

Pages 112-113  
Colonel Brandon // "Cleveland"  
to "Do you think he might  
accept?"

MARRIANNE. Cleveland! I cannot go to Cleveland. It is within  
sight of Allenhurst.

MRS J. Oh, come, Marianne. It is merely a house on a hill.  
It cannot do you any harm.

COLONEL. It would be my pleasure. Miss Dashwood, may I  
speak to you?

*(They move to one side.)*

COLONEL. I admit, I heard of the distresses of your friend,  
Mr Ferrars.

ELINOR. I am afraid he has been left quite penniless.

COLONEL. So it is true.

ELINOR. His mother has withdrawn his fortune and he's  
left with neither money nor prospects. He had every  
wish to make his way in the church, but even in that,  
Mrs Ferrars has done her utmost to prevent him.

MRS JENNINGS. Poor ducks. They will be as poor as a coal  
scuttle.

COLONEL. I wonder, Miss Dashwood, if I might be able to  
assist.

ELINOR. You, Colonel?

COLONEL. I shouldn't like to interfere, but do you think  
Mr Ferrars might accept a living from me? As the  
parson at Delaford. It is a terribly small parish, and I  
cannot pay a fortune—

ELINOR. Colonel, I am sure there's nothing in the world  
he'd like more. But you have never met him. You have  
no reason to oblige him with your generosity.

*(EDWARD arrives on the other platform. (He is in a later  
moment.)*

COLONEL. No. But he is a friend of yours. That is  
recommendation enough. Do you think he might  
accept?

*(As time moves forward we segue into ELINOR relaying  
the story to EDWARD.)*

EDWARD. Brandon, give me a living? How is it possible?

ELINOR. The unkindness of your own relations has made  
you astonished to find friendship anywhere.

EDWARD. No. Not to find it in you. For I know it's to you  
that I owe this kindness.

ELINOR. You are mistaken — you owe it entirely to your own  
merit, and the Colonel's discernment of it. I've had no  
hand in it.

EDWARD. What a generous man.

ELINOR. He is.

EDWARD. He lodges on St James' street I believe.

ELINOR. Yes he does.

EDWARD. I must thank him. He has made me an exceedingly  
happy man.

ELINOR. Mr Ferrars. My sister and I are to quit London—

EDWARD. Already? But we have hardly had a chance to  
speak, or to... Miss Dashwood, I — I've been wanting  
to — trying to work out how to say—

ELINOR. Please. There is nothing to say. I wish you all the  
happiness in the world.

*(Beat. They look at each other.)*

EDWARD. I hope you know that, had my circumstances  
been different—

ELINOR. You must catch the Colonel before he leaves. You  
should hurry.

EDWARD. Yes. Yes. I... thank you.

*(She smiles. He turns and goes. She is left alone. As she  
stands on her own, luggage whizzes past and in a clatter  
of horses hooves we are on our way to Cleveland.)*

COLONEL. Miss Dashwood – there is something. I have been wrestling with whether to relay some circumstances – I feared they may cause heartache, but now, perhaps they may at least allow some understanding of...

ELINOR. You know something of Willoughby that might explain his behaviour?

COLONEL. You will find me a very awkward narrator. Once, in our conversation, I alluded to a lady who reminded me of Marianne. The same warmth, spirit. Eliza was an orphan that my father took in, and, from our earliest years, we were inseparable. But at seventeen she inherited a fortune and was, against her will, forced to marry my brother. He neither loved her, nor deserved her – forgive me, when I think of it...*(he's finding it hard to control himself)* He was unforgivably cruel. Eliza and I made a plan to elope to Scotland; we'd be penniless but we'd be together. But then her maid betrayed us, for a cheap bribe. They were married and I was posted to the East Indies. I wrote every day, but every attempt was sabotaged. She was without friend or support, so she ran. I came back to England as soon as I heard, but I couldn't trace her beyond her first seducer. Eventually I found her in a sponging house, confined for debt and forced to...she was in the last stages of consumption. I tried every way I knew to make her comfortable until the end. *(Pause)* But out of that horror – a little girl was born, the offspring of her first guilty connection. And she became the most precious thing in the world to me. She lived with an aunt, I gave her everything I could, I tried to make her happy, but without her real mother...last February, she disappeared. She had gone to Bath with a friend – and they were allowed, God knows how, to range about the town with whomever they fancied. She was gone for eight long months, and then, what I feared...the worst...

ELINOR. Good heavens...

COLONEL. She was with child. And the rascal who took advantage of her...

ELINOR. It cannot be...not Willoughby!

COLONEL. You remember, the day of the Whitwell picnic when I was called away? He left a girl whose youth and innocence he had seduced, in a situation of the utmost distress, with no home, no help, no friends, ignorant of his address!

ELINOR. This is beyond everything!

*(As he completes the story, MARIANNE emerges and we segue from his telling to ELINOR's later retelling.)*

COLONEL. Knowing this, you can guess what I felt on seeing your sister so fond of him. I hoped that her influence might reclaim him. Had I not believed that this knowledge might help her recover, I should never have told you. *(Exits)*

MARIANNE. And he told you all of this.

ELINOR. This morning. You know, he challenged Willoughby.

MARIANNE. In a duel?

ELINOR. For your honour. He won but let Willoughby go.

Colonel Brandon  
Pages 98-99  
to his exit



Page 116  
Doctor - to his exit.

*asleep, MARIANNE starts to wheeze. ELINOR notices, then wakes the COLONEL..)*

ELINOR. Colonel, her pulse is lower. And quicker than ever.  
COLONEL. We must get help!

*(The DOCTOR arrives and they gather round the bed. MARIANNE is feverish and mumbling.)*

ELINOR. Well?

DOCTOR. The fever's taken hold. My medicines alas have failed. I'm afraid she is in God's hands now. You might like to think about sending for your mother.

BRANDON. Let me go please. If I set off now I'll be there by morning.

*(ELINOR just nods. The COLONEL goes.)*

DOCTOR. There's nothing more to be done now. We must wait it out. By the morning, it will turn one way or the other. All we can do is pray.

*(ELINOR kneels down next to the bed and has a moment where she begins to pray, before giving up and embracing her sister. Time passes. ELINOR sleeps. MARIANNE is breathing heavily enough that we can hear it.)*

*(Meanwhile we see MARGARET and MRS DASHWOOD with fishing nets dipping for catches in the rock pools. The COLONEL is looking for them.)*

COLONEL. *(off)* Mrs Dashwood! *(On)* Mrs Dashwood.

MRS D. Colonel! I had thought you were still in town! What a pleasant surprise. What is wrong? Oh no - oh no - what's happened?

COLONEL. It is Marianne.

