

## TEACHERS' NOTES

The Sense and Sensibility study guide is aimed at students of A' Level Film and Communication and English. It may also be suitable for some students of GCSE Media Studies and English.



Lose your heart  
and come to your senses.



## SYNOPSIS

When Henry Dashwood dies unexpectedly, his estate must pass by law to his son from his first marriage, John and wife Fanny. But these circumstances leave Mr. Dashwood's current wife and daughters Elinor, Marianne and Margaret, without a home and barely enough money to live on.

As Elinor and Marianne struggle to find romantic fulfilment in a society obsessed with financial and social status, they must learn to mix sense with sensibility in their dealings with both money and men. Based on Jane Austen's first novel, *Sense and Sensibility* marks the first big-screen adaptation of this classic romantic comedy.

Directed by Ang Lee. Certificate: U. Running time: 135 mins.

## INTRODUCTION

“Jane Austen? Aren't her novels just old-fashioned romantic stories about love amongst the rich and lazy?”

To many people, including students of English Literature, there is a problem penetrating the 'Mills and Boon' romantic veneer of Jane Austen's plots to find the subtle analysis of social and moral behaviour that teachers and critics claim is beneath the surface. Even after studying her novels, many students find Austen's world remote and perhaps rather trivial.

## READING NOVELS - READING FILMS - READING TEXTS

The fact that there are many film and television adaptations of Jane Austen's novels and this itself is a mark of her popularity as well as her skill as a writer. The film industry tries not to take too many expensive risks and it is clear that were Jane Austen alive and writing today, there would be a scramble amongst the studios to purchase the rights to her next novel. There is no doubt that a film or television adaptation of a Jane Austen novel can bridge the gap between the pleasure of reading the novels as romantic comedies and analysing the texts as social commentaries.

Reading books and reading films involves the same process: an individual reader brings expectations, assumptions, knowledge and experience to a text and the characteristics of that particular film or book produce a response. If you have some understanding of the society in which Jane Austen lived and her own preoccupations, then you are more likely to respond confidently

## WOMEN, MONEY AND MARRIAGE

Before we look at the opening shots of the film, it is useful to discover if there is a pattern to the opening of Jane Austen's novels.

### Task

**Read the opening to two of Jane Austen's novels (see appendices A and B) and underline any words which are to do with money and property, marriage and social position.**

**Now search through the two passages to find any obvious contrasts or oppositions - these might begin to reveal what these novels are going to be about.**

When Jane Austen was writing, marriage was much more than a contract between two people who love each other enough to want to spend their lives together. In fact, love might not even have been a consideration. For women, marriage gave the only form of financial security. Legally, married women owned nothing, all money and property belonged to their husbands. In families with sons, there was little complication about who inherited the wealth - the eldest son. Daughters had to be allocated a portion of the family's wealth (a dowry) but this was really for use as bargaining power in the marriage marketplace.

## THE NOVEL OF SENTIMENT

During Jane Austen's short life (she was born in 1775 and died in 1817), there were many important events and changes in society. The most obvious point to make about her life is that it bridged the 18th and the 19th centuries. As far as literary history is concerned, there was a gradual change in attitudes and philosophy which also spanned the two centuries, so that it is possible to recognise typical 18th century views reflected in books written in that century as well as views typical of the 19th century. Broadly speaking, the 18th century has been called 'The Age of Reason' - the age of sense when there was a belief in a 'right way' for the universe to work and in 'true' human behaviour. The 19th century saw a gradual move away from 'reason' towards human instinct and feeling, so that it became known as 'The Age of Romanticism' with the emphasis on sensibility. The influence of this transition was broad-reaching affecting attitudes to art, architecture, music, philosophy as well as literature.

## Task

**Draw a time-line which begins in 1775 and ends in 1817. Using as many sources as possible, try to find out some of the main historical events that took place throughout Jane Austen's lifetime. Now discuss what you can remember of the film and how accurate a portrayal of early 19th century England it is. You might discuss some of the following topics: fashions, the presence of the military, social class differences.**

In the later years of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, a form of fiction which became very popular amongst the literate population, was the Novel of Sentiment'. In these books the common theme was to argue for the natural goodness of human nature with feelings shown to be more attractive than cold reasoning. The heroes and heroines were always virtuous and their reaction to most situations was usually highly emotional - sudden fits of weeping, fainting and uncontrolled acts of kindness. Here is an extract from a famous sentimental novel entitled *The Man of Feeling* by Hugh Mackenzie (1771):

He seized her hand - a languid colour reddened his cheek - a smile brightened faintly in his eye. As he gazed on her, it grew dim, it fixed, it closed. He sighed and fell back on his seat - Miss Walton screamed at the sight. His aunt and servants rushed into the room. They found them lying motionless together. His physician happened to call at that instant. Every art was tried to recover them; with Miss Walton they succeeded - but Harley was gone forever!"

