

'She is only grown a little more grave than she was.'

'Nay, Edward,' said Marianne, '*you* need not reproach me. You are not very gay yourself.'

'Why should you think so?' replied he, with a sigh. 'But gaiety never was a part of *my* character.'

'Nor do I think it a part of Marianne's,' said Elinor; 'I should hardly call her a lively girl—she is very earnest, very eager in all she does—sometimes talks a great deal and always with animation—but she is not often really merry.'

'I believe you are right,' he replied, 'and yet I have always set her down as a lively girl.'

'I have frequently detected myself in such kind of mistakes,' said Elinor, 'in a total misapprehension of character in some point or other: fancying people so much more gay or grave, or ingenious or stupid than they really are, and I can hardly tell why or in what the deception originated. Sometimes one is guided by what they say of themselves, and very frequently by what other people say of them, without giving oneself time to deliberate and judge.'

'But I thought it was right, Elinor,' said Marianne, 'to be guided wholly by the opinion of other people. I thought our judgments were given us merely to be subservient to those of neighbours. This has always been your doctrine, I am sure.'

'No, Marianne, never. My doctrine has never aimed at the subjection of the understanding. All I have ever attempted to influence has been the behaviour. You must not confound my meaning. I am guilty, I confess, of having often wished you to treat our acquaintance in general with greater attention; but when have I advised you to adopt their sentiments or to conform to their judgment in serious matters?'

'You have not been able to bring your sister over to your plan of general civility,' said Edward to Elinor, 'Do you gain no ground?'

'Quite the contrary,' replied Elinor, looking expressively at Marianne. 'My judgment,' he returned, 'is all on your side of the question; but I am afraid my practice is much more on your sister's. I never wish to offend, but I am so foolishly shy, that I often seem negligent, when I am only kept back by my natural awkwardness. I have frequently thought

that I must have been intended by nature to be fond of low company, I am so little at my ease among strangers of gentility?'

'Marianne has not shyness to excuse any inattention of hers,' said Elinor.

'She knows her own worth too well for false shame,' replied Edward. 'Shyness is only the effect of a sense of inferiority in some way or other. If I could persuade myself that my manners were perfectly easy and graceful, I should not be shy.'

'But you would still be reserved,' said Marianne, 'and that is worse.'

Edward started—'Reserved! Am I reserved, Marianne?'

'Yes, very.'

'I do not understand you,' replied he, colouring. 'Reserved!—how, in what manner? What am I to tell you? What can you suppose?'

Elinor looked surprised at his emotion; but trying to laugh off the subject, she said to him, 'Do not you know my sister well enough to understand what she means? Do not you know she calls every one reserved who does not talk as fast, and admire what she admires as rapturously as herself?'

Edward made no answer. His gravity and thoughtfulness returned on him in their fullest extent—and he sat for some time silent and dull.

'We are all unanimous in that wish, I suppose,' said Elinor, 'in spite of the insufficiency of wealth.'

'Oh dear!' cried Margaret, 'how happy I should be! I wonder what I should do with it!'

Marianne looked as if she had no doubt on that point.

'I should be puzzled to spend so large a fortune myself,' said Mrs Dashwood, 'if my children were all to be rich without my help.'

'You must begin your improvements on this house,' observed Elinor, 'and your difficulties will soon vanish.'

'What magnificent orders would travel from this family to London,' said Edward, 'in such an event! What a happy day for booksellers, music-sellers, and print-shops! You, Miss Dashwood, would give a general commission for every new print of merit to be sent you—and as for Marianne, I know her greatness of soul, there would not be music enough in London to content her. And books!—Thomson, Cowper, Scott—she would buy them all over and over again: she would buy up every copy, I believe, to prevent their falling into unworthy hands; and she would have every book that tells her how to admire an old twisted tree. Should not you, Marianne? Forgive me, if I am very saucy. But I was willing to show you that I had not forgot our old disputes.'

'I love to be reminded of the past, Edward—whether it be melancholy or gay, I love to recall it—and you will never offend me by talking of former times. You are very right in supposing how my money would be spent—some of it, at least—my loose cash would certainly be employed in improving my collection of music and books.'

'And the bulk of your fortune would be laid out in annuities on the authors or their heirs.'

'No, Edward, I should have something else to do with it.'

'Perhaps, then, you would bestow it as a reward on that person who wrote the ablest defence of your favourite maxim, that no one can ever be in love more than once in their life—your opinion on that point is unchanged, I presume?'

