

Game Title: Fencing & Fatalities
Scene: Eliza Bramblehurst Makes a Match

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Opening cinematic for a historical fighting game; third
person camera
(Glossary of historical terms attached after script)

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GAMEPLAY: START NEW GAME

INT. A REGENCY-ERA BALLROOM - NIGHT

The doors open into a burst of light, music and chatter. It is crowded, loud, luxurious and bright.

BUTLER (O.S.)
Miss Eliza Bramblehurst.

A brief hush in conversation and then a rising stream of whispers as ELIZA BRAMBLEHURST walks in. She is in her late 20s, her tall, sturdy figure contrasts with the pastel silk of her gown.

DISCONNECTED WHISPERS (O.S.)
...Such audacity! To come here
after...

...The Reverend Bramblehurst's eldest,
doesn't have more than £200 a year...

...will never know how *she* caught the
eye of Fitzwil...

...and Miss Banbury swears they were
halfway to Gretna Green...

...but he never showed up at the
coaching inn! His uncle's doing,
naturally, threatened to disinherit...

ELIZA stands awkwardly in the gulf that has formed between herself and the guests. No one breaches social custom by openly asking her to leave, but no one welcomes her either. After a brief pause, LADY AMELIA MAUPIN, early 50s, strides decisively across the gap and takes both of ELIZA's hands in hers.

LADY AMELIA
My dear Miss Bramblehurst! I was
beginning to fear that we would not
see you tonight!

LADY AMELIA looks back at the crowd as if daring them to object.

ELIZA
Thank you Lady Amelia, for your warm
invitation and for everything that...



ELIZA spots FITZWILLIAM DE BOURGH; early 30s, classically handsome, and her words trail off.

ELIZA

You will excuse me my lady, I spy a gilded turnip next to your fashionable hothouse pineapples and there is a matter I must settle with him.

ELIZA walks across the room to DE BOURGH, who is standing nonchalantly in a circle of dandies, pretending not to have heard or seen anything.

ELIZA

(curtsies)

Mr. de Bourgh. I was hoping we might have a word. In private.

DE BOURGH

(without bowing)

I am afraid, madame, that my principles forbid me from conversation with a young lady of such ill repute as yourself.

A soft murmur rises up from the crowd at DE BOURGH's blatant hostility, but ELIZA looks relieved that he has abandoned any pretense of politeness.

ELIZA

Your principles must have been issued a special invitation to this ball, sir -
I do not recall seeing hide nor hair of them when you wooed and then abandoned me.

DE BOURGH

Wooed?! Did you really mistake my politeness to you, a spinster of no family, as a *déclaration d'amour*? I say Miss Bramblehurst, you must not have half the wit others think you do.

DE BOURGH looks around, his cronies laugh sycophantically.

DE BOURGH (CONT'D)

I suppose this is what your theatrical entrance this evening is all about? You imagine yourself ill-used and have no doubt come here to shed a few tears designed to draw my sympa-

Before DE BOURGH can complete his sentence he is hit in the FACE with a SILK GLOVE.

ELIZA

Fitzwilliam de Bourgh, I challenge you to a duel in two weeks, the 17th of July, on the grounds that you have breached your promise of marriage to me. My second is Captain Frederick Byrne of His Majesty's Navy.

DE BOURGH

You would challenge me? Is this some poorly thought-out jest?

He looks around again, sneering in disbelief but this time the crowd is too stunned to return his laughter.

DE BOURGH

So, losing your reputation and all your acquaintance is not enough that you needs must risk your skin too?

ELIZA

Captain Byrne will deliver my challenge in writing to you tomorrow. You may name your second and declare your choice of weapons at the same time.

DE BOURGH

God's wounds! Consider you damned harridan - if you lose, you will add your life to the list of things you have already bid adieu to!

ELIZA

(calmly)

If.

BACK TO GAMEPLAY: PLAYER UNLOCKS FIRST BOSS, FITZWILLIAM DE BOURGH. PROCEED TO FENCING TUTORIAL.



Glossary

Thank you for taking the time out to read my cinematic script. Since it is heavily immersed in a specific period of history, here is a short glossary of terms that might need more context to be understood fully.

Regency Era

This scene is inspired by the works of Jane Austen and set in the same period - the early 1810s in England, commonly referred to as the Regency.

£200 A Year and Gretna Green

Austen's characters are often introduced by the amount of money they stand to inherit (£200 a year would have been a lower middle-class income). Money decided who you could marry, and marriage decided your financial stability as a woman. For couples who wanted to break the rules, there was Gretna Green, a Scottish village close to the English border and a popular destination for elopements. However, failed elopements or socially unsanctioned marriages could result in a loss of reputation and being cut off from family, friends, income and future marriage prospects (for women – men usually got off easy).

Pineapples

In the 18th century until well into the 19th, pineapples were only available to the wealthy. As such, they became a status symbol – social climbers could even rent them for parties!

Duelling

Duelling was a quasi-legal way to settle real or perceived insults to one's honour in the 18th century. It had an extensive set of rules and etiquette, most famously the Irish Code Duello of 1777 that I've used as a basis with some concessions.

Glove: The act of throwing down a glove - or even slapping someone with it - signified that a challenge was being issued – the gloves were literally off.

Seconds: Seconds were friends or trusted representatives who organized the duel and its conditions.

Female duellists: While rarer, women did duel – with each other as well as with men. One of the most prolific female duellists was Julie d'Aubigny, a 17th century French opera singer also known as la Maupin.

References and further information:

- The Regency Period of Jane Austen ([link](#))
- Courtship and Marriage in the Regency Period ([link](#))
- Gretna Green ([link](#))
- The Super Luxe History of Pineapples ([link](#))
- 1777 Irish Code Duello: The Most Formal Way to Fight ([link](#))
- 7 Duels Between Women ([link](#))
- Mlle Maupin ([link](#))