## Task

**In groups of four, discuss how you could represent this extract in six to eight still pictures. Storyboard each image with its accompanying piece of text. Using a still camera, photograph each tableaux ensuring that the emotional heights are visible.**

As you can see, in one very short scene the extremes of emotion are shown. Often these novels presented natural, unspoilt behaviour against an ideal rural setting such as a very 'pretty' country cottage or a picturesque scene of pastures and trees. The novels were guilty of relying upon romantic clichés such as 'love at first sight' and quite unrealistic coincidences. Poverty was also admired as it brought people closer to their natural, uncorrupted origins. It would be difficult to justify such romantic views to the people who actually suffered genuine rural squalor during the reign of George III!

Jane Austen is obviously attacking the conventions of these novels - not so much as a comment upon the society of the time but for the dangerous emotional imbalance it encouraged. In a novel entitled *Love and Friendship* written several years earlier than *Sense and Sensibility*, Jane Austen clearly attacks the cult of sentimentalism. On the surface, the characters in this earlier novel behave according to the sentimental formula - at one point the heroine Laura and her friend Sophie take turns to faint! However, the novel is clearly meant to be - poking fun at the cult of sensibility and actually shows the characters to be corrupt and rather unpleasant.

### **Task**

**Using any reference material you can find, e.g. a companion to English Literature, a biography of Jane Austen, the internet, try to discover the plot of Love and Friendship and note any links with Sense and Sensibility.**

### **Task**

**Read the following list of the typical conventions of a novel of sentiment. From your memory of the film, list scenes in Sense and Sensibility which appear to follow these conventions:**

#### THE NOVEL OF SENTIMENT

#### SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

1. characters are prone to extremes of emotion: weeping, fainting, or falling into fits.
2. often there are rejected, seduced maidens.
3. characters are often too emotionally weak to keep secrets.
4. some of the action takes place in a beautiful rural setting - often a cottage.
5. heroes are often shown to be gallant and strong.
6. the weather often reflects the emotional state of characters.
7. characters sometimes perform acts of wild generosity.

## Task

Now try to find the same scenes in the novel. In the chart below, write down key words from these scenes as they are described in the novel, and then in the second column describe how they are presented in the film.

KEY WORDS FROM THE NOVEL

HOW THEY ARE PRESENTED IN THE FILM

**For each of the above scenes discuss Elinor's reactions and behaviour.**

**Have you noticed any problems in the above list?**

**Is there any evidence which does not fit into the pattern of the novel of sentiment?**

**If we look closely at Elinor's reactions to most situations she is less prone to the impulses shown by**

**her mother and Marianne.**

## **SENSE' v 'SENSIBILITY'? ELINOR v MARIANNE?**

You have probably realised that there is a great deal more to Sense and Sensibility than sentiment. In fact this brings us to the very title of the novel. The examples we have looked at so far are all examples of sensibility.

### **Task**

**Elinor and Marianne are introduced at the end of the first chapter of the novel. Read carefully the extract given in appendix C and underline the differences between the sisters as they are presented to us by Jane Austen.**

**Now read the screenplay from the film (appendix D) which is aiming to show the same subtle differences between the two sisters.**

**From your reading of the original extract and its adaptation for film, list the differences between the sisters' personalities. Concentrate on how we are made to understand these differences by both texts.**

**Here is a list of statements about the character of Elinor. Decide which ones you agree with.**

- 1. Elinor is far more sensible than her younger sister Marianne.**
- 2. Elinor is too cautious in her relationships with the opposite sex.**
- 3. Elinor has a great deal of self-control.**
- 4. Elinor believes that to behave in a socially acceptable way is as important as being true to your own feelings.**
- 5. Elinor is too worried about what other people think to allow herself to behave in an emotional way.**
- 6. Elinor has mature judgement and understanding of the way people behave.**
- 7. Elinor is too polite.**

Now look at the following chart. It includes a list of scenes from the film. For each scene, write down, in the box on the right hand side of the chart, a description of Elinor's reaction at that moment. Does her behaviour fit the qualities which Jane Austen described to us in the extract from the first chapter given in appendix C?

