Jane Austen

Sense and sensibility

Retold by Anna Paluchowska
Chapter I

The Affairs of the Family of Dashwood
The family of Dashwood had long been settled in Norland Park, Sussex. Mr Henry Dashwood lived with his only son, as his wife had passed away. She had had a large fortune, and when she died, she left it all to her son, but with one condition; the money and house would only be passed on to her son once her husband had died as well. After several years, Mr Henry Dashwood married again and had three daughters. His new lady had no money at all and he understood, that to his daughters he would not be able to leave much on his death. Elinor, Marianne and Margaret would only get what Mr Dashwood would manage to save during his lifetime as he could give them nothing from his first wife’s fortune. But Mr Dashwood was a cheerful man and hoped to live many years, and by living economically he would be able to save enough money so that his three daughters would have reasonable incomes. Also, he hoped his eldest son would help his half sisters if such help was needed.

When his eldest daughter, Elinor, was only nineteen, Mr. Henry Dashwood suddenly became very ill and died within two months, leaving to his widow and daughters only ten thousand pounds. His son was sent for as soon as the danger was known, and Mr Dashwood’s last words were to ask him to help his stepmother and sisters.

The son, Mr John Dashwood was not a bad person, unless to be rather selfish and rather cold-hearted is to be bad. In fact, had he married a nicer woman, he might have been made a nice person himself. Unfortunately Fanny Ferrars, who he married, was even more narrow-minded and selfish than he. Consequently, during their marriage, her husband, who was very fond of her, had been made a strong caricature of his earlier self. When his father was dying, Mr John Dashwood promised to do ‘everything in his power’ to make his stepmother and sisters comfortable. After his father’s death he had to consider how much ‘everything’ really was. At first, he thought he could give them a thousand pounds each.
‘Yes, I could spare the sum very easily,’ he thought to himself.

But his wife did not see it in the same light. To take three thousand pounds from the fortune of their dear little son would be making him almost poor! How could he rob his child of so large a sum? And then give it to his HALF-sisters!

‘It was my last promise to my father, my dear Fanny.’ her husband replied. ‘He begged me to do something for my sisters and their mother after his death.’

‘Well, then let something be done for them, but that something need not be three thousand pounds!’

‘I would not like them to think mean of me, you know...’ added Mr Dashwood.

‘There’s no knowing what they might expect, but the real question is what you can afford!’ said the lady. ‘To my mind, they need no more money. They may live very comfortably on the ten thousand pounds they have been left.’

‘That is true!’ Mr Dashwood brightened up. ‘Perhaps then, it would be better to do
something for their mother while she lives. A hundred pounds a year would make them very comfortable.’

‘Undoubtedly,’ answered the lady, ‘but if Mrs Dashwood lives another fifteen years, we shall be ruined!’

‘Fifteen years! But my dear Fanny!’ exclaimed Mr Dashwood in horror.

‘Well, my experience is that people seem to live forever if there is money to be paid them,’ said Mrs Dashwood calmly.

‘Perhaps then,’ said Mr Dashwood after a moment’s thought. ‘I should just help them from time to time, occasionally, whenever we can afford it.’

‘Precisely, my dear,’ said the lady with satisfaction. ‘In fact, I think they may live so comfortably on their own money that they will be much more able to help you than you can them!’

And thus it was agreed between them that it would be absolutely unnecessary if not highly improper to do anything for the Miss Dashwoods or their mother.

Soon after Mr Henry Dashwood’s funeral, Fanny Dashwood arrived at Norland Park with her servants and made herself the mistress of the house, reducing Mrs Henry Dashwood and her daughters to the status of her guests. Of course, she had the right to come, the house was now her husband’s, but it was a most unkind behaviour to the four ladies who still needed peace after the death of their dear husband and father.

Mrs Henry Dashwood, the widow, who felt everything in double strength whether it was joy or offence, wanted to leave the house as soon as she could. She immediately started to look for a new house for her and her daughters, inexpensive enough for her to afford it. The task was not easy though, and in the meantime the ladies had to stay in Norland Park, and put up with Fanny Dashwood.

It was a little easier when Mr Edward Ferrars, Fanny’s brother, came to visit them. Edward was totally unlike his sister. He was a gentlemanly young man, kind-hearted and sensible, even if not very handsome. Mrs Henry Dashwood soon noticed that
he showed much interest in her eldest
daughter, Elinor, and that Elinor was
beginning to fall in love with him too.
‘In a few months, my dear Marianne,’ she
said to her younger daughter, who had just
turned seventeen. ‘Elinor will be happily
married to Edward Ferrars.’
‘But you do not look happy, my love!’ she
added as she saw Marianne’s expression.
‘Don’t you think him a good choice?’
‘Edward is ... ’ said Marianne with
hesitation. ‘the most kind-hearted person
in the world...but he has not the spirit which
a young man ought to have. He is not lively
enough, doesn’t dance or sing well, and is
hopeless at reading poetry!
‘But, mama!’ she exclaimed after a moment.
‘The more I know of the world, the more I
am sure that I shall never find a man who I
can really love! I want so much!’
Such were the strong feelings of the mother
and daughter, who were very like each
other in the fact that they knew no limits
in either their happiness or despair. Elinor,
however, did not share this characteristic.
She was made very unhappy by her father's death and her sister-in-law's unkindness, but she could bear it, and try to make the best of every situation. On the other hand she could not be too enthusiastic about the prospect of marrying Edward Ferrars. Even though she saw his feelings for her, she knew not whether they were for love or friendship. Besides, she understood that there were other things and people to consider. Fanny and Fanny's mother, Mrs Ferrars, would not be happy to see their eldest son and brother married to a woman with no money.

And she was right. As soon as Fanny Dashwood noticed the interest that her brother showed in the eldest Miss Dashwood, she became even more impolite to her guests. One morning, she mentioned quite directly how her brother shall be protected from any young girls who tried to marry him. Mrs Henry Dashwood could bear it no longer, and replied that she and her daughters were moving out of Norland the next day as that very morning she had received a letter which would make it possible.
The letter was from Mrs Dashwood’s cousin, Sir John Middleton from Devonshire. It was a very friendly offer of a small cottage to rent in the closest neighbourhood of the Middletons’ own residence, Barton Park. Barton Cottage was its name, and it was there Mrs Dashwood decided to move.