'Undoubtedly. At my time of life opinions are tolerably fixed. It is not likely that I should now see or hear any thing to change them.'

'Marianne is as steadfast as ever, you see,' said Elinor, 'she is not at all altered.'

'I shall not attempt it. I have no wish to be distinguished; and have every reason to hope I never shall. Thank Heaven! I cannot be forced into genius and eloquence.'

'You have no ambition, I well know. Your wishes are all moderate.'

'As moderate as those of the rest of the world, I believe. I wish as well as every body else to be perfectly happy; but, like every body else it must be in my own way. Greatness will not make me so.'

'Strange that it would!' cried Marianne. 'What have wealth or grandeur to do with happiness?'

'Grandeur has but little,' said Elinor, 'but wealth has much to do with it.'

'Elinor, for shame!' said Marianne, 'money can only give happiness where there is nothing else to give it. Beyond a competence, it can afford no real satisfaction, as far as mere self is concerned.'

'Perhaps,' said Elinor, smiling, 'we may come to the same point. *Your* competence and *my* wealth are very much alike, I dare say; and without them, as the world goes now, we shall both agree that every kind of external comfort must be wanting. Your ideas are only more noble than mine. Come, what is your competence?'

'About eighteen hundred or two thousand a year; not more than *that*,' Elinor laughed. '*two* thousand a year! *one* is my wealth! I guessed how it would end.'

'And yet two thousand a year is a very moderate income,' said Marianne. 'A family cannot well be maintained on a smaller. I am sure I am not extravagant in my demands. A proper establishment of servants, a carriage, perhaps two, and hunters, cannot be supported on less.'

Elinor smiled again, to hear her sister describing so accurately their future expenses at Combe Magna.

'Hunters!' repeated Edward—'but why must you have hunters? Every body does not hunt.'

Marianne coloured as she replied, 'But most people do.'

'I wish,' said Margaret, striking out a novel thought, 'that somebody would give us all a large fortune apiece!'

'Oh that they would!' cried Marianne, her eyes sparkling with animation, and her cheeks glowing with the delight of such imaginary happiness.

Chapter XVIII



ELINOR saw, with great uneasiness the low spirits of her friend. His visit afforded her but a very partial satisfaction, while his own enjoyment in it appeared so imperfect. It was evident that he was unhappy; she wished it were equally evident that he still distinguished her by the same affection which once she had felt no doubt of inspiring; but hitherto the continuance of his preference seemed very uncertain; and the reservedness of his manner towards her contradicted one moment what a more animated look had intimated the preceding one.

He joined her and Marianne in the breakfast-room the next morning before the others were down; and Marianne, who was always eager to promote their happiness as far as she could, soon left them to themselves. But before she was half way upstairs she heard the parlour door open, and, turning round, was astonished to see Edward himself come out.

'I am going into the village to see my horses,' said he, 'as you are not yet ready for breakfast; I shall be back again presently.'

Edward returned to them with fresh admiration of the surrounding country; in his walk to the village, he had seen many parts of the valley to advantage; and the village itself, in a much higher situation than the cottage, afforded a general view of the whole, which had exceedingly pleased him. This was a subject which ensured Marianne's attention, and she was beginning to describe her own admiration of these scenes, and to question him more minutely on the objects that had particularly struck him, when Edward interrupted her by saying, 'You must not enquire too far, Marianne—remember I have no knowledge in the picturesque,

and I shall offend you by my ignorance and want of taste if we come to particulars. I shall call hills steep, which ought to be bold; surfaces strange and uncouth, which ought to be irregular and rugged; and distant objects out of sight, which ought only to be indistinct through the soft medium of a hazy atmosphere. You must be satisfied with such admiration as I can honestly give. I call it a very fine country—the hills are steep, the woods seem full of fine timber, and the valley looks comfortable and snug—with rich meadows and several neat farm houses scattered here and there. It exactly answers my idea of a fine country, because it unites beauty with utility—and I dare say it is a picturesque one too, because you admire it; I can easily believe it to be full of rocks and promontories, grey moss and brush wood, but these are all lost on me. I know nothing of the picturesque.’

‘I am afraid it is but too true,’ said Marianne; ‘but why should you boast of it?’

‘I suspect,’ said Elinor, ‘that to avoid one kind of affectation, Edward here falls into another. Because he believes many people pretend to more admiration of the beauties of nature than they really feel, and is disgusted with such pretensions, he affects greater indifference and less discrimination in viewing them himself than he possesses. He is fastidious and will have an affectation of his own.’