*(The COLONEL puts his arm around her and escorts her off with MARGARET.)*

*(Light fills the room in Cleveland. ELINOR is still asleep. MARIANNE's breathing continues loudly, then fitfully, then stops. Silence. ELINOR wakes up. She notices MARIANNE's heavy breathing has stopped.)*

ELINOR. Is it a fever?

DOCTOR. I hope that a few days will restore her. Though I fear her disorder may have a putrid tendency and give rise to infection. It is hard to know yet. I'd advise that Mrs Palmer, with the newborn, best quit the building.

*(MRS PALMER looks at him, takes this in, then in a single beat, turns and runs from the room.)*

ELINOR. Mr Palmer, I'm sorry, forcing you out of your own home.

MR PALMER. Don't apologise. On consideration - if Mrs Palmer is to stay with her mother... I might just stay here.

*(MRS PALMER re-enters.)*

MRS PALMER. Thomas!

MR PALMER. *(disappointed)* Or perhaps not. *(Exits)*

COLONEL. What can we do? To help her?

DOCTOR. Tend to her. Stay with her. Time will tell, but you must inform me if there's any change at all. I hope it will pass of its own accord.

ELINOR. Thank you, Doctor.

DOCTOR. Good day to you. *(Exits)*

ELINOR. Colonel, we're indebted to you again.

COLONEL. Not at all. Now, if we are to sit and keep watch we shall need entertainment. What can I fetch you?  
ELINOR. Perhaps some paper to sketch on. Thank you.

*(He bows and leaves. Musical sequence where ELINOR and the COLONEL take turns to watch over MARIANNE. Then, in the middle of the night, when they are both*

Scene Nine: Winkles and Rockpools

*(A physical sequence in which WILLOUGHBY turns up every day and he and MARIANNE do various activities together. COLONEL BRANDON attempts to compete but he's always one step behind. Segway to WILLOUGHBY and the Dashwoods on the beach. MARGARET is searching for crabs.)*

WILLOUGHBY. Colonel Brandon is just the kind of man whom everybody speaks well of, and nobody cares about. *(Pointing to something)* There you are, Margaret.

MARGARET. Where?

WILLOUGHBY. There.

MARIANNE. That is exactly what I think of him.

MARGARET. What is it?

WILLOUGHBY. A wrinkle.

*(He fishes it out for her and hands it to her. She puts it in her bucket.)*

ELINOR. You two! Don't abuse the poor man. He is esteemed by all the family at the Park, and I enjoy talking to him a great deal.

WILLOUGHBY. That he's patronized by you is certainly in his favour. But as for the others – Mrs Jennings and Sir John – that's a reproach in itself, isn't it? Come on! He has more money than he can spend, more time than he knows what to do with, and two new coats every year. And that's probably the most interesting thing about him.

ELINOR. He's a man of great sense and a gentle address. He seems to have an amiable heart.

WILLOUGHBY. Miss Dashwood, you are endeavouring to disarm me by reason, but it will not do. I can be as stubborn as you are convincing. I say, there are three unanswerable charges against Brandon. One, he has threatened me with rain when I wanted it to be fine; two, he has found fault with my curicle, and three

Edward Ferrars

P. 51 to 52

(To

--- "disliking him  
as much as ever



— I cannot persuade him to buy my brown mare. If you'll be satisfied by my saying that his character is, in other respects, irreproachable, I'll confess it. And in return, you cannot deny me the privilege of disliking him as much as ever.

*(The COLONEL arrives.)*

ELINOR. Colonel Brandon.

COLONEL. I saw you from the path.

MARGARET. Look, it's a wink!

COLONEL. Well I never.

MARGARET. Mr Willoughby found it for me.

COLONEL. Did he?

WILLOUGHBY. Would you mind if I stole your sister away for just a moment? I promise to return her directly.

*(To MARIANNE)* I have something to show you. Upon the cliff.

ELINOR. The cliff? Is it safe?

MARIANNE. ELINOR! Where is your spirit? I may even lose my footing on purpose just so I can tumble into the sea for the adventure.

ELINOR. But—!

*(But they are gone.)*

*(ELINOR and the COLONEL move away from SIR JOHN and MRS JENNINGS.)*

ELINOR. I fear my sister leaves little to guess at in terms of her affections. She doesn't see how people talk.

COLONEL. And yet there's something so amiable in the prejudices of a young mind—

ELINOR. That would all be very well if her naivety didn't have the unfortunate tendency of setting propriety at naught.

COLONEL. The world can be a cruel place, Miss Dashwood. To enjoy the blissful innocence of youth whilst one can... I knew a young lady once who...but perhaps...

ELINOR. Colonel?

Elinor + Edward

from:  
Elinor: Margaret is more  
interested.

to

End Page 21

EDWARD. At all? Or just not out loud?

(He's caught her out.)

And Margaret?

ELINOR. Margaret is more interested in the contents of the pond than the contents of her heart.

EDWARD. Well I am grateful for that, for I've been here less than a day and I've already received instruction on the best location for newt spotting.

ELINOR. You may have made a friend for life already.

EDWARD. I do hope so.

ELINOR. She's determined to become a naturalist, despite Mother's insistence that no man'll want a wife who brings lizards to the dinner table. Though thankfully she's a little young for us to worry yet.

EDWARD. I'm sure she'll have no shortage of suitors when the time comes, for I think there's little in the world as attractive as an appreciation of nature and the open air. I confess it is the only world I find myself truly comfortable in.

ELINOR. I thought you were a society man.

EDWARD. Ah. Fanny has been relaying the details of my mother's fortune has she?

ELINOR. It is a favourite topic of hers. It must be comforting to know that your future's secure, that you won't suffer the agony of an uncertain inheritance.

EDWARD. If only it were that simple. You see, my brother Robert is far more impressive than I, and though I am the eldest, I wouldn't be surprised if she cut me out completely.

ELINOR. Surely not!

EDWARD. Robert has that natural effervescence which makes society life easy for him, whereas I'm afraid I find the extravagances of society rather overwhelming. He has always been the orator. And the sportsman. And the favourite. When he was leading the fray at Harrow I was lumped off to be tutored by an uncle, a Mr Pratt, a fat old fellow with one beady eye and little capacity for learning. So whilst Robert is conquering the city, the only profession my rather sorrowful demeanour sets me in stead for is the church.

ELINOR. And would that make you happy? A parsonage – a country life?

EDWARD. Perhaps. If it was a very little parsonage. With a very small congregation. One or two perilously old ladies, a couple of rabbits and a jersey cow to bless at harvest-time. Then, I am sure, I could live out my life quite contentedly. What do you think to that, Miss Dashwood? Do you despise me?

ELINOR. Not at all. In fact I think you very lucky indeed.

EDWARD. I can't think why.

ELINOR. Mr Ferrars, you at least have the chance to work – to find joy in a profession. If only we could do the same. But we are women. All we are at liberty to do is sit and wait.