Barton Cottage turned out to be situated among very pretty hills. It was small but comfortable, and had a large garden round it. It needed some small changes perhaps, but on the whole, all the ladies were very pleased with their new home. The neighbours, too, appeared to be even more friendly than they expected. They soon met the whole party when they dined at Barton Park two days after their arrival.

Sir John Middleton was a good-looking man about forty. He was friendly and good-humoured, and determined to do anything in his power to make his cousins comfortable. His wife, Lady Middleton, was certainly very elegant and polite, but reserved and rather cold.

In the evening, Marianne Dashwood was discovered to be musical and was asked to play the piano. Sir John was loud in his admiration of her every song, and as loud in his conversation with others while every song lasted. Lady Middleton wondered how anybody could not pay their full attention to the music, and then asked Marianne to play a particular song which Marianne had just finished. Only Colonel Brandon, Sir John’s friend and neighbour, listened to her with attention, and Marianne respected him for it.

The only person who noticed this attention was Lady Middleton’s mother, Mrs Jennings, an elderly lady, who talked a great deal, seemed very happy and rather vulgar. She was full of jokes on the subject of lovers, and soon announced that Colonel Brandon was very much in love with Marianne Dashwood. Marianne found the accusation absurd as Colonel Brandon was on the wrong side of thirty-five, and even though not without charm, was not Marianne’s type in the least.
When the Miss Dashwoods talked about it with their mother when finally back home, Marianne exclaimed: ‘But mama! He is old enough to be my father! To be in love at his age! He was wearing a flannel waistcoat and has surely got rheumatism!’

Mrs Dashwood could not think a man five years younger than herself so very ancient, and Elinor only said laughing:

‘Perhaps thirty-five and seventeen should have nothing to do with marriage together!’

The countryside around Barton Cottage was so pretty that it invited the ladies for walks in all weather. One day, however, a particularly windy day, the youngest Miss Dashwoods, Marianne and Margaret, found it impossible to persuade their elder sister to join them for a walk, and so they went on their own. They pushed their way through the wind for about twenty minutes, and just as they found themselves on the top of the hill behind their house, heavy rain began to fall. Wet through within minutes, they decided to run back home at all possible speed. They set off. But half-way down the
hill Marianne fell down with a strong pain in her ankle, while Margaret could not stop herself earlier than at the bottom of the hill.

A gentleman with a gun was passing within a few yards of Marianne when the accident had happened. When he saw that the lady could not raise herself, he ran up to her, took her up in his arms, carried home, and seated her on a chair in the dining room. Elinor and Mrs Dashwood had been standing speechless, staring at the strikingly handsome young man, who soon introduced himself as Mr Willoughby of Allenham, and begged to be allowed to come the next day to ask after Miss Marianne’s health.

Sir John visited the Cottage that afternoon, and on hearing the whole story, exclaimed:

‘What? Willoughby is in the country? I shall ask him for dinner tomorrow!’

‘You know him then?’ asked Mrs Dashwood.

‘Of course, I do. He’s a very good kind of fellow! I remember last Christmas, he
danced from eight till four in the morning, and was up again at eight to ride the horses!

‘Was he?’ exclaimed Marianne with delight. ‘That is what I like! That is what a young man ought to be!

‘Aye! I see how it will be!’ laughed Sir John. ‘You’ll love him now, and never think of poor Brandon!

‘But,’ he added. ‘He is as good a husband as one can catch, though he hasn’t got much at present. But his cousin, an old lady, Mrs Smith at Allenham, will leave him quite a fortune one day.’

Willoughby visited them the next day. He was welcomed with more than politeness, and so of the kindness of the Miss Dashwoods he could have no doubt. Of their personal charms he soon was convinced. Miss Elinor Dashwood had a delicate complexion, a very pretty face and an exceptionally graceful figure. Marianne was even prettier. She was taller than her sister, had dark eyes, which shone beautifully in her pretty face when she talked about something with passion. And it was enough to mention any favourite amusement to engage her in a passionate conversation. Poetry, music, dance, all delighted her. Within an hour Willoughby and Marianne found that their tastes were exactly the same, they liked everything in the same way, and shared the same enthusiasm about everything.
‘Well, Marianne,’ said Elinor laughing as soon as Willoughby had left. ‘For one morning, you’ve done very well. You’ve already found out what Mr Willoughby’s opinion is on every important subject!’

‘Elinor, is this fair?’ asked Marianne. ‘Have I got so few ideas? But I know what you mean. I have been too open, too frank! Had I talked only about the weather and the roads, you would not have said such a thing!’ Elinor laughed and said she had only been joking.

From that morning, Willoughby visited them every day. He talked to Marianne, played the piano and sang with her. Then they read and discussed their books. When Sir John threw a party they danced together half the time, and when playing cards, he cheated himself and everyone around to let Marianne win. They became a standing joke for Mrs Jennings, who delighted in a match between two such handsome young people. Colonel Brandon was therefore temporarily spared her wit, until one very pleasant morning.
It was the morning in which the whole party, including the Miss Dashwoods and Colonel Brandon breakfasted at the Park, and there received their morning post. There was a letter for Colonel Brandon. He opened it, read a few lines, got up, and said quickly:
‘I am very sorry to leave such a lovely party, but a very important business calls me to London. I cannot lose one hour.’
And with this he left in a terrible hurry. Everybody wondered what the business could be, and Mrs Jennings especially, as she took the greatest interest in her friends’ affairs.

The next day, Willoughby was invited to dine at the Cottage. In the afternoon, Mrs Dashwood with Elinor and Margaret went to visit Lady Middleton, and Marianne decided to stay at home and get the dinner ready. When the ladies returned from their walk, they found Willoughby’s carriage outside the house. As they went in, they saw Marianne crying and running upstairs, while Willoughby was standing by the fire, looking very sad.
‘Willoughby? What is the matter?’ asked Mrs Dashwood.

‘I am unable to stay with you for dinner tonight.’ Willoughby answered slowly.

‘Mrs Smith sends me on a very important business to London.’

‘Oh!’ exclaimed the ladies.

‘But,’ said Mrs Dashwood cheerfully. ‘It cannot take you very long. When will you be back?’

‘I do not expect to be back within twelve months.’ said Willoughby.

‘Oh, it is useless!’ he added passionately. ‘I cannot stay any longer here, among such friends, whose company I am not allowed to enjoy.’

