

SIDE: Sir Walter, Elizabeth, Mrs. Clay

2. *September 1814.*

Kellynch Hall, Somersetshire. A room with several mirrors.

Sir Walter Elliot and his daughter Miss Elizabeth Elliot are entertaining Mrs Clay.

SIR WALTER: I was remarkably handsome in my youth, though am still accounted very fine.

MRS CLAY: Indeed, Sir Walter, few *women* could think more of their appearance than you do.

SIR WALTER: Naturally, the constant use of Gowland is imperative to maintain the beauty.

MRS CLAY: Sir, you hardly need Gowland to aid *your* face.

SIR WALTER: And, happily, Elizabeth's inherited my fine looks, though her sisters are of very inferior value. Anne was a pretty young girl, but her bloom has withered, and now she's horribly faded and thin. And Mary was never more than fine and now is pinched.

ELIZABETH: (*Reading a letter*) Papa! Horror! **SIR**

WALTER: What on earth is it, Elizabeth? **ELIZABETH:**

From the Cornwallises. **SIR WALTER:** What's happened?

ELIZABETH: I can hardly say it... Mr Cornwallis overheard Mr William Elliot speaking most disrespectfully of...us! Most slightly and contemptuously of the very blood he belongs to.

SIR WALTER: Let me see. **ELIZABETH:** That's about Mrs Cornwallis' bunion. There.

SIR WALTER: (*Reading*) Unpardonable, abominable rudeness! Mr Elliot speaks ill of the very honours which are hereafter to be his own.

MRS CLAY: This Mr Elliot is a close relation, Sir Walter?

SIR WALTER: Distant – but in the event of my girls having no brother, the heir presumptive, to the title and the house. Elizabeth does him the honour to wear black ribbons for his wife –

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ELIZABETH: He's conducted himself miserably, Papa. I shall never think of him again.

MRS CLAY: He appears to be a most improper young man.

SIR WALTER: When we met him in London, there wasn't a baronet from A to Z whom Elizabeth's feelings could have so willingly acknowledged as her equal. But he ignored our solicitations of intimacy, and purchased independence by uniting himself to a rich woman of inferior birth. Now she's dead and he has the fortune.