EDWARD. Or stroll and wait.

ELINOR. Or stroll, indeed.

EDWARD. And what an unadulterated joy that can sometimes be.

(They smile at each other and walk on, maybe arm in arm.)



MRS D. He promised your father he would support us. We're each promised fifteen hundred pounds at least.

MARRIANNE. (*disappointed*) Fifteen hundred pounds!

(*On the other stage platform, FANNY and MR DASHWOOD appear. She wears the house's.*)

FANNY. (*outraged*) Fifteen hundred pounds!

MARRIANNE. How on earth would we live on that?

FANNY. What on earth would they do with that?

MRS D. It is very little ...

FANNY. Fifteen hundred pounds!

JOHN. But darling—

FANNY. Tell me, what possible claim do the Miss Dashwoods have on your generosity? Do you want us to be left out in the cold?

ELINOR. (*worried*) It is very little to live on.

JOHN. Hmm. What say you to a thousand a piece? Though I did promise Father I'd do all I could to make them comfortable.

FANNY. Comfortable! How comfortable do you want them to be? Silken sheets? Egyptian cotton? One can be quite comfortable with less than a thousand pound a year.

JOHN. You couldn't, my darling.

FANNY. That is beside the point. Would you really see us impoverished to aid some distant half-bloods?

MRS D. We're his closest relations. He wouldn't throw us out of our own house.

(*Time moves forward in the Dashwood house, as JOHN and FANNY's scene continues.*)

JOHN. How about five hundred a piece?

FANNY. A piece? Five hundred between them would be too much. Just think how cheaply they will live! They'll have no carriage, no horses, no need of servants. They'll keep no company and will have no expenses

of any kind. They will be much more able to give you something. And of course, we will have the house.

JOHN. We do already have one.

FANNY. Two. But we *will* have the house. You must write to them immediately. Tell them we'll arrive on Monday.

(*A SERVANT delivers a letter to MRS DASHWOOD; the girls watch her read it.*)

JOHN. Sweetheart, don't you think—

FANNY. It's a rambling old place, by no means fit for us yet, but when I've finished with it—

MRS D. They are to take the house from us.

Fanny & John

Dashwood

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Fanny: --- when I've finished with it...

(*In a single beat time moves forward.*)

SERVANT. Mr and Mrs Dashwood, Madam.

## Scene Seven: Earl Grey

(At the Dashwoods' house)

(LUCY is having tea with FANNY. FANNY doesn't want to have tea with LUCY. LUCY is oblivious.)

LUCY. It tastes of perfume.

FANNY. It is Earl Grey.

LUCY. It is my favourite. We drink it at home.

FANNY. You do? In 'Plymouth'? I am surprised you are able to acquire it.

LUCY. Oh yes, at the town market.

FANNY. The market?!

LUCY. Yes, I often go. Thank you for inviting me in.

FANNY. I couldn't very well leave you in the hallway.

LUCY. I am so very pleased that we are becoming friends. It means such a great deal.

FANNY. I cannot think why.

LUCY. It's just – I hold your family in such esteem, you and Mr Dashwood and Mr Ferrars—

FANNY. Robert?

LUCY. Mr Edward Ferrars. He is the most charming of men.

FANNY. I wasn't aware of your acquaintance.

LUCY. Oh yes. I am sure he'd make whomever he was to marry very, very happy indeed.

FANNY. One generally hopes so.

LUCY. I know when I marry I hope it will be to a man with all of Mr Ferrars' charms and good nature.

FANNY. I am sure you'll meet someone...in Plymouth.

LUCY. Mrs Dashwood, do you know – I have met someone.

But it is entirely a secret.

FANNY. A secret? Is it? Pray do tell.

LUCY. I really wasn't going to say a thing – but you have been so kind – I think I cannot keep it in a second longer.

FANNY. I promise I won't tell. Go on. Do I know him?

LUCY. Indeed you do. The man is – he is—

FANNY. Go on. Well go on!

(LUCY leans in and whispers it to her.)

FANNY. (frozen, icy) What?!!

LUCY. Edward and I have been engaged in secret these four years. What do you say to that?

FANNY. Get out of my house you little urchin! You stupid, stupid girl! You!

LUCY. But Mrs Dashwood—

FANNY. John! Edward! Get out of my house, get out!! You little sneaking, conniving, filthy country peasant – you trapped him – you disgust me – get out, get out, get out!!!

*Fanny & Lucy  
Whole Scene.*



*Lucy & Elinor -  
p78 - end p.79*

LUCY. You may think my question a little odd, but tell me, are you at all acquainted with your sister-in-law's mother, Mrs Ferrars?

ELINOR. I've never met her, no.

LUCY. Then you cannot know what sort of woman she is?

ELINOR. Not at all. Why do you ask?

LUCY. I don't mean to be impertinent.

ELINOR. We've only just met, how could I think you impertinent?

LUCY. I couldn't bear to have you think me ungracious.

I am sorry you don't know Mrs Ferrars.

ELINOR. As am I, if my knowing her could be of any use to you, but really I never understood that you were at all connected with the family.

LUCY. But if I dare tell you my secret, it would make perfect sense. You see, Mrs Ferrars is nothing to me at present, but the time may come when we may be very intimately connected.

ELINOR. Good heavens, what do you mean? Are you acquainted with Mr Robert Ferrars? Can you be? Do the two of you have an understanding?

LUCY. Oh no, not with Mr Robert Ferrars, for I have never met him in my life. But with his elder brother, Edward.

*(A beat)*

ELINOR. Edward Ferrars? But, surely it cannot be.

LUCY. You may well be surprised, as I'm sure he never dropped the smallest hint.

ELINOR. But surely we can't mean the same Edward Ferrars.

LUCY. Oh yes, we can mean no other.

ELINOR. It cannot be.

LUCY. It is, I assure you. Edward Ferrars, brother of your sister-in-law, Fanny Dashwood. We met when he came to study under my uncle, Mr Pratt, at Plymouth. Did he never mention it to you?

ELINOR. Yes. Yes he did.

ELINOR. May I ask if your engagement is long standing?

LUCY. We have been engaged these four years.

ELINOR. Four years!

LUCY. Yes. Oh, Elinor, I knew I could depend on you. For he holds you in such high esteem, you're like a sister to him.

ELINOR. It is strange that I have never even heard him mention your name.

LUCY. Oh no, considering our situation it isn't strange at all. He was always so afraid of discovery.

ELINOR. Four years?

LUCY. Yes, and heaven knows how much longer we will have to wait. Poor Edward! *(She dabs away tears with a handkerchief with his initials.)* All he has of mine are letters and a lock of hair I had set into a ring for him. Have you seen it?

ELINOR. Yes, I have.

