less, but Liana was not the type to hide her character for long with anybody and Ada was well-acquainted with her kind: the cheerful, talkative, easily amused and more easily flattered. She had known many women of the same demeanor in her youth and learned to let slide and even appreciate, if not understand, their simple happinesses.

In this situation, however, Ada was resolute. Liana could not marry Mr. Donnelly. It would be the most unsatisfactory marriage that her small coastal town of Shields could

experience, not only because it would disappoint the potential bride's family, who hoped to marry her into wealthier relations, but because it would reflect badly on the entire town. Miss Liana Prynne, daughter of Carson and Elia Prynne, 20,000 pounds a year and resident of the opulent Teller House, marrying a man from a town none of them had ever seen, who only earned 10,000! It would be most upsetting for Shields to lose the woman of the most consequence within its borders to a man whose closest connection to it was his home view of the sea. No matter how kind Mr. Donnelly was to all of them, how mannered he was, how much he insisted on the power, name and wealth that came with his father's Fielding Estate, the fact remained that he would bring Liana down.

He did not deserve her. Ada knew more than enough about deserving, though of course she would never say so aloud. She had been born a little ways out of Shields, a few miles out of Newcastle, which was where her parents had meant to run. Her parents' elopement was the shame of her life, and although she had only discovered the truth of it several weeks before their departure from their old home, it had quickly consumed her and left hardly anything of the rich pride of Westoe she had been. If time had not been enough to whittle away her childish belief in happy endings, her discovery of the fortune and generosity that had dragged her parents into the lifestyle that she had thought was hers by blood certainly dashed it. Her family had not deserved any of the riches it had.

Mr. Matthew Coleridge had been nearly five and twenty when he met seventeen-year-old Newcastle beauty Robyn Hennon on her two-month visit to the coast. Impulsive, passionate, and idealistic to his very core, Mr. Coleridge had been certain that Miss Hennon's immaculate features backed a mind and home of the same caliber and endeavored to see her as many times as

was possible during her stay in Shields. As she was about to leave, he decided that such beauty and sweetness of demeanor was not likely to come his way again, and that it would be the mistake of his lifetime to let someone like her go. Having discovered that she did not come from a wealthy family and was instead the daughter of a traveling fisherman, he was convinced that his father would not approve of the marriage and fled to Newcastle with her in the hopes of wedding near her home. During their escape, however, Mr. Coleridge spent more time with his desired wife than he ever had in their few meetings in Shields, and began to realize that he may have been wrong about her; though beautiful, Robyn Hennon did not have much substance in her brain.