With this he left.

Marianne would have thought herself cold-hearted had she been able to sleep a minute that night, or the whole of the following week. She ate nothing, did nothing, felt weak, and cried most of the time, giving pain to all her family, who could not help her in any way.

One day, Elinor managed to persuade her at last to go for a walk. As they were starting to enjoy themselves, Marianne noticed a figure of a gentleman on horseback in the distance.

‘It is he! It is he!’ she cried and ran towards the figure.

But it was not Willoughby. It was Edward Ferrars, and fortunately for him, as he was at that moment the only person in the world who could have been excused for not being Willoughby. For in Marianne’s eyes, he was the equivalent of Willoughby for her elder sister.

Edward was warmly welcomed at the Cottage by Mrs Dashwood and her daughters. He was asked to stay as long as he wished. He stayed for a week, during which time he was so involved in the whole carousel of dances and excursions organised by Sir John, that he had not much time to enjoy the peace of the Cottage and the company of his hosts.

One day, however, they had a free afternoon and were drinking tea in the sitting room. While pouring her the tea, Edward’s hand passed so close before
Marianne’s eyes that she noticed a ring of hair on one of his fingers.
‘I have not seen you wearing this ring before, Edward!’ she exclaimed. ‘Is this your sister’s hair? I thought her hair was darker!’
There was silence for a moment, and at first Edward seemed too embarrassed to answer.
‘Yes,’ he said at last. ‘It is Fanny’s hair. It looks different in different light, you know.’
Both Elinor and Marianne were at this moment sure that it was in fact Elinor’s hair. The difference between them was that what Marianne thought was a gift from her sister, Elinor knew must have been stolen from her in one way or another, as she had never given her hair to anybody.
Soon after that incident, Edward announced that he must leave them, preferably that very day. He did not know where or on what business, but still go he must. And he did go, leaving them all to wonder at the speed of his departure.
Elinor especially did not know what to think. She felt very strongly that Edward was in love with her just as much as she was
with him, but she also saw that there were some great obstacles to their happiness. Whatever the situation, however, to her sister’s greatest amazement, Elinor neither cried nor starved herself on Edward’s departure. Quite the opposite, she tried to cheer up the rest of her family.

Sir John tried to cheer them up too. And the best way to do that was, in his opinion, to bring them new visitors. Therefore as soon as Mrs Jennings’s distant cousins from Exeter, the Miss Steeles, arrived at the Park to stay for some two or three weeks with Lady Middleton, he lost no time to introduce them to the Miss Dashwoods.

During dinner at Barton Park, Elinor and Marianne had the opportunity to get to know the two young ladies and make up their minds about them. Miss Anne Steele was about thirty with a plain face, and seemed to be able to talk of nothing but admirers. Her younger sister, Lucy, about twenty-three, was much prettier and much cleverer than Anne. They were both poor relations of the Middletons, but were so skilful at pleasing everybody that hardly anybody could see through their tricks and all loved to include them in their party. The Miss Steeles made sure that they admired each of Lady Middleton’s dresses, and laughed at all Mrs Jennings’s jokes, and loved beyond anything to play with the spoiled children of anybody of fortune. In short, the Miss Dashwoods saw nothing nice about them, and would have preferred not to be acquainted with them at all. That, however, was not possible. Sir John was determined to make them best friends, and not a day could be spent without them having to visit each other on some purpose.

One day, when they were all walking, Lucy separated Elinor from the rest, and asked her in a whisper:

‘I am sure you will think my question a strange one, but do you know Mrs Ferrars?’

Elinor did think the question a very strange one, but said calmly that she had never seen Mrs Ferrars in her life.

‘Well, if I dare tell you all...’ said Lucy with a coquetish smile. ‘I may be one day very intimately known to Mrs Ferrars...’
'Good heavens!' exclaimed Elinor. 'Are you acquainted with Mr Robert Ferrars, Mrs Ferrars’s younger son?'
'Mr Robert Ferrars!' exclaimed Lucy in return. 'Oh, no!'
Then she lowered her voice, and looking straight into Elinor’s eyes, she said:
'I am engaged to Mr Edward Ferrars, Mrs Ferrars’s eldest son and heir.'
Elinor turned white on hearing such news. ‘We have been engaged these four years.’ Lucy added in the same awful whisper. ‘I can see your surprise, but indeed no one apart from Anne has known anything about it till today. I may depend on your secrecy, Miss Dashwood, might I not?’ ‘Of course.’ replied Elinor hardly knowing what she was saying. ‘But how did you meet?’ ‘Oh, Edward was my uncle’s, Mr Pratt’s, student for some years, I am sure you know. It was there that we got to know each other. But now, we see each other so rarely.’ Lucy added with tears in her eyes. ‘Edward says it breaks his heart!’

Lucy put her handkerchief to her eyes. ‘But when he visited us just before he came to see you, two weeks ago, I gave him a ring of my hair.’ Lucy said with a proud smile. ‘And he said it made him a lot happier.’

Elinor turned even whiter at hearing this information. So it was Lucy’s hair on Edward’s finger, and not her own!

Back at home, Elinor went through her
conversation with Lucy once again. She was shocked and could hardly believe the information. She decided to talk to Lucy again and try to find out how much truth there was in the news.

She had the opportunity the next day, at an afternoon tea at Lady Middleton’s. Marianne was playing the piano so passionately that Lucy and Elinor sitting behind it could talk safely without being overheard.

‘Thank you for breaking the ice!’ said Lucy as Elinor seated herself next to her. ‘You cannot imagine how much it means to me to be able to talk to you about my secret.’

‘Yes, I understand your situation must be difficult.’ said Elinor as calmly as she could.

‘Everything depends on Edward’s mother.’ said Lucy. ‘And I suspect Mrs Ferrars will not be happy to find out her eldest son engaged to a penniless girl like myself. That is why we are keeping it a secret.’

‘But how long can you go on like this?’ asked Elinor.

‘I do not know.’ Lucy answered with a sigh. ‘But I think it would be madness to marry now! What if Mrs Ferrars disinherits Edward? We would be poor forever!’

Elinor blushed at these words. So that would be Edward’s future wife’s main aim in life – to be rich! She needed Edward to be rich!

‘Edward is going to London in February. So he says in his letter.’ Lucy continued. ‘Are you going to London this winter, Miss Dashwood?’