LUCY. It is imperative that his mother doesn't find out yet, for she'd never approve. The torment we have gone through! Sometimes I wonder if we should break off the engagement entirely, for both of our sakes, but it would break his heart, he loves me so very much. Miss Dashwood, what would you do, if you were me?

ELINOR. I beg your pardon?

LUCY. If you were in love with Edward in the most impossible circumstances.

ELINOR. I cannot imagine.

LUCY. He is so cast down by it all - did you not think him melancholy when he last came to Barton?

ELINOR. He came straight from seeing you then?

LUCY. He'd been with us for a fortnight in Plymouth.



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Marianne & Elinor

to: ...hate myself forever

(MARIANNE runs just behind the netus...)

MARIANNE. (pause) How long have you known?

ELINOR. Four months.

MARIANNE. Elinor!

ELINOR. When Lucy first came to Barton Park, she told me in confidence.

MARIANNE. Four months! What, while attending me in all my misery, this has been on your heart? And I reproached you for being happy.

ELINOR. I could hardly tell you then.

MARIANNE. But you've been so calm and cheerful! How have you been supported?

ELINOR. By feeling like I was doing my duty. I had promised to keep her secret—

MARIANNE. Four months! And yet you loved him!

ELINOR. Yes, but I did not love only him. I couldn't let you suffer on my account. And now, in time, I'll be able to speak of it with less emotion. I want him to be happy, Marianne. Perhaps, in spite of the bewitching idea that happiness depends entirely on falling for one person — maybe it's not meant, or fit, that that should be so. Edward will marry Lucy; and time and habit will teach him to forget that he ever thought of me at all.

MARIANNE. You...if you can think so, if the loss of he who is most valued to you can be so easily resolved, then perhaps you were lucky and did not love him so very much after all.

ELINOR. I understand you. You don't suppose that I have ever felt much. For four months, Marianne, I have had all this hanging on my mind, without being at liberty to speak of it to a single creature, knowing how unhappy it would make you and Mother. It was forced on me by the very person whose engagement ruined all of my prospects, and told, as I thought, with triumph.

Her suspicions I have had to oppose, by having to appear indifferent where I have been the most deeply involved — and not only once but repeatedly. I have had to listen to her hopes and exultations again and again. I have known myself to be divided from Edward forever, without hearing one circumstance that could make me want to be with him less. I have had to contend with the unkindness of his sister and the insolence of his mother, and have suffered all the punishments of an attachment without ever enjoying any of its advantages. And all this at a time when this has been far from my only unhappiness. If you can think me capable of ever feeling, surely you may suppose that I have suffered now.

MARIANNE. Oh Elinor, how can I have been so selfish? I've been so thoughtless when you've borne with me all my sufferings — I have been barbarous to you! Oh, I will hate myself forever!

(She bursts into tears and guess what — ELINOR comforts her. They hug. Time moves forward. MRS JENNINGS enters, later that day.)

MRS J. So he has been dismissed from his mother's notice forever and is set to marry Lucy as soon as they can arrange a parson. And what's worse, the spiteful woman has redirected all of his fortune to his brother Robert, who everyone knows is a noodle and far less deserving. She's been at the lawyer's this morning. Lord help them, how poor they will be. I must see what I can give them towards furnishing their house.

MR PERKS. Colonel Brandon, ma'am.

MRS J. Dear Colonel, we are glad to see you.

COLONEL. I hope you are all well. I have brought Miss Dashwood some music in case she needed something to lift her spirits.

MARIANNE. Thank you, Colonel.

MRS J. Ah, music — the food of love.

(MARIANNE begins to play.)



# MR + MRS PALMER

*(The girls and the COLONEL are being shown round the PALMERs' house. MRS PALMER is in the doorway, showing her baby daughter a bee. MR PALMER is his usual unimpressed self.)*

MRS PALMER. Look, Georgina – a bee. Say 'bee'. Say 'b, b, b, bee'.

MR PALMER. It is a wasp, not a bee. She'll get stung.

MRS PALMER. You see, Mr Palmer is as chirpy as ever. Though he dotes on Georgina, don't you darling, eh? Oh. Oh dear. She's been sick again. Thomas? Here, Daddy will hold you.

MR PALMER. No I won't, Charlotte!

*(He holds her at arm's length.)*

MRS PALMER. You see – look at that. Can't you see the resemblance?

MR PALMER. Thank you very much.

MARIANNE. I want to walk – will you make my excuses?

ELINOR. Don't go too far.

MARIANNE. Of course not. *(Exiting)*

ELINOR. And be back for lunch.

MRS PALMER. Pray, where's she going?

ELINOR. We've been in town for such a while, I think she's relieved to be in the open air. A walk will do her good.

MR PALMER. We were sorry to hear of her troubles in London.

MRS PALMER. It is as you always said, Thomas. He said from the start, that that Mr Willoughby was a no good noodle of a man, didn't you dear?

MR PALMER. Well I –

MRS PALMER. He did, indeed. Really! What is there not to love about dear Marianne? Well, the Willoughbys will never be welcome here again, never, even if Allenham is but a mile away.

COLONEL. It is quite as close as that?

ELINOR. I hadn't realised. She knows, doesn't she?

COLONEL. I'm sure.

ELINOR. Do you think that's where she's gone?

MR PALMER. It's an easy walk, providing it hasn't rained. She'll be back within two hours I'm sure.

*(The sound of rain starting. Music. Two scenes simultaneously: upstage – MRS PALMER, MR PALMER and ELINOR are playing cards as the COLONEL stands by the window and watches. Downstage – MARIANNE walks, wet through. She looks out across the audience to Allenham.)*

MRS PALMER. I shouldn't worry, Elinor.

ELINOR. Can you see her, Colonel?

COLONEL. No, I can't.

MRS PALMER. Snap!

MR PALMER. You cheated!

MRS PALMER. I did not.

MR PALMER. It's only a little drizzle. Nothing to worry about.

MARIANNE. Oh, Willoughby, Willoughby!

*(A huge thunderclap. Everyone is taken aback.)*

*MARIANNE walks on. The COLONEL makes for the door.)*

MR PALMER. I'm sure your sister is quite safe.

ELINOR. I don't think her constitution is strong enough to withstand another battering.

MR PALMER. If she's in any danger at all, the Colonel will find her. He is the very best of men.

*(The door bangs open and, in a repeat of the earlier image of WILLIOUGHBY holding the drenched MARIANNE, this time it is the COLONEL holding her.)*

ELINOR. Marianne!

MRS PALMER. *(struck by his heroic sexiness)* Colonel!

Mrs Dashwood

41-43 to

"Lord Preserve us!"

Marianne + Margaret

41-42.

MARIANNE. Which are you tea day? And which are you?