SCENE	ELINOR'S REACTION
1. Elinor organises the household at Norland after the death of her father.	
2. The family dine with John and Fanny Dashwood before leaving Norland.	
3. Elinor is teased by Sir John	
4. Middleton about the mysterious Mr F.	
5. Elinor and Marianne watch	
6. Willoughby ride away after he has visited Marianne the day after rescuing her.	
7. Elinor receives news of Edward's engagement from Lucy Steele.	

However, Elinor is not entirely without feeling. Can you think of any scenes in the film when she shows extremes of emotion? Note down the moments when she cannot control her rears.

Again, you should have discovered that it is too simple to state that Elinor represents the sense and Marianne the sensibility in the title. Both characters display too much common sense and too much emotion at various times. However, it is probably true to state that in both the novel and the film Elinor is established as the sister with the most self-control, and Marianne contrasts with her by being more self-indulgent. The sisters' taste in men is a useful example of their

different outlooks on life.

Look at Marianne's reaction to Edward and his inability to read poetry; look at the way she teases Elinor when they discuss Edward before bedtime. Are both these scenes taken directly from the novel?

### Task

**In a small group, discuss other examples of how the two sisters' rather different personalities are established in the film and note down whether these scenes are direct adaptations of scenes in the novel or additional filmic constructions.**

## THE MORAL LESSON

One of the problems facing us is that language has altered slightly since Jane Austen wrote this novel. The meaning of the words sense, sensibility and sensible have changed slightly. The main point is that the terms actually point us towards the ideas beyond the surface of the text - that there is more to this text than a narrow slice of upper class Regency society. It is almost certainly intended to be a didactic novel, trying to reach us a moral lesson. Does this mean that we are being taught that sense is a good thing and sensibility bad? Or, because it is clear that both sisters display both types of behaviour, is this too simple?

We need to examine how both texts reach us a moral lesson; how our responses are manipulated by the novel and by the film.

## A CLOSER LOOK AT WILLOUGHBY

**Look at the following images of Willoughby taken from the film. Now read the extracts from the novel on the following page. Underline key words which you think relate directly to these images.**

...The gentleman offered his services, and perceiving that her modesty declined what her situation rendered necessary, took her up in his arms without farther delay, and carried her down the hill...

*Sense and Sensibility, Chapter 9*

...he bore her directly into the house, whither Margaret was just arrived, and quitted not his hold till he had seated her in a chair in the parlour.

Elinor and her mother rose up in amazement at their entrance, and while the eyes of both were fixed on him with an evident wonder and a secret admiration which equally sprung from his appearance, he apologised for his intrusion by relating its cause, in a manner so frank and so graceful, that his person, which was uncommonly handsome, received additional charms from his voice and expression. Had he been even old, ugly and vulgar, the gratitude and kindness of Mrs. Dashwood would have been secured by an act of attention to her child; but the influence of youth, beauty, and elegance, gave an interest to the action which came home to her feelings.

*Sense and Sensibility, Chapter 9*

Willoughby was a young man of good abilities, quick imagination, lively spirits, and open, affectionate manners. He was exactly formed to engage Marianne's heart, for with all this, he joined not only a captivating person, but a natural ardour of mind which was now roused and increased by the example of her own, and which recommended him to her affection beyond every thing else.

*Sense and Sensibility, Chapter 10*

The carriages were then ordered; Willoughby's was first, and Marianne never looked happier than when she got into it. He drove through the park very fast, and they were soon out of sight; and nothing more of them was seen till their return, which did not happen till after the return of all the rest. They both seemed delighted with their drive, but said only in general terms that they had kept in the lanes, while the others went on the downs.

*Sense and Sensibility, Chapter 10*

"My engagements at present," replied Willoughby confusedly, "are of such a nature - that - I dare not flatter myself" -

He stopt. Mrs Dashwood was too much astonished to speak, and another pause succeeded. This was broken by Willoughby, who said with a faint smile, "It is folly to linger in this manner. I will not torment myself any longer by remaining among friends whose society it is impossible for me now to enjoy."

He then hastily took leave of them all and left the room. They saw him step into his carriage, and in a minute it was out of sight.