‘Certainly not.’ said Elinor, who at that moment would avoid meeting Edward at all costs.

But Elinor was wrong in her answer to Lucy, even though she did not know it at the time. Mrs Jennings had a house in London, and to this house she decided to go after Christmas. And she invited the two elder Miss Dashwoods to go with her. Marianne was delighted. Willoughby was in London! And even though she thought Mrs Jennings the most vulgar woman in the world, she felt she could put up with
her easily if that was all that was needed to be closer to Willoughby. Mrs Dashwood and Elinor seeing how much Marianne had set her heart on going could not refuse her. Elinor decided to go with her, and as she counted on their visit to be over long before Edward’s arrival in London, she felt it was a safe thing to do.

They travelled for three days and when they finally found themselves in Mrs Jennings’s comfortable house in Berkeley Street, they dreamt of nothing but burning fire and an early night. The next day, Marianne woke up full of expectations of seeing or hearing from Willoughby. But Willoughby did not come. They only had a visit from Colonel Brandon.

‘Oh Colonel, I am so glad to see you!’ exclaimed Mrs Jennings. ‘So how did your mysterious business go? Come, come, let us have no secrets among friends!’

Colonel Brandon was very polite as usual, and answered every question of Mrs Jennings without actually giving her any information on any subject.

During the first week in London, the ladies were very busy visiting all of Mrs Jennings’s friends and then hosting them in return at Berkeley Street. But to Marianne’s great disappointment, they saw or heard nothing of Willoughby. Marianne wrote letters and notes to him but none of them were answered. Instead, to her horror, Colonel Brandon visited them everyday. And, to make matters worse, by the end of the week, the Middletons came to stay at their house in Conduit Street, and the Miss Dashwoods were even busier.

One evening, they absolutely had to accompany Lady Middleton at a very important ball. As soon as they entered the ballroom, Elinor noticed Willoughby talking passionately to a young lady. He caught Elinor’s eye, but only nodded his head with cold politeness, without interrupting his conversation. Elinor was shocked. When Marianne noticed him the next minute and he still did not come, she exclaimed:
'Good God! Willoughby! What is the meaning of this? Won’t you come and shake hands with me?'

Then he could not avoid them any more. He left his partner and came up to the two ladies.

‘Have you not got my letters?’ asked Marianne giving him her hand.

‘Yes.’ he said coldly, barely touching her fingers. ‘I have had this pleasure.’

Then he turned around and went back to his partner. Soon afterwards they both left the room.

‘Elinor!’ exclaimed Marianne. ‘Take me home! I cannot stay a minute longer!’

Elinor explained to Lady Middleton as best she could that her sister was feeling ill and that it was absolutely necessary to transport her back to Berkeley street. Back at the house, Marianne spent another sleepless night. At dawn, Elinor woke up to see her sister, sitting by the window and writing a letter to Willoughby. The letter was sent, and within two hours, soon after breakfast, Marianne got a reply. It read as follows:
My dear Madam,

I am very unhappy to hear that you felt offended by my behaviour yesterday, though I honestly do not know what impoliteness I committed. In any case, please accept my apologies.

I also learn that while in Devonshire I gave rise to some expectations, which you will understand to be a mistake on your part. I am engaged and hope to be married within a short time. I gladly return all your letters therefore, and send my sincere regards to Mrs and Miss Dashwood.

Yours sincerely,
John Willoughby

Reading these lines tears rose in Elinor’s eyes. She could hardly believe such cruelty. After she had reread the letter ten times, she said:

‘Well, at least we know his character now, Marianne. Imagine your disappointment if the engagement had lasted years!’

‘Engagement?’ cried Marianne. ‘There has been no engagement! We were in love!’
Mrs Jennings returned home from her morning shopping with a very sad face. She saw Elinor downstairs, and exclaimed:
‘How is she, my dear?’
Elinor only shook her head.
‘Ah!’ said Mrs Jennings sitting down. ‘He is going to be married very soon. And the lady, Miss Grey, has got fifty thousand pounds, my dear! And they say he needs it very much too, as he is deep in debts! But, say I, even if this is the case, he has used your sister terribly! To act as if you are in love with such a pretty girl, and then fly off because a richer girl is ready to have him!’
‘I must say this, Madam. Mr Willoughby was not engaged to my sister.’
‘No, my dear!’ exclaimed Mrs Jennings. ‘Do not try to defend him! I was in Devonshire with you, and I know what I am saying! A good-for-nothing fellow!’
Elinor said no more, and Mrs Jennings thought it better to leave the sisters on their own. In the meantime she would visit the Middletons and communicate the terrible news to them. But as soon as she
was gone, Colonel Brandon came in.

‘Oh, Miss Dashwood,’ he started hesitantly, ‘I am glad to see you alone. I have something important to tell you. I ... I ... hope it will help your sister...’

Elinor understood him. ‘You have something to tell me about Mr Willoughby. It will be the greatest kindness to Marianne if you could explain his behaviour.’

‘I am not sure I can do that, but however... I ..., I ... once knew a lady very much like your sister. The same strong feelings, and a great beauty too! She was an orphan and we were brought up together. I cannot remember a time when I did not love Eliza, and when she did not love me! But she had a large fortune, and my father decided she would marry his heir, my elder brother, and not me. We were only seventeen, and we would have run away together, but they caught us and separated us for the next five years. I was made a soldier and she was made to marry my brother, who did not even love her. My father died soon after their wedding, and after that since then my brother did not treat her well. Who can wonder that she fell... But he died too, after five years, and all his fortune, then very large, was left to me. I returned home and immediately started to look for Eliza. But... I only found her first lover! How many others there were afterwards I did not even try to count! I found her at last, by accident, in a house for debtors. She was dying of consumption. She lived only two months, and then left her daughter, three years old at the time, to my care. I looked after the little Eliza as best I could. She had a governess and private tutors. A year ago, however, when she was sixteen, I made a terrible mistake. I let her go to Bath under the care of one of her friend’s aunt. She disappeared! Nothing had been heard of her until that day at Barton Park when I received a letter from her!’

‘Good God!’ exclaimed Elinor. ‘Could this have been Willoughby?’

‘It was him,’ said the Colonel sadly. ‘I found her in London, nine-months pregnant and with no money at all.
Willoughby left her without giving her his address or once writing to her! I moved her back to the country, where she is now safe with her baby.’