MRS D. If I could tell you that, I would be a very rich woman indeed.

Scene Seven: The Knight

(We are in the parlour and MARIANNE is practising the piano. ELINOR is drawing from the pictures in EDWARD's book.)

MARGARET. (off) Look, look! (She runs in.)

MRS D. How many times? It's not genteel to squeal.

MARGARET. Sorry. Look what I found!

(She takes a crab out of its pot and all three women start with alarm.)

MARIANNE. What in heaven's name?!

MARGARET. I think it's a hermit crab.

MRS D. Margaret, you're supposed to be a lady.

MARGARET. Why can't I be a lady with a crab?

ELINOR. Do take it outside. I'm sure it doesn't appreciate being pulled out of the sea.

MARGARET. He wasn't in the sea. He was in a rock pool.

And he was perfectly willing to come.

MARIANNE. How do you know it is a he? It might be a lady crab.

MARGARET. It's not. I checked.

MRS D. Margaret Dashwood! Really! Take it outside and wash your mouth out.

(MARGARET goes. Then comes back immediately.)

MARGARET. Colonel Brandon's at the gate.

(MARIANNE stands up immediately.)

MARIANNE. Come on. We're going for a walk.

MARGARET. What about my crab?

MARIANNE. He can come too. Quickly.

ELINOR. Marianne! You know perfectly well he has come to see you.

MARIANNE. Margaret, your crab won't survive another minute unless we put him back in the water immediately! Come on, let's go the back way.



*(She grabs MARGARET's hand and pulls her out of the room, leaving ELINOR and MRS DASHWOOD looking at each other in exasperation. The COLONEL approaches the house. He has a little bundle of books wrapped with a ribbon, clearly a present for MARIANNE.)*

THOMAS. Colonel Brandon, ma'am.

MRS D. How lovely to see you again so soon.

COLONEL. Mrs Dashwood, Miss Dashwood. *(He pauses and looks around subtly.)* I was just passing by.

ELINOR. *(looking at the books)* I am afraid you just missed Marianne. She has gone for a walk with Margaret.

COLONEL. Ah. That is a shame. Well, the weather is turning. I do hope they don't get caught in the rain.

*(MARIANNE and MARGARET cross the other part of the stage, as if outside.)*

MARIANNE. Oh, Meg, look! Is there a felicity in this world superior to this?

MARGARET. You said we were going to the sea. What about my crab?

MARIANNE. It's a hardy old thing. I'm sure he'll be fine.

MARGARET. But you said—

MARIANNE. 'Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?'

MARGARET. My feet are wet.

MARIANNE. 'Think not of them, thou hast thy music too'—

MARGARET. Can we go home now?

MARIANNE. No. We will walk here at least two hours.

MARGARET. But look at the clouds.

ELINOR. Look at the clouds.

MARIANNE. Let's run!

*(Thunderclap. Meanwhile COLONEL BRANDON, ELINOR and MRS DASHWOOD sit awkwardly in silence. They are floundering for conversation.)*

MRS D. And how do you like — the sea?

COLONEL. The sea?

MRS D. Yes. I wondered...with you living in Devonshire...you may enjoy...the sea.

COLONEL. Well. Yes. The sea is very — pleasant.

*(Pause)*

MRS D. Do you... Do you fish...in it?

COLONEL. Fish?

MRS D. Yes. In the sea. Do you fish?

COLONEL. Oh. No.

MRS D. Oh.

*(Pause)*

COLONEL. Well, I think I mustn't trouble you any longer.

Please send Miss Dashwood — and Margaret — my kindest regards.

MRS D. Of course. I am sorry — we expected her back a hour ago. Is that for...?

*(She indicates the ribbon-wrapped books.)*

COLONEL. Oh. Another time. Good day to you both.

*(As he exits one way, there is another thunderclap and the door bursts open to reveal MARIANNE, soaking wet, is in WILLOUGHBY's arms in the doorway.)*

MRS D. Lord preserve us!

ELINOR. Marianne!

MARGARET. He rescued her! He rescued her!

WILLOUGHBY. My most sincere apologies for the intrusion; forgive me. She'd fallen. And though it wasn't fitting to the lady's modesty, I'm afraid I had no choice but to take her up and carry her down the hill. It's her ankle. If it hadn't been for the danger she was in I wouldn't have dreamed of acting with such indiscretion.

MARIANNE. *(dazed. Captivated by him)* No indiscretion.

WILLOUGHBY. Your ankle — may I?

*(He takes her shoe off and feels her ankle. The women watch in wonder.)*

How is this possible?

MRS J. He's a rogue! A rogue! Well, he shall never be invited to dine here again – no matter how smart his relations. Let me fetch you something for your nerves.

*(Exits)*

ELINOR. Marianne, at least you have escaped a connection for life with the most unprincipled man.

MARIANNE. I have never felt so wretched.

*(WILLOUGHBY leaves his scene.)*

ELINOR. Please try and exert yourself, if you're not to kill yourself and all who love you.

MARIANNE. Oh happy, happy Elinor – you cannot have any idea of what I suffer!

ELINOR. Do you call me happy, Marianne? If you knew! How can you believe me to be so when you are so wretched? Think what you would have suffered if this discovery had been further delayed – if your engagement had carried on for months before he put an end to it.

MARIANNE. There has been no engagement!

ELINOR. What?

MARIANNE. He's not so unworthy as you think. He's broken no faith with me.

ELINOR. But he told you he loved you.

MARIANNE. Yes – no – never – absolutely, it was every day implied but never truly declared. Sometimes I thought it had been, but it never was.

ELINOR. Yet you wrote to him?

MARIANNE. Could that be wrong after all that had passed?

ELINOR. Oh, Marianne. You should have thought—

MRS J. No, Elinor, he is entirely in the wrong. We saw them head and ears in love with each other! Did he not take her in his carriage with him, take a lock of her hair—

Mrs Jennings  
Bottom P. 95  
to P 96 her exit



MARIANNE. 'The lock of hair which you so obligingly bestowed on me' – that is unpardonable! For it was he who cut it and he who brought the scissors!

(MARIANNE runs out, distraught.)

MRS J. The man is rotten, through and through. Well, I think the least I can do is to make sure that everybody knows about it.

ELINOR. I'm sure the less said on the subject, the better – for both of them, as whilst his actions are unforgivable, we must at least do him justice that he has broken no engagement with her.

MRS J. No engagement indeed! After taking her all over Allenham House and fixing on the very rooms they were to live in! He is beyond redemption. Well, at least now Colonel Brandon can have her at last. I'll put a shilling on it if they a'nt married by Midsummer. Two thousand pounds a year – it's not much – but he has some of the best mulberry trees in the country. Lord, how Charlotte and I did stuff ourselves when we were there last. And a dove cot, and a stewponds, and a very pretty canal. And it is only a quarter of a mile from the turnpike road, so it's never dull, for if you sit up behind the house you may spot all the goings-on on the way to Exeter. I'll invite him for dinner. And in the meantime, we have some of the very finest Constantia wine – take her a drop, will you? (Exits)

ELINOR. Of course.

