SIDE FOR MR. ELTON

#1

MR. ELTON

Approaches Emma to take her hand, and stumbles over his own feet, and falls. Emma steps back in alarm, as he grabs her hand on his way back up.

My dear Miss Woodhouse, I must speak. I find myself with a precious opportunity for which I long hoped. Surely my constancy and adoration these past months have not gone unnoticed. You must know that I am ardently attached to you. I flatter myself that my unequalled state of love and unexampled passion is not in vain and has some effect on you as well.

EMMA

Mr. Elton, you must have enjoyed too much port.

MR. ELTON

No, no! It is *you* who have intoxicated me, my dear Miss Wood… Emma. Do say you feel it too, and that you will make me the happiest of…

EMMA

(*cajoling*)

I am very much astonished Mr. Elton. You forget yourself and take me for my friend—any message to Miss Smith I shall be happy to deliver; but no more of this to me, if you please.

MR. ELTON

While I respect Miss Smith, I do not think of her as anything more that your friend. There is nothing in the world that could provoke me to admire her. She is not your equal. Miss Woodhouse, who can think of Miss Smith when Miss Woodhouse is near?

EMMA

This seems an unsteadiness of character. Believe me, I am very far from gratified at being the object of such professions. You are not yourself, or you could not speak either to me, or of Harriet, in such a manner. Command yourself enough to say no more, and I will endeavor to forget it.

MR. ELTON

I never thought of Miss Smith in the whole course of my existence, never cared if she were dead or alive, but as your friend. Upon my honor, there is no unsteadiness of character. For many weeks, everything that I have said or done has been with the sole view of marking my adoration of yourself.

Emma is dumbfounded and embarrassed. After a few seconds he continues.

Charming Miss Woodhouse, allow me to interpret this interesting silence. You have long understood me.

EMMA

No, sir! I have seen you only as an admirer of my friend. You have been no more to me than a common acquaintance. I am exceedingly sorry, but it is well that the mistake ends where it does. I trust the disappointment will not be lasting, as I have no thoughts, at present, of marrying.

MR WESTON enters the room, unaware of the tension.

MR. WESTON

The carriage stands ready, and the snow remains manageable. Come, Emma. Mr. Elton. What a night!

MR. ELTON

I prefer a walk! It's warmer.

The Butler hands him his coat, hat and scarf.

EMMA and MR. ELTON

Indeed.

The butler hands them their coats, hats and scarves and they exit.

#2

CONTEXT: E*mma is painting a portrait of her friend*

MR. ELTON

You have given Miss Smith all that she required. She was a beautiful creature when she came to you, but, in my opinion, the attractions you have added, grace and ease, are infinitely superior to what she received from nature.

EMMA

Harriet only wanted drawing-out with very few hints. She had all the natural grace of sweetness of temper and artlessness in herself. I have done very little.

MR. ELTON

Exactly so. That is what principally strikes me. So much super-added decision of character! Skilful has been the hand!

EMMA

I never met with a disposition more truly amiable. Harriet's features are very delicate, which makes a likeness difficult; and yet there is a peculiarity in the shape of the eye and the lines about the mouth which one ought to catch.

MR. ELTON

The shape of the eye and the lines about the mouth. What an exquisite possession a good picture of her would be! I would give any money for it. I almost longed to attempt her likeness myself.

EMMA

If you would be so good as to continue reading to us, it would be a kindness indeed.

MR. ELTON takes out a book of Shakespeare Sonnets and starts to read as HARRIET preens and Emma smirks and continues to paint.

MR. ELTON

Looking between Emma and Harriet

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.

EMMA

There! Done.

Mr. ELTON, MR. WOODHOUSE, and MR. KNIGHTLEY all gather to look at the portrait. HARRIET stands to the side to catch a glimpse.

MR. ELTON

Miss Woodhouse has given her friend the only beauty she wanted. Her expression of the eye is most correct, but Miss Smith has not those eyebrows and eyelashes. It is the fault of her face that she has them not. I cannot keep my eyes from it. I never saw such a likeness. Might I be trusted with the commission of having it framed? I can ride to London at any time and would be deeply gratified by the commission.