Here he stopped, got up, and started to walk about the room.

‘And have you seen Mr Willoughby since?’ Elinor asked when he seemed calmer.

‘Yes, we have met with our pistols – I to punish him, he to defend himself. But as we are both still alive, not many people have heard of it.’

‘Thank you,’ said Elinor shaking his hand as he was leaving. ‘It was most kind of you to tell me all this. I shall pass it on to my sister as soon as possible.’

At first, Marianne could hardly believe any accusation against Willoughby. She was sure that the whole matter was some kind of conspiracy of London against her. However, when she heard Colonel Brandon’s story, she had no hope left. She calmed down, and decided to be calmly unhappy for the rest of her life. Her only wish was to go home. They wrote to their mother to ask
for advice. Mrs Dashwood, however, on thinking the matter over, decided that it would be better for Marianne to stay among her friends in London than to come back to Barton, where everything would remind her of her happy times with Willoughby. Her other wish was for her daughters to have some contact with their brother, who had just written to her and informed her about his going to London. Mrs Dashwood did not forget his or his wife’s unkindness, but still felt it was her duty to make sure that the relationship between all her husband’s children was good. And so the Miss Dashwoods would stay another two or three weeks under the roof of Mrs Jennings.

Indeed, Mr John Dashwood soon visited his sisters, mainly on purpose to be introduced to Mrs Jennings, as he understood she was a woman of fortune. He was extremely polite to her. He only waited for the information that Colonel Brandon was equally rich to be just as polite to him. When he was sure of that, he could only congratulate his sisters on being able to move in such good circles.

Soon the Dashwoods were acquainted with the Middletons, too. Lady Middleton was delighted with Mrs Fanny Dashwood, and Mrs Fanny Dashwood found Lady Middleton ‘the most charming woman in the whole of town!’ This caused no surprise to either Elinor nor Marianne.
But there were even worse visitors to put up with. The Miss Steeles arrived to keep company of Lady Middleton, and Elinor was sure she would hear from them very soon. She was not mistaken. They visited Berkeley Street the very next day with ‘such incredibly good news’ that Marianne did not even want to stay in the room to hear it.

It turned out, to Elinor’s horror, that the Dashwoods were giving dinner to which everybody was invited, including them and Mrs Jennings, Colonel Brandon, the Middletons and the Miss Steeles as Lady Middleton’s visitors. To top it all, the guest of honour of the party was to be Mrs Fanny Dashwood’s mother, Mrs Ferrars. Fortunately for Elinor, Lucy was sure that Edward, who had just arrived in London, would not come to the dinner. He did not want to be seen in the same room as Lucy as he could then not hide his love for her! And so, poor Lucy would have to ‘face her future mother-in-law on her own!’
The day after the dinner, Lucy Steele went to see her dear Miss Dashwood to discuss the details of it. She hoped to see Elinor greatly jealous of her success, as she had been clearly the favourite with both Mrs Fanny Dashwood and Mrs Ferrars throughout the evening.

‘Oh, Miss Dashwood,’ she started. ‘I can see that all my fears were unnecessary. Mrs Ferrars was all kindness to me, was she not?’

Elinor nodded her head politely but did not mention that Mrs Ferrars was kind to Lucy only because she knew nothing about Lucy’s engagement to Edward. In fact, though neither of the ladies knew it, Mrs Ferrars had been long informed by her daughter that it was Elinor who had once tried to catch Edward. Throughout the dinner therefore, Mrs Ferrars favoured Lucy especially to show how much she disliked Elinor.

‘And Mrs Dashwood as well!’ exclaimed Lucy. ‘I wonder that you have never mentioned what a sweet-tempered person she was!’

Elinor had no reply to this, so Lucy continued triumphantly: ‘She must have really liked me from the start! To invite me and Anne to stay at her house as her guests for the whole of the next week! And only after a day’s acquaintance!’

And so Lucy was very sorry but really had to leave her dear Miss Dashwood because she would soon be so busy moving her things to Mrs Fanny Dashwood’s place in Harley Street. That did surprise Elinor greatly. She could not explain to herself why Fanny should show such favour to a girl she had only just met.
The truth was, though again neither of the ladies could have guessed it, that the invitation to the Miss Steeles resulted from a conversation between Mrs Dashwood and her husband. Mr Dashwood suggested to his wife during the dinner that perhaps they should invite his sisters to stay with them at their house for some time while they were in London. Mrs Dashwood was shocked. She panicked for a few seconds looking for a suitable reply, and then found it. She said that she had just decided to invite the Miss Steeles to stay with them. They were such a nice kind of girl, and would probably not be in London the next year. The Miss Dashwoods they could always invite some other time. Mr Dashwood immediately saw the necessity of inviting the Miss Steeles, and congratulated his wife on such a good idea.

The triumph of Lucy was almost complete. During the course of the next week, Elinor heard from Mrs Jennings, who knew all the gossip in town, that Mrs Fanny Dashwood was so delighted with the Miss Steeles that she knew not how she would ever go on without them. One morning, however, changed it all.

Mrs Jennings came back from her morning shopping with eyes so full of gossip that Elinor knew something very interesting must have happened.

‘Lord, my dear Miss Dashwood! Have you heard the news! Mr Edward Ferrars has been these four years engaged to my cousin, Lucy Steele! This was kept a great secret for fear of Mrs Ferrars and neither your brother nor your sister-in-law have known anything about it until this morning! Poor Anne Steele popped it all out! “Lord!” she thinks to herself. “They’re all so fond of Lucy! Surely they’ll make no difficulty about it!” So off she went to tell your sister about the whole matter! Lord, what a blow on her it was! She fell into such hysteric! And I must say this, Miss Dashwood, what she did was not polite. She said that Lucy and Anne could not stay a minute longer in her house! Your brother had to go on his knees to beg her to let them stay till they had packed up their clothes!'
‘And I must say, Miss Dashwood,’ continued Mrs Jennings. ‘I have no patience with your sister-in-law! What is this big deal about money and greatness? I am sure Mrs Ferrars could, if she wanted, give them money enough for a cottage like yours and they would want nothing! And I would help them, too, with whatever I could!’