(ELINOR goes to comfort MARIANNE but she won't come out of her room.)

I've a drink for you. It might make you feel better.

MARIANNE. Just leave me.

ELINOR. I will leave you, if you will go to bed.

(ELINOR drinks the wine down in one. Meanwhile, on second stage, COLONEL BRANDON is in a street queue to buy a newspaper, behind two chattering gossips.)

GOSSIP 1. Well, I never. At the Fothergills?

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Peto. to  
"It was the wind,  
Madam."

Scene Three: Berkeley Street

(MARIANNE is haranguing a long-suffering servant (MR PERKS))

MARIANNE. Are you sure there's no letter?

MR PERKS. Yes, madam.

MARIANNE. Or a note? Or a card?

MR PERKS. I am sure, madam.

MARIANNE. Did you go out? Even for a minute? Could you have missed it?

MRS J. Marianne, leave the poor man alone.

(*There is a noise, off.*)

MARIANNE. Was that a knock?

MR PERKS. The wind, madam.

MARIANNE. How do you know? Do go and check!

(MR PERKS looks to MRS JENNINGS, who gives him an exasperated look, then goes to check.)

ELINOR. Try and stay calm.

MARIANNE. How can I stay calm when my heart is exploding? (*As the SERVANT returns*) Well?

MR PERKS. It was the wind, madam.

MRS J. Perhaps Willoughby is not in town yet. I know Sir John wouldn't dream of leaving Barton while the weather's still fine enough to hunt and fish.

MARIANNE. I hadn't thought of that.

MRS J. But take solace – we are in England – before they know it the frost'll set in and drive them all to town.

ELINOR. (*joking*) Nay, perhaps it may even freeze tonight!

MARIANNE. Oh, I do hope so. Of course, he is at Allensham. I'll write immediately.

ELINOR. Please – wait until you hear from him. Allow him the chance to miss you.



Robert Ferrars

p. 90

ELINOR. He may not be here.

MARIANNE. He must know I am come tonight. *(She goes off in search of him.)*

ELINOR. Marianne!

LUCY. Your sister's quite determined.

MRS J. Now look who I have brought you. Mr Ferrars!

ROBERT. Robert Ferrars. Delighted.

MRS J. Miss Dashwood and Miss Steele.

ROBERT. I've heard a good deal about you, Miss Dashwood, which is praise indeed as my urchin of a brother seldom speaks ten words together. Miss Steele... I know we've never met, for I wouldn't forget a face like yours. Phwoar!

LUCY. Mr Ferrars!

ROBERT. Would you do me the honour of the next dance? I'll try not to tread on your feet. They look sturdy enough.

*(ROBERT is a bit of an idiot and he clearly likes the look of LUCY. They flirt with each other shamelessly.)*

LUCY. Of course.

*(A dance begins. Lots of swirling and curtsying, then all of a sudden ELINOR finds herself face to face with WILLoughBY. The following conversation happens as they dance together. It is fragmented, as they move closer and further from each other with the steps - and very awkward. He evidently would rather be anywhere else.)*

ELINOR. Mr Willoughby!

WILLoughBY. Miss Dashwood. I had not expected to see you here. You are well?

ELINOR. Yes.

WILLoughBY. And how - is your mother?

ELINOR. My mother? She is fine. Mr Willoughby—

*(WILLoughBY bows and runs away, causing a disturbance as he interrupts the dance.)*

WILLoughBY. Excuse me—

ELINOR. Mr Willoughby!

*(He is gone. ELINOR moves through the crowd to reach MARIANNE.)*

I think we should go.

MARIANNE. But I haven't danced yet. And I have not seen him, he'll be here I'm sure.

ELINOR. I really think we ought to—

MARIANNE. There he is. There! Why does he not look at me? Willoughby!

*(WILLoughBY is talking to a posh woman (MISS GREY) and some others. MARIANNE makes a bee-line for him and ELINOR follows helplessly.)*

ELINOR. Don't betray your feelings to everyone present.

Perhaps he hasn't seen you—

MARIANNE. Willoughby!

WILLoughBY. *(taken aback)* Miss Dashwood. Good evening. *(Beat)* You are - well, I pray? How long have you been in town?

MARIANNE. Good God, Willoughby, what's the meaning of this? Have you not received my letters? Will you not shake hands with me?

WILLoughBY. I called at Berkeley Street; I hope my card was not lost.

MARIANNE. But have you not received my notes? Here is some mistake, I'm sure. Tell me, for heaven's sake, what is the matter?

WILLoughBY. I must return to my party. If you will excuse me.

Willoughby Margaret  
& Marianne Pl 7#48

MARGARET. The knight is back – Marianne, it's your preserver!

*(Madness ensues as they all ready themselves for his entrance. He steps through the door. They all pose perfectly as if nothing was amiss.)*

WILLOUGHBY. Ladies.

MRS D. Mr Willoughby. You are most welcome.

WILLOUGHBY. How is the invalid? Here, these are for you.

*(He hands her a large bunch of flowers.)*

MARIANNE. They're beautiful.

WILLOUGHBY. I hope you don't mind that I picked them myself.

MARIANNE. There is nothing in the world like wild flowers. Thank you.

WILLOUGHBY. And as you are confined here, I thought you might enjoy a little reading. I was going to bring you Alexander Pope as he's so much in the fashion, but I just couldn't bring myself to do it. I confess I don't get on with him at all.

MARIANNE. That is exactly how I feel.

WILLOUGHBY. You do?

MARIANNE. Absolutely! I think Pope is quite overrated.

WILLOUGHBY. I couldn't agree more. He has none of the/ heart—

MARIANNE. – heart, none of the soul of the true Romantics.

WILLOUGHBY. No, indeed. Who do you like to read, Miss Dashwood?

MARIANNE. Poets of spirit. Honest, feeling poets. William Blake most of all.

WILLOUGHBY. Well I never. And I.

Never seek to tell thy love,



Love that never told can be.  
/For the gentle—'

MARIANNE. 'For the gentle wind does move  
/Silently. Invisibly.'

WILLOUGHBY. 'Silently invisibly.'

MARIANNE. You understand it.

*(Beat. They look at each other. All eyes on them.)*

And speak it so well.

WILLOUGHBY. Well I'm glad you approve of Blake as I took  
the liberty of bringing you a copy.

*(She looks inside it.)*

It is inscribed.

MARIANNE. He signed it! I can't accept this; it is too much.  
WILLOUGHBY. Please.