‘It is very true,’ said Marianne, ‘that admiration of landscape scenery is become a mere jargon. Every body pretends to feel and tries to describe with the taste and elegance of him who first defined what picturesque beauty was. I detest jargon of every kind, and sometimes I have kept my feelings to myself, because I could find no language to describe them in but what was worn and hackneyed out of all sense and meaning.’

‘I am convinced,’ said Edward, ‘that you really feel all the delight in a fine prospect which you profess to feel. But, in return, your sister must allow me to feel no more than I profess. I like a fine prospect, but not on picturesque principles. I do not like crooked, twisted, blasted trees. I admire them much more if they are tall, straight, and flourishing. I do not like ruined, tattered cottages. I am not fond of nettles or thistles, or heath blossoms. I have more pleasure in a snug farm-house than a watch-tower—and a troop of tidy, happy villagers please me better than the finest banditti in the world.’

Chapter XVII



Mrs Dashwood was surprised only for a moment at seeing him; for his coming to Barton was, in her opinion, of all things the most natural. Her joy and expression of regard long outlived her wonder. He received the kindest welcome from her; and shyness, coldness, reserve could not stand against such a reception. They had begun to fail him before he entered the house, and they were quite overcome by the captivating manners of Mrs Dashwood. Indeed a man could not very well be in love with either of her daughters, without extending the passion to her; and Elinor had the satisfaction of seeing him soon become more like himself. His affections seemed to reanimate towards them all, and his interest in their welfare again became perceptible. He was not in spirits, however; he praised their house, admired its prospect, was attentive, and kind; but still he was not in spirits. The whole family perceived it, and Mrs Dashwood, attributing it to some want of liberality in his mother, sat down to table indignant against all selfish parents.

‘What are Mrs Ferrars’s views for you at present, Edward?’ said she, when dinner was over and they had drawn round the fire; ‘are you still to be a great orator in spite of yourself?’

‘No. I hope my mother is now convinced that I have no more talents than inclination for a public life!’

‘But how is your fame to be established? for famous you must be to satisfy all your family; and with no inclination for expense, no affection for strangers, no profession, and no assurance, you may find it a difficult matter.’

Marianne looked with amazement at Edward, with compassion at her sister. Elinor only laughed.

The subject was continued no farther; and Marianne remained thoughtfully silent, till a new object suddenly engaged her attention. She was sitting by Edward, and in taking his tea from Mrs Dashwood, his hand passed so directly before her, as to make a ring, with a plait of hair in the centre, very conspicuous on one of his fingers.

‘I never saw you wear a ring before, Edward,’ she cried. ‘Is that Fanny’s hair? I remember her promising to give you some. But I should have thought her hair had been darker.’

Marianne spoke inconsiderately what she really felt—but when she saw how much she had pained Edward, her own vexation at her want of thought could not be surpassed by his. He coloured very deeply, and giving a momentary glance at Elinor, replied, ‘Yes; it is my sister’s hair. The setting always casts a different shade on it, you know.’

Elinor had met his eye, and looked conscious likewise. That the hair was her own, she instantaneously felt as well satisfied as Marianne; the only difference in their conclusions was, that what Marianne considered as a free gift from her sister, Elinor was conscious must have been procured by some theft or contrivance unknown to herself. She was not in a humour, however, to regard it as an affront, and affecting to take no notice of what passed, by instantly talking of something else, she internally resolved henceforward to catch every opportunity of eyeing the hair and of satisfying herself, beyond all doubt, that it was exactly the shade of her own.

Edward’s embarrassment lasted some time, and it ended in an absence of mind still more settled. He was particularly grave the whole morning. Marianne severely censured herself for what she had said; but her own forgiveness might have been more speedy, had she known how little offence it had given her sister.

Before the middle of the day, they were visited by Sir John and Mrs Jennings, who, having heard of the arrival of a gentleman at the cottage, came to take a survey of the guest. With the assistance of his mother-in-law, Sir John was not long in discovering that the name of Ferrars began with an F. and this prepared a future mine of trailery against the devoted Elinor, which nothing but the newness of their acquaintance with Edward

could have prevented from being immediately sprung. But, as it was, she only learned, from some very significant looks, how far their penetration, founded on Margaret's instructions, extended.