Elinor was not at all surprised at her sister’s-in-law behaviour. And she felt less sorry for Lucy than Mrs Jennings did. What she was most interested in was what Edward would do now, but this information Mrs Jennings could not give her. It was soon given by Mr John Dashwood, who came to visit them in the afternoon to talk about the shocking affair and demand their compassion for poor Fanny’s nerves.

‘And Mrs Ferrars’s too!’ he added. ‘It cannot be described what she suffered on hearing the news! She sent for Edward immediately and tried to persuade him to give up the engagement! And the power of her arguments! If he married the lady, Mrs Ferrars would not give him a penny! She would give
all his money to Robert, his younger brother! I know not what could be worse for a man than seeing his fortune in his younger brother’s hands! What is more, Mrs Ferrars would never see Edward again but she would make sure he did not do well in any profession!

‘Good God!’ exclaimed Marianne.

‘I can see what you mean, my dear sister,’ continued John. ‘Mrs Ferrars is indeed one of the best mothers in the world and only has her sons’ interest in mind! But Edward was so stubborn! He would not give up his engagement whatever its costs!’

‘Then,’ exclaimed Mrs Jennings. ‘He has acted like an honest man!’

John Dashwood, very shocked to hear such words, soon left. The three ladies remained of the same opinion as to the behaviour of Edward and his family. They felt sorry for Edward, and knew not how his situation could possibly be improved. But the help came much sooner than anyone could have expected, and from a most unlikely person.

The next morning brought Colonel Brandon to Berkeley Street. He came on
purpose to talk about a very important matter to Miss Dashwood.

‘I understand.’ he started, ‘Mr Ferrars to be your good friend.’

Elinor nodded her head.

‘I have heard about the cruelty of his family. I know myself the unhappiness of being divided from the person one loves, and I have come to help Mr Ferrars as best I can.’

Elinor looked at him in the greatest surprise and listened again.

‘I understand Mr Ferrars would like to become a clergyman, is that right?’

Elinor nodded her head again.

‘Well, the clergyman of my estate has just left it, and so it is free for Mr Ferrars to take it whenever he likes. It is not a great fortune, about two hundred pounds a year, but it could be a start for the young couple. Miss Dashwood, would you be so kind as to inform Mr Ferrars about it?’

Elinor nodded her head again and thanked him with all her heart for this kindness towards Edward.
Elinor was about to start her letter to Edward, when Edward came into the room.
‘I have come to say good-bye.’ He started, and it seemed the words were painful to him. ‘I am afraid we may not meet very soon.’
‘And I have great news to tell you,’ said Elinor, and then went on to tell to him about the kind offer of Colonel Brandon. Edward’s eyes grew bigger and bigger in surprise. ‘Colonel Brandon... offers me all this! How did you manage to persuade him to do it?’ ‘I did no such thing!’ protested Elinor. ‘You owe it all to your gentleman-like behaviour, Edward.’
‘Oh, I have no doubt I owe it to you, to your goodness!’ Edward’s eyes explained more than his words. They told Elinor he loved her as much as he had always done, and that the situation he was now in was as difficult for him as it was for her. But no more words passed between them, and Edward left soon afterwards.

The Miss Dashwoods had stayed in London for two months now, and to Marianne’s great happiness, they were starting on their journey home that day. It was going to take them about two weeks or so, as they were staying at Mrs Jennings’s other house, at Cleveland, for Easter. Colonel Brandon was keeping them company.

While at Cleveland, Marianne hardly stayed indoors. She had missed the country air and beauty so much while in London that now she spent nearly all her time walking and admiring the views. But as she was still weak, hardly slept and ate next to nothing, the long and tiring walks in wet boots soon resulted in a heavy cold, which grew more serious every day.

At first, Elinor saw nothing to worry about. But one night, when Marianne’s temperature was really high, even she got frightened. The doctor was sent for, came, looked serious, left some medicines and said he would be back in the morning. But Marianne was not getting any better. She trembled, was white as a sheet, and kept calling her mother in a terrible voice. Mrs Jennings was convinced the poor girl was dying. Elinor did not let herself think
such thoughts, but decided to send a messenger to her mother to join them in Cleveland immediately. Colonel Brandon volunteered to be the messenger, and though it was in the middle of the night, he got on his horse and galloped to Barton Cottage.

It was then that Elinor saw for the first time that Mrs Jennings’s first jokes about him being in love with Marianne had a grain of truth in them. His love must have grown during the time he had spent with them in London, and what Elinor saw in his eyes now was the fear of losing a loved person again. First Eliza, now Marianne.

The two sisters struggled through the night. Elinor fought for Marianne’s every breath, and waited for her every heartbeat. At last, at about four o’clock in the morning, Marianne grew calmer and fell asleep. Her breath was more regular, her heart seemed to be going back to its normal rhythm. Elinor could not have been happier. She only waited for her mother to arrive so that she could tell her the good news. And then she heard horses
outside. She ran downstairs and saw ... Willoughby.

‘How is she?’ he cried.
‘Better,’ replied Elinor. ‘Could you please leave this house now?’

‘Miss Dashwood, for a minute, please let me stay, I need to talk to you! I need to, if I can, make you hate me a little less. Please let me explain...’

‘Well, sir, be quick then.’

‘I am married now, and very rich, but not happy, Miss Dashwood. I had not known what love was till I realised I had lost your sister! Oh, what a scoundrel I was when you first met me! I admired Marianne’s pretty face in Devonshire but never thought of marrying her. I was poor and she was poor - that was not a match for me! Sure, I would one day get Allenham, but when? I could not count on that! Oh, what a cold-hearted character I was! But during the months we spent together, I grew so fond of your sister that I decided to marry her despite all this. We would have to wait till we get Allenham, I thought to myself. The day when I left
you, I was going to ask for Marianne’s hand, but something happened which stopped me. Mrs Smith learnt about my affair with Colonel Brandon’s relation, Eliza Williams. I need not explain it further, I am sure you know the details of it.

‘Yes,’ replied Elinor. ‘And I do not know how you can possibly explain your behaviour to her! You left her knowing fully well she had no means of contacting you, no address, nothing.’

‘I did not know it!’ explained Willoughby, and stood up from his seat. ‘Remember who you heard the story from. Because I was a scoundrel, must she be a saint?’

He started to walk about the room trying to calm down.

‘But anyway,’ he continued after a while. ‘Mrs Smith was really angry with me then. She said she would not leave Allenham or any money to me unless I married Eliza! This could not be! I had to leave, go to London and marry someone with a fortune. I had known Miss Grey, my present wife, before. I knew she would be ready to marry me. And that is what happened.’

