

## SIDES FOR MR. KNIGHTLEY

#1

MR. KNIGHTLEY

I must speak to you. I cannot see you acting wrong. How could you be so unfeeling to Miss Bates? How could you be so insolent in your wit to a woman of her character, age, and situation? Emma, I had not thought it possible.

EMMA

How could I help saying what I did? Nobody could have helped it. It was not so very bad. I dare say she did not understand me.

MR. KNIGHTLEY

I assure you she felt your full meaning. I wish you could have heard how she talked of it, with candor and generosity. I wish you could have heard her honoring your forbearance in being able to pay her such attentions when her society must be so irksome.

EMMA

I know there is not a better creature in the world: but you must allow, that what is good and what is ridiculous are most unfortunately blended in her.

MR. KNIGHTLY

They *are*, and were she prosperous, I could allow for the occasional ridiculous over the good. Were she your equal in situation, I would not quarrel with you for any liberties of manner. But she is poor, sunk from the comforts she was born to, and if she lives to old age, must probably sink more. Her situation should secure your compassion. It was badly done, indeed! You, whom she had known from an infant, and seen grow up from a period when her notice was an honor. To have you now, in thoughtless spirits and the pride of the moment, laugh at her, humble her, and before her niece, too. Before others, many of whom would be entirely guided by your treatment of her.

*Emma begins to tear up*

This is not pleasant. I will tell you truths while I can, proving myself your friend, and trusting that you will, sometime or other, do greater justice than you do now.

EMMA

What have I done? How can I... Oh, have been unfeeling. I will call upon her first thing in the morning.

*HARRIET approaches and takes her hand to lead her into the house. The GUESTS stay outside with Mr. KNIGHTLEY*

MR. KNIGHTLEY

What could have gotten into Emma? She has never been deliberately unfeeling or cruel. I can only account for it having something to do with Frank Churchill. His puppyish ways and carelessness are a bad influence. I do not trust him.

#2

MR. KNIGHTLEY

What years of felicity *he* has before him. Everything turns out for his good. He meets a young woman at a watering-place, gains her affection, and cannot even weary her by negligent treatment. Had his family sought round the world for a perfect wife for him, they could not have found her superior. His aunt is in the way. His aunt dies. He has only to speak. He used everybody ill and they are all delighted to forgive him. He is a fortunate man indeed! I do envy him, Emma. In one respect he is the object of my envy. *Emma does not respond.*

You are determined, I see, to have no curiosity. You are wise, but I cannot be wise. Emma, I must tell you what you will not ask, though I may wish it unsaid the next moment.