

Side 3 Emma and Mr. Elton; Mr. and Mrs. Elton

In this scene, Emma thinks that Harriet and Mr. Elton are made for each other. She is trying to build up Harriet, but Mr. Elton only has eyes for Emma.

EMMA:

Emma takes a palette from the servant and begins sketching as we quickly whirl into:

NOW, Mr. Elton! Do you not think Harriet an absolute goddess in this light?

Harriet is posing, in rather a silly position. Mr. Elton is an unbearable man; dripping with sentiment, and very prepared to be in love. Emma has all the subtlety of a bag of hammers.

MR. ELTON:

I could not have said it better myself, Miss Woodhouse. A goddess-exactly so.

[HARRIET:

(overcome) Oh, now, I]

EMMA:

Do not *move*, dear.

Harriet is a mite too modest, Mr. Elton, but our subject has perfect manners in every other respect! And so we must forgive her diffidence, mustn't we?

MR. ELTON:

Perfection, indeed! Forgiven-of course!

[HARRIET:

Oh now, I really]

EMMA:

Do not speak, dear.

I try, with what little skill I have, to capture her likeness-only her features are so flawless!

[HARRIET:

Oh, now, I really think]

EMMA:

ABSOLUTELY do not think, dear.

Mr. Elton, do explain to her how inadequate my scribblings are! What a pale imitation my canvas is! How impossible it is for mortal artistry to do justice-to the divine!

(Mr. Elton has come around to view Emma's painting; it must be said that he is very close)

MR.ELTON:

Miss Woodhouse is never wrong, Miss Smith, and if she says you are an unmatched beauty, then you must concede.

[HARRIET:

(head exploding) I mean well if you insist. (she feels good about herself)]

MR.ELTON:

But you *yourself* are overmodest, Miss Woodhouse! I have never seen such a likeness. This-is-a masterpiece.

EMMA:

(starting to believe her own hype) Really? -! rather thought I made her too tall. She turns around the portrait-it is... not great.

MR.ELTON:

-that is – just - the effect of shade! Oh, Miss Woodhouse, oh, oh, oh-I cannot tear my eyes away!
Emma joins Harriet.

MR. ELTON:

I –am also somewhat Prone to Fits of Recitation, Miss Smith-

He positions himself.

And–in this company, I find myself inspired to recite a rather labyrinthine riddle, full of twists and turns and hidden depths. No lady has yet unlocked its tender mysteries! But I can only hope that some blessed day –I-it –might be unravell-ed... by cunning feminine wiles?

He bows, as:

EMMA:

(elbowing Harriet) We also live in hope, sir, –but we must hear it first.

Elton strikes a sentimental pose. He recites the poem with elaborate hand gestures, swimming in his own juices:

MR.ELTON:

*"My first word displays the pomp of kings,
Lords of the earth! Observe their luxury and ease."*

EMMA:

(discerning the riddle instantly) Hm.

[HARRIET:

(imitating Emma) Hm.]

MR.ELTON:

"Another view of man, my second word brings, Behold him there, the monarch of the seas!"

EMMA:

(discerning the riddle instantly) Oh.

~~**HARRIET:**~~

~~*(imitating Emma) Oh.]*~~

MR.ELTON:

But lo! united, what reverse we have!

Man's power and freedom, all are a-flown!

Lord of the earth and sea, he bends his knee, And woman, lovely woman, reigns alone!

Mr. and Mrs. Elton are enjoying a Berry Picking Party at Mr. Kingsley home. Mr. Elton continues to recite poetry badly. Mrs. Elton cackles when she laughs.

That hyena cackle. As we enter the grounds of Mr. Knightley's home Donwell Abbey, it is quite green and beautiful-this need not be denoted by more than carts of flowers and greenery, or baskets of the same, here and there. Keep it extremely simple and wide-open. They don bonnets or hats, and have baskets. Mr. Elton opens, in full dramatic recitation form:

MR.ELTON:

BURNS! (that bad Scots accent again) The winter it is past, and the summer comes at last (it is indeed quite hot out) I And the small birds, they sing on ev'ry tree/

MRS. ELTON:

Birds! (she cackles)

MR.ELTON:

Now ev'ry thing is glad-but I am very sad,

MRS. ELTON:

Sad! (she cackles)

MR. ELTON:

Since my true love was parted from me.

He ends in a sad pose.

MRS.ELTON:

Parted. *(she cackles, then lustfully:) Oh Mr. E, how SENSITIVE you are!
(she cackles and they exit, making out frantically)*

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