‘And your letter, Mr Willoughby?’ asked Elinor. ‘How could you have written such a letter?’

‘Ha! You liked my wife’s style of writing then.’

‘Your wife’s!’ Elinor exclaimed. ‘The letter was in your hand writing.’
'Yes, but I only copied the sentences, which my wife so charmingly put together. She had found Marianne’s letters to me, and got jealous. The letter was her revenge.’

He stopped, looked Elinor in the eyes, and said with pain ringing in his voice:

‘Will you tell it to your sister?’

Elinor nodded her head, and Willoughby kissed her hand and left the house without another word.

There was no end to Mrs Dashwoods joy at finding both her daughters in much better health than she expected.

‘Elinor, did you know,’ she asked her when they were alone. ‘that Colonel Brandon loves Marianne? He told me so himself when we were coming here. I hope she’ll love him too, as I think he would be so much better for her than Willoughby! There was something about that man which I never liked, do you remember?’

Elinor did not remember, but that was not important at the time. They were together again, and would be soon going home.
The Miss Dashwoods and their mother were sitting down to their dinner on a warm April afternoon, when their servant came in with the news.

‘I have just met Mrs Ferrars as she was passing in her carriage. She sends her regards.’

As he saw the ladies’ changed faces, he added:

‘It was Miss Lucy Steele before, Madam. She is married to Mr Ferrars now.’

‘Yes,’ said Mrs Dashwood, observing how white the faces of her two elder daughters were. ‘Thank you, Thomas.’

Elinor now learned the difference between expecting a painful event and experiencing it. For the first time in her life she felt she would not be able to stay calm a minute longer. And then ... she was forced to do so because Edward Ferrars’s figure appeared outside the house.

He came in, was welcomed, and asked a few questions about the weather and the roads. Then there was a long silence, interrupted heroically by Elinor, who asked:
‘And how is Mrs Ferrars? Is she waiting for you in the carriage?’
‘My mother?’ said Edward with some surprise. ‘I believe she is in London.’
‘I meant Mrs Edward Ferrars ...’
‘Perhaps ... you meant Mrs Robert Ferrars.’ Edward said slowly.
‘Mrs Robert Ferrars?!’ repeated the ladies.
It turned out that after it became clear that Mrs Ferrars would not change her mind and indeed pass all Edward’s money onto Robert, Lucy suddenly moved her affection to him, too. Two weeks after the Miss Dashwoods had left London, she wrote a letter to Edward, explaining that she was going to marry his younger brother, with whom she was greatly in love.
Edward’s engagement to Lucy was formed when Edward was very young and could not yet judge people better. But later, when he realised his mistake, it was too late, as Lucy seemed to be so much in love with him that he felt he could not break his word to her. He had never realised that she had been after his money all the time.

At any rate, Edward was now free and came to Barton to ask for Elinor’s hand, which was what he had long wanted to do. It can be easily guessed what her reply was.
Elinor and Edward lived very happily in their small house next to Colonel Brandon’s residence. It was not far from Barton Cottage either. Their happiness increased even more, when after two years, Marianne moved to live with the Colonel as his wife. Neither Elinor nor her mother had ever dared to suggest this marriage to her. Marianne simply started to gradually find Colonel Brandon a very good companion. His tastes in books and music turned out to be exceptionally good. She valued all his other opinions more and more. In time she even forgave his flannel waistcoat. And as Marianne could never do anything by halves, she finally married the man whom she loved with all her heart.
charm – urok
charming - uroczy
cheat - oszukiwać
cheerful – radosny
cheer up - podnosić na duchu, rozweselić
choice - wybór
cold-hearted – nieczuły
comfortable – 1. wygodny 2. make someone comfortable – sprawić by ktoś miał wszystkiego pod dostatkiem, sprawić aby ktoś dobrze się czuł
commit – popełnić
communicate - komunikować
company - towarzystwo
complexion - cera
condition – warunek
congratulate - gratulować
consequently – w rezultacie
consider – rozważyć
conspiracy - konspiracja
consumption – suchoty, gruźlica
convinced – przekonany
coquettish – kokietujący, kokieteryjny
cottage – domek z ogródkiem
countryside – okolica
course – 1. during the course of - podczas
cruelty - okrucieństwo
dare – odważyć się
deal – 1. to talk a great deal – dużo mówić
debt – dług
dead – gleboki, głęboko
defend - bronić
delicate- delikatny
delight – 1. (rzeczownik) radość, przyjemność 2. (czasownik) radować 3. to delight in something – uwielbiać coś
departure - wyjazd
despair – rozpaczą
detail - szczegół
determined – zdeterminowany, zdecydowany
dine – jeść kolację
dining room - jadalnia
directly – wprow
disappointment - zawód
discover – odkrywać
disinherit - wydziedziczać
distance – 1. Odległość   2. in the distance – w oddali
distant – daleki
economically – oszczędnie
elderly - starsza
eldest = oldest – najstarszy
embarrassed - zażenowany
engage – 1. engage somebody in conversation – wciągnąć kogoś do rozmowy 2. be engaged to someone – być z kimś zaręczonym
engagement – zaręczyny, narzeczność
enthusiasm - entuzjazm
enthusiastic – entuzjastyczny
equivalent – odpowiednik
especially - szczególnie
even - 1. nawet  2. even though – mimo że
except - wyjątkiwać
excuse – wybaczać
excursion - wycieczka
expect – oczekiwać
expectation – oczekiwanie
extremely - niezwykle
face – (czasownik) stanąć twarzą w twarz
fact – 1. in fact - tak naprawdę
fall – 1. upaść, stoczyć się (także pod względem moralnym) 2. fall in love with someone – zakochać się w kimś
favour – 1. (czasownik) wyróżniać
favourite – ulubiony
fear – strach, obawa
fellow – facet, gość
figure- figura
flannel – flanelowy
fly off - zwiewać
fond - 1. to be fond of someone – kochać kogoś
fortune – fortuna, majątek
fortunately – na szczęście, szczęśliwie
frank - szczery
friendship – przyjaźń
gentlemanly – szarmancki, uprzejmy
gift – podarunek
give rise to something – zapoczątkować coś
glad – 1. I’m glad to (see) – cieszę się, że (widzę)
gladly – z przyjemnością
go – 1. go through – przeprzeć, przeżyć

