

Act 1 Scene 6 Mary, Arthur – pages 36, 37 to where Lydia enters.

Scene 6

Arthur and Mary in mid conversation—completing each other's sentences.

MARY. And then there's the early work of Antonie van Leeuwenhoek and his marvelous microscope—

ARTHUR. Animalcules!

MARY. Animalcules, yes!

ARTHUR. *Paramecia* and bacteria so tiny as to be invisible to the unaided eye.

MARY. Which makes one wonder about all the other invisibilia that one might miss if one doesn't have the eyes to see it.

ARTHUR. I must say, Miss Bennet, how thoroughly I enjoy our talks. You are so very...

He should say lovely or charming. Instead he says—

Conversant.

MARY. Well. My family finds my conversation worthy of some laughter, though often at my expense.

ARTHUR. Oh I would never laugh at you. Certainly not while discussing *Paramecia*. Unless you erupted with some biological joke, in which case guffaw would seem appropriate.

MARY. It would. Though I would never joke about biology.

Enough for him to realize...

ARTHUR. That was irony?

MARY. It was.

ARTHUR. And I missed it?

MARY. You did.

She laughs, he does too.

He is bewitched by her.

Then he says something far more personal than he meant to.

ARTHUR. Your smile. Is...entirely...permeative.

MARY. I have never had it noticed before.

ARTHUR. Lucky me. To have eyes to see it.

Just as Mary thinks, "Is he admiring me?"—Lydia enters—

LYDIA. Lord Arthur! Lord Arthur!

Arthur ducks—Mary saves him.

MARY. He's...in the stables.

LYDIA. Lord Arthur is in the stables?

MARY. Studying. The many...hooves.

LYDIA. How very like him. Such a curious man, that one. *(Dismissively.)* Lizzy was looking for you. And you know you might try being a bit more sociable, sister. It's Christmas. You're supposed to mingle.

MARY. Thank you, Lydia.

Lydia runs off. Mary leans down to Arthur.

You are saved, "Lord Arthur." For now.

ARTHUR. Thank you, Miss Bennet. I hope you do not think me a coward for avoiding your charming sister.

MARY. Not at all. However it makes me think you know more about the "female species" than you let on. My sister calls. Good afternoon.

Mary smiles and leaves him to fully realize his affection for her. Arthur exits.