MARGARET. Do you like crabs?

WILLOUGHBY. Crabs?

MRS D. Margaret! What have we told you about polite  
conversation.

WILLOUGHBY. I have been known to wander these shores  
a little.

MARIANNE. You like the open air?

WILLOUGHBY. How could anyone not? 'The grass, the  
thicket, and the fruit-tree wild; White hawthorn, and  
the pastoral eglantine.'

MARIANNE. Keats.

WILLOUGHBY. The greatest observer of nature ever to have  
raised a pen. Have you ever seen a porcelain crab,  
Miss?

MARGARET. Never.

WILLOUGHBY. There are perhaps two or three spots in the  
country you can find them, and you're lucky enough  
to live only a mile from one. If you like, I can show  
you.

*(MARGARET is speechless.)*

MRS D. He does have a charming way.

MARIANNE. Oh his manners! And his voice — (sitting up) when he talked—

ELINOR. Marianne! Take care, your ankle—

MARIANNE. What about it? He has cured it completely!

Look— (She demonstrates by standing on it and falls back down.) Ow!

(There is a knock at the door.)

MARIANNE. He has returned! I knew it.

(SIR JOHN enters, covering his head with a newspaper which is now soggy.)

SIR J. Well bless me, I was only coming to deliver you a paper when the heavens opened — there's rather little left of the news, I'm afraid it's all run away down the page. (Seeing MARIANNE drenched and with a leg raised) Gracious, have you been shipwrecked?

MARGARET. Marianne fell down a cliff and she was rescued by a knight.

SIR J. A cliff?

MRS D. It wasn't a cliff.

ELINOR. And he wasn't a knight.

MARIANNE. He was a gentleman!

SIR J. So that was the fellow flying off into the distance, was it?

MARIANNE. His name is Willoughby.

SIR J. Willoughby? He in the country, is he? You know, he is the boldest rider in England.

MARIANNE. You know him?

SIR J. Yes indeed.

MARIANNE. Who is he? What sort of a man is he? What are his pursuits? His talents?

SIR J. Upon my soul, I don't know him as well as all that.

MARIANNE. But Sir John, who is he? Where does he come from?

Sir John & Marianne

— From P 45:—

Marianne: He has returned...

to end P. 46



SIR J. Well, he has a house at Allenhurst, or he will have, when he inherits from his aunt. But bless me, why so many questions?

*(The women all share a look.)*

Oh I see! Wait 'til Mrs Jennings hears of this.

MARIANNE. What else can you tell us? Does he play? Does he dance?

SIR J. Now you ask, I do remember last Christmas, at a little hop at the Park, he danced from eight 'til four without once sitting down.

MRS D. Did he indeed?

MARIANNE. And with elegance, with spirit?

SIR J. With spirit in abundance! And he was up again at eight to ride.

MARIANNE. Oh that is everything a young man ought to be. Whatever his pursuits, his eagerness should know no moderation, and leave him no sense of fatigue.

SIR J. I see how it will be now. You'll set your cap at him now, and never think of poor Brandon. Dear me, I hope you will not break his heart, for he is quite taken with you. Perhaps I should invite Willoughby for dinner.

MARIANNE. Oh please, Sir John.

SIR J. I shall go and arrange it. Once I've found Columbus, he bolted at the first clap of thunder and Lord only knows how many rabbits he has mangled on his travels. Don't despair, Miss Dashwood, I'm sure it will be your turn soon. Maybe you'll find the Colonel favourable now. If I were you I wouldn't give him up for all of this tumbling down hills – unless of course your Mr F is still lurking in the Devonshire fog.

ELINOR. Sir John!

SIR J. Anon, anon.

Willoughby Margaret  
& Marianne P47#48

MARGARET. The knight is back – Marianne, it's your preserver!

*(Madness ensues as they all ready themselves for his entrance. He steps through the door. They all pose perfectly as if nothing was amiss.)*

WILLOUGHBY. Ladies.

MRS D. Mr Willoughby. You are most welcome.

WILLOUGHBY. How is the invalid? Here, these are for you.

*(He hands her a large bunch of flowers.)*

MARIANNE. They're beautiful.

WILLOUGHBY. I hope you don't mind that I picked them myself.

MARIANNE. There is nothing in the world like wild flowers. Thank you.

WILLOUGHBY. And as you are confined here, I thought you might enjoy a little reading. I was going to bring you Alexander Pope as he's so much in the fashion, but I just couldn't bring myself to do it. I confess I don't get on with him at all.

MARIANNE. That is exactly how I feel.

WILLOUGHBY. You do?

MARIANNE. Absolutely! I think Pope is quite overrated.

WILLOUGHBY. I couldn't agree more. He has none of the/ heart—

MARIANNE. – heart, none of the soul of the true Romantics.

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WILLOUGHBY. Well I never. And I.

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Love that never told can be.  
/For the gentle—'

MARIANNE. 'For the gentle wind does move  
/Silently. Invisibly.'

WILLOUGHBY. 'Silently invisibly.'

MARIANNE. You understand it.

*(Beat. They look at each other. All eyes on them.)*

And speak it so well.

WILLOUGHBY. Well I'm glad you approve of Blake as I took  
the liberty of bringing you a copy.

*(She looks inside it.)*

It is inscribed.

MARIANNE. He signed it! I can't accept this; it is too much.  
WILLOUGHBY. Please.

MARGARET. Do you like crabs?

WILLOUGHBY. Crabs?

MRS D. Margaret! What have we told you about polite  
conversation.

WILLOUGHBY. I have been known to wander these shores  
a little.

MARIANNE. You like the open air?

WILLOUGHBY. How could anyone not? 'The grass, the  
thicket, and the fruit-tree wild; White hawthorn, and  
the pastoral eglantine.'

MARIANNE. Keats.

WILLOUGHBY. The greatest observer of nature ever to have  
raised a pen. Have you ever seen a porcelain crab,  
Miss?

MARGARET. Never.

WILLOUGHBY. There are perhaps two or three spots in the  
country you can find them, and you're lucky enough  
to live only a mile from one. If you like, I can show  
you.

*(MARGARET is speechless.)*

*Willoughby.*

P. 51-52 To end speech

*... together. COLONEL BRANDON attempts to compete but he's always one step behind. Segway to WILLOUGHBY and the Dashwoods on the beach. MARGARET is searching for crabs.)*

WILLOUGHBY. Colonel Brandon is just the kind of man whom everybody speaks well of, and nobody cares about. *(Pointing to something)* There you are, Margaret.

MARGARET. Where?

WILLOUGHBY. There.

MARIANNE. That is exactly what I think of him.

MARGARET. What is it?

WILLOUGHBY. A wrinkle.