good-for-nothing - beznadziejny
governess- biona, opiekunka
graceful – pełen grać

gain - zboże

half sister – siostra przyrodnia
halves – 1. do something by halves – robić coś połowicznie, bez pełnego przekonania
handkerchief - chusteczka
handsome – przystojny
health – zdrowie
heir - spadkobiorca
hesitantly – z wahaniem
hesitation - wahanie
highly – wysokie
hill – wzgórze
honest – uczciwy
honestly – 1. uczciwie  2. naprawdę

hopeless – beznadziejny
horseback – konno
host – 1. (rzeczownik) pan domu  2. (czasownik) gościć kogoś
however - jednakże
hurry – pośpiesz
ice – (zob. break)
immediately – niezwłocznie, natychmiast
impolite – nieuprzejmy, niegrzeczny
impoliteness - nieuprzejmość
improper – niestosowny
incident - wypadek
including - włączając
income – dochód
incredibly – niezwykle, niesłychanie
indeed – w rzeczy samej
inexpensive – niedrogi
interrupt - przerywać
intimately - blisko
jealous - zazdrosny

join someone – dołączyć do kogoś
joy – radość
kind-hearted – przyjazny, dobry
kindness – dobroć, życzliwość
least (czasownik) - trwać
least – in the least – zupełnie nie, absolutnie nie
lively – pełen życia
lovely – przyjemny
make – 1. make the best of every situation – widzieć najlepsze strony w każdej sytuacji  2. make something possible – umożliwiać coś  3. make up one’s mind about something – wyrobić sobie opinię o czymś  4. to make matters worse – co gorsza
manage – 1. manage to do something – udać się zrobić
match – związak
matter – (zob. make)
mean 1. (przymiotnik) – skąpy 2. (czasownik) znaczyć. 3. What do you mean? – Co przez to rozumiesz?
meantime – 1. in the meantime - w międzyczasie
mention – wspomnieć, nadmienić
mother-in-law - teściowa
move out – wyprowadzać się
musical – uzdolniony muzycznie
narrow-minded – ograniczony do swoich poglądów
neighbour- sąsiad
neighbourhood – sąsiedztwo
neither – 1. żaden  2. neither ... nor ... – ani ... ani ...
nod - 1. nod one’s head – potakiwać
notice – zauważać
obstacle - przeszkoda
ofence – uraza
offended – obrażony, urażony
offer – propozycja
opportunity - okazja
opposite – 1. Przeciwny. 2. quite the opposite – wręcz przeciwnie
orphan – sierota
owe – 1. owe something to somebody – zawdzięczać coś komuś
own – 1. on one’s own – samemu
overhear - podsłuchać
pain – ból
painful - bolesny
panic – panikować, wpadać w panikę
particular - szczególnie
particularly - szczególnie
party – 1. Przyjęcie. 2. Grupa znajomych.
pass - przechodzić
pass away – odejść, umrzeć
pass on to someone – przekazać komuś
passion – pasja
passionately – z pasją
peace – spokój, pokój
persuade – przekonać, namówić
plain – przeciętna
pleasant – mily, przyjemny
pleased – 1. be pleased with something – być z czegoś zadowolonym
pleasure - przyjemność
politeness – uprzejmość
pour – nalewać
preferably – najlepiej
pregnant – w ciąży, ciężarna
prospect – perspektywa
protect – chronić
proud – dumny
punish - karać
push - 1. push one’s way through – przedzierać się
purpose- cel
raise – unosić
rarely - rzadko
reasonable – rozsądny
receive - otrzymywać
reduce – redukować
refuse – odmawiać
regards – wyrazy szacunku
relation – krewny
remind- przypominać
rent - wynajmować
reply – odpowiadać
reread – czytać ponownie
reserved - powściągliwa
residence – rezydencja
respect – szanować
return – 1. (czasownik) wracać  2. in return – w odpowiedzi, w zamian
revenge- zemsta
rheumatism - reumatyzm
right – have the right to do something - mieć prawo coś zrobić
rob – rabować
roof - dach
ruin – rujnować
run - 1. run away - uciekać
saunt - świętą
save – oszczędzać
scoundrel - łajdak
seat – posadzić
see - 1. see through the tricks – przejrzeć sztuczki
selfish – samolubny
seem – wydawać się
sensible – rozsądny
separate – oddzielić
set – 1. set one’s heart on something – bardzo czegoś chcieć
share – dzielić, podzielać
sheet - prześcieradło
sigh – westchnienie
sincere – szczery
sincerely – 1. Yours sincerely – z poważaniem
situated - usytuowany
skilful – zręczny
sleepless - bezsenny
spare – 1. poradzić sobie bez 2. He was spared her wit – oszczędziła mu zartów, nie zartowała z niego
speed - prędkość
speechless – stand speechless - zaniemówić
spirit – duch
spoiled - rozpieszczony
standing joke -
stare – gapić się
starve - głodzić
status - status
stepmother – macocha
stolen - skradziony
strength – siła, moc
strikingly – uderzająco
struggle - walczyć
suddenly – nagle
suitable - odpowiedni
sweet-tempered - przemiły
taste - gust
think - 1. think the matter over – przemyśleć sprawę
throughout – przez cały czas trwania
throw – 1. throw a party – wydawać bal
top – 1. to top it all – na domiar złego
 treat – traktować
tremble – drżeć, mieć dreszcze
 trick – sztuczka
triumphantly - triumfalnie
turn – 1. turn seventeen – skończyć siedemnaście lat.
 throughout – przez cały czas trwania
 be – okazać się być  3. turn white – zblednąć
 tutor - nauczyciel
 unable- 1. be unable to do something – nie być w stanie zrobić czegoś
 undoubtedly – bezsprzecznie
 unkind – nieuprzejmy
 unkindness - nieuprzejmość
 unnecessary – zbędny
 use – 1. Use somebody – wykorzystać kogoś
 volunteer – zgłosić się na ochotnika
 vulgar – wulgarny
 waistcoat – kamizelka
 weak – słaby
 wedding - ślub
 wet through – przemoknięty
 whisper - szept
 whole – 1. cały  2. on the whole – w sumie
 widow - wdowa
 windy - wietrzny
 wonder – dziwić się

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