Sir John never came to the Dashwoods without either inviting them to dine at the park the next day, or to drink tea with them that evening. On the present occasion, for the better entertainment of their visitor, towards whose amusement he felt himself bound to contribute, he wished to engage them for both.

'You *must* drink tea with us to night,' said he, 'for we shall be quite alone—and tomorrow you must absolutely dine with us, for we shall be a large party.'

Mrs Jennings enforced the necessity. 'And who knows but *you* may raise a dance,' said she. 'And that will tempt you, Miss Marianne.'

'A dance?' cried Marianne. 'Impossible! Who is to dance?'

'Who! why yourselves, and the Careys, and Whickers to be sure.—What! you thought nobody could dance because a certain person that shall be nameless is gone!'

'I wish with all my soul,' cried Sir John, 'that Willoughby were among us again.'

This, and Marianne's blushing, gave new suspicions to Edward. 'And who is Willoughby?' said he, in a low voice, to Miss Dashwood, by whom he was sitting.

She gave him a brief reply. Marianne's countenance was more communicative. Edward saw enough to comprehend, not only the meaning of others, but such of Marianne's expressions as had puzzled him before; and when their visitors left them, he went immediately round her, and said, in a whisper, 'I have been guessing. Shall I tell you my guess?'

'What do you mean?'

'Shall I tell you?'

'Certainly.'

'Well then; I guess that Mr Willoughby hunts.'

Marianne was surprised and confused, yet she could not help smiling at the quiet archness of his manner, and after a moment's silence, said,

'Oh, Edward! How can you?—But the time will come I hope...I am sure you will like him.'

'No, not all,' answered Marianne; 'we could not be more unfortunately situated.'

'Marianne,' cried her sister, 'how can you say so? How can you be so unjust? They are a very respectable family, Mr Ferrars; and towards us have behaved in the friendliest manner. Have you forgot, Marianne, how many pleasant days we have owed to them?'

'No,' said Marianne, in a low voice, 'nor how many painful moments.' Elinor took no notice of this; and directing her attention to their visitor, endeavoured to support something like discourse with him, by talking of their present residence, its conveniences, &c. extorting from him occasional questions and remarks. His coldness and reserve mortified her severely; she was vexed and half angry; but resolving to regulate her behaviour to him by the past rather than the present, she avoided every appearance of resentment or displeasure, and treated him as she thought he ought to be treated from the family connection.

After a short silence which succeeded the first surprise and enquiries of meeting, Marianne asked Edward if he came directly from London. No, he had been in Devonshire a fortnight.

'A fortnight!' she repeated, surprised at his being so long in the same county with Elinor without seeing her before.

He looked rather distressed as he added, that he had been staying with some friends near Plymouth.

'Have you been lately in Sussex?' said Elinor.

'I was at Norland about a month ago.'

'And how does dear, dear Norland look?' cried Marianne.

'Dear, dear Norland,' said Elinor, 'probably looks much as it always does at this time of the year. The woods and walks thickly covered with dead leaves.'

'Oh,' cried Marianne, 'with what transporting sensation have I formerly seen them fall! How have I delighted, as I walked, to see them driven in showers about me by the wind! What feelings have they, the season, the air altogether inspired! Now there is no one to regard them. They are seen only as a nuisance, swept hastily off, and driven as much as possible from the sight.'

'It is not every one,' said Elinor, 'who has your passion for dead leaves.'

'No; my feelings are not often shared, not often understood. But *sometimes* they are.'—As she said this, she sunk into a reverie for a few moments;—but rousing herself again, 'Now, Edward,' said she, calling his attention to the prospect, 'here is Barton valley. Look up to it, and be tranquil if you can. Look at those hills! Did you ever see their equals? To the left is Barton park, amongst those woods and plantations. You may see the end of the house. And there, beneath that farthest hill, which rises with such grandeur, is our cottage.'

'It is a beautiful country,' he replied; 'but these bottoms must be dirty in winter.'

'How can you think of dirt, with such objects before you?'

'Because,' replied he, smiling, 'among the rest of the objects before me, I see a very dirty lane.'

'How strange!' said Marianne to herself as she walked on.

'Have you an agreeable neighbourhood here? Are the Middletons pleasant people?'

'I do not doubt it,' replied he, rather astonished at her earnestness and warmth; for had he not imagined it to be a joke for the good of her acquaintance in general, founded only on a something or a nothing between Mr Willoughby and herself, he would not have ventured to mention it.



CAME TO TAKE A SURVEY OF THE GUEST



BEGGING HER TO STOP