*(He fishes it out for her and hands it to her. She puts it in her bucket.)*

ELINOR. You two! Don't abuse the poor man. He is esteemed by all the family at the Park, and I enjoy talking to him a great deal.

WILLOUGHBY. That he's patronized by you is certainly in his favour. But as for the others – Mrs Jennings and Sir John – that's a reproach in itself, isn't it? Come on! He has more money than he can spend, more time than he knows what to do with, and two new coats every year. And that's probably the most interesting thing about him.

ELINOR. He's a man of great sense and a gentle address. He seems to have an amiable heart.

WILLOUGHBY. Miss Dashwood, you are endeavouring to disarm me by reason, but it will not do. I can be as stubborn as you are convincing. I say, there are three unanswered charges against Brandon. One, he has threatened me with rain when I wanted it to be fine; two, he has found fault with my curicle, and three



— I cannot persuade him to buy my brown mare. If you'll be satisfied by my saying that his character is, in other respects, irreproachable, I'll confess it. And in return, you cannot deny me the privilege of disliking him as much as ever.

---

*(The COLONEL arrives.)*

ELINOR. Colonel Brandon.

COLONEL. I saw you from the path.

MARGARET. Look, it's a wink!

COLONEL. Well I never.

MARGARET. Mr Willoughby found it for me.

COLONEL. Did he?

WILLOUGHBY. Would you mind if I stole your sister away for just a moment? I promise to return her directly.  
*(To MARIANNE.)* I have something to show you. Upon the cliff.

ELINOR. The cliff? Is it safe?

MARIANNE. ELINOR! Where is your spirit? I may even lose my footing on purpose just so I can tumble into the sea for the adventure.

ELINOR. But—!

*(But they are gone.)*

*(ELINOR and the COLONEL move away from SIR JOHN and MRS JENNINGS.)*

ELINOR. I fear my sister leaves little to guess at in terms of her affections. She doesn't see how people talk.

COLONEL. And yet there's something so amiable in the prejudices of a young mind—

ELINOR. That would all be very well if her naivety didn't have the unfortunate tendency of setting propriety at naught.

COLONEL. The world can be a cruel place, Miss Dashwood. To enjoy the blissful innocence of youth whilst one can... I knew a young lady once who... but perhaps...

ELINOR. Colonel?

Gossips 1 & 2.

Page 96 → 97

now Colonel Brandon can have her at last. I'll put a shilling on it if they a'nt married by Midsummer. Two thousand pounds a year – it's not much – but he has some of the best mulberry trees in the county. Lord, how Charlotte and I did stuff ourselves when we were there last. And a dove cot, and a stewponds, and a very pretty canal. And it is only a quarter of a mile from the turnpike road, so it's never dull, for if you sit up behind the house you may spot all the goings-on on the way to Exeter. I'll invite him for dinner. And in the meantime, we have some of the very finest Constantia wine – take her a drop, will you? *(Exits)*

ELINOR. Of course.

*ELINOR goes to comfort MARIANNE but she won't come out of her room.)*

I've a drink for you. It might make you feel better.

MARIANNE. Just leave me.

ELINOR. I will leave you, if you will go to bed.

*(ELINOR drinks the wine down in one. Meanwhile, on second stage, COLONEL BRANDON is in a street queue to buy a newspaper, behind two chattering gossips.)*

GOSSIP 1. Well, I never. At the Fothergills?

GOSSIP 2. Yes indeed! And afterwards, she was seen entering a carriage with him, with her husband only feet away getting their coats. And by the time he'd turned around they were gone!

GOSSIP 1. No!

GOSSIP 2. Yes!

GOSSIP 1. They never did.

GOSSIP 2. On my life, I swear it! And then, did you hear the scandal of the Dashwood girl and that Mr Willoughby?

GOSSIP 1. I heard they were engaged.

GOSSIP 2. As had I. But, would you believe, he arrived at the Holbein Ball with another lady – a Miss Grey, who has twenty thousand pounds – and after Miss Dashwood made quite a scene, it turns out, he has been engaged to the heiress the whole time – and never had the least intention of marrying the Dashwood girl at all.

GOSSIP 1. No!

GOSSIP 2. Yes!

GOSSIP 1. He never was!

GOSSIP 2. I swear, on my heart. Of course, no one will touch her now, as she hasn't a penny.

GOSSIP 1. 'Tis a shame for her, as her reputation will be quite ruined.

COLONEL. What is a shame is your lack of discretion.

Perhaps if you ceased your tittle-tattle and instead were kinder to the fellow members of your sex, you would not need to look to other people's misfortunes for entertainment. Good day. *(Exits)*

GOSSIP 1. Well I never!

*(They are both left standing open-mouthed. During this time ELINOR has stayed outside MARIANNE's door. The COLONEL then appears in the scene with ELINOR.)*

ELINOR. Colonel! You look flustered. Are you quite well?

COLONEL. I am sorry, I heard the news. Is there anything I can do?

ELINOR. I only wish there was.



Thomas

P 42

*(In the parlour. THOMAS enters with the post. MARIANNE is playing a sad song on the piano.)*

THOMAS. Post's here, ma'am.

MARIANNE. Is there a letter for me?

THOMAS. *(to MRS D)* Two letters for you, ma'am, and one—

*(MARIANNE grabs it out of his hands and tears it open.)*

...and one for Miss Marianne.

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*(She grabs MARGARET's hand and pulls her out of the room, leaving ELINOR and MRS DASHWOOD looking at each other in exasperation. The COLONEL approaches the house. He has a little bundle of books wrapped with a ribbon, clearly a present for MARIANNE.)*

THOMAS. Colonel Brandon, ma'am.

MRS D. How lovely to see you again so soon.

Pages 125 - 126

THOMAS. *(entering)* Shall I fetch tea for you all, ma'am?

MRS D. That would be lovely, Thomas. Do you know – why don't we open a bottle of wine? We are all reunited, are we not? We should celebrate. Did you purchase any in Exeter?

THOMAS. I did, ma'am.

ELINOR. Mama! We are supposed to be saving.

MRS D. Just once in a while, Elinor.

THOMAS. I saw Mr Ferrars while I was there. I suppose you know that he is married now, ma'am?

*(Pause. MARIANNE stops playing. The merriment ends. A pause.)*

MRS D. Who told you this, Thomas?

THOMAS. I saw him for myself, ma'am, this morning, with his lady. Miss Steele as was. They were stopping in a chaise at the New London Inn. She enquired after you all, especially you, Miss Dashwood.

MARIANNE. But did she tell you she was married, Thomas?

THOMAS. Yes, ma'am. So I made free to wish her joy. She said they were not biding long, but they'd be sure to call here soon.

MRS D. And did Mr Ferrars look well?

THOMAS. Right well, madam. And they both seemed vastly contented with their situation.

MRS D. Thank you, Thomas.