*Sense and Sensibility, Chapter 10*

In both texts, Willoughby is presented to the reader/viewer as externally very attractive. In the novel he offers Marianne a present of one of his horses - it is Elinor's sense that persuades her against accepting the ridiculous offer. Clearly, the novel is warning us against the danger of following Marianne's misjudgment, we are being 'steered' away from such vulnerable behaviour.

### **Task**

**Read Chapter 44 in the novel. Willoughby visits the house where Marianne lies so ill that she is close to death. Jane Austen gives him this opportunity to explain his conduct to Elinor. Discuss the chapter carefully and try to find evidence in the text that Austen wants us to sympathise with him. Why was this episode deliberately cut from the film - was it just to prevent the film from becoming too long and tedious? Re-read the end of the novel and compare it with the end of the film - is there a difference in the way Willoughby is presented?**

## COMIC CHARACTERS AND CARICATURES

We have seen that Jane Austen is poking fun at the cult of sentiment and is also trying to reach the reader a lesson about the dangers of showing either too much sense or too much sensibility. However, the novel isn't meant to be taken too seriously. There are several characters in the novel who are almost caricatures -exaggerations of social stereotypes: Mr and Mrs Palmer (played by Imelda Staunton and Hugh Laurie), Lord Middleton, Mrs Jennings and, to a certain extent, Edward's brother Robert who is portrayed as a comic fop in the film. In the novel Austen describes him as:

"exactly the coxcomb she had heard him described to be by Lucy".

### **Task**

**In a small group, discuss which characters in the film were meant to be amusing and which were meant to be rather unattractive. Find references to these characters in the novel and compare the way Austen presents them to the way the actors interpreted their roles. List the characters according to their allegiance to sense or sensibility.**

## APPENDIX A

### PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, CHAPTER 1.

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this much is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters.

'My dear Mr Bennet,' said his lady to him one day, 'have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?' Mr Bennet replied that he had not.

'But it is,' returned she; 'for Mrs Long has just been here, and she told me all about it.' Mr Bennet made no answer.

'Do not you want to know who has taken it?' cried his wife impatiently.

'You want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it.'

This was invitation enough.

'Why, my dear, you must know, Mrs Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England; that he came down on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place, and was so much delighted with it that he agreed with Mr Morris immediately; that he is to take possession before Michaelmas, and some of his servants are to be in the house by the end of next week.'

'What is his name?'

'Bingley.'

'Is he married or single?'

'Oh! single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls!'

'How so? how can it affect them?'

'My dear Mr Bennet,' replied his wife, 'how can you be so tiresome! You must know that I am thinking of his marrying one of them.'

'Is that his design in settling here?'

'Design! nonsense, how can you talk so! But it is very likely that he may fall in love with one of them, and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes.'

'I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for as you are as handsome as any of them, Mr Bingley might like you the best of the party.'

'My dear, you flatter me. I certainly have had my share of beauty, but I do not pretend to be any thing extraordinary now. When a woman has five grown up daughters, she ought to give over thinking of her own beauty.'

'In such cases, a woman has not often much beauty to think of.'

'But, my dear, you must indeed go and see Mr Bingley when he comes into the neighbourhood.'

'It is more than I engage for, I assure you.'

'But consider your daughters. Only think what an establishment it would be for one of them. Sir William and Lady Lucas are determined to go merely on that account, for in general you know they visit no new comers. Indeed you must go, for it will be impossible for us to visit him, if you do not.'

'You are over scrupulous surely. I dare say Mr Bingley will be very glad to see you; and I will send a few lines by you to assure him of my hearty consent to his marrying which ever he chuses of the girls; though I must throw in a good word for my little Lizzy.'

'I desire you will do no such thing. Lizzy is not a bit better than the others; and I am sure she is not half so handsome as Jane, nor half so good humoured as Lydia. But you are always giving her the preference.'

'They have none of them much to recommend them,' replied he; 'they are all silly and ignorant like other girls; but Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters.'

'Mr Bennet, how can you abuse your own children in such a way? You rake delight in vexing me. You have no compassion on my poor nerves.'

'You mistake me, my dear. I have a high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends. I have heard you mention them with consideration these twenty years at least.'

## APPENDIX B

### SENSE AND SENSIBILITY, CHAPTER 1

The family of Dashwood had been long settled in Sussex. Their estate was large, and their residence was at Norland Park, in the centre of their property, where, for many generations, they had lived in so respectable a manner, as to engage the general good opinion of their surrounding acquaintance. The last owner but one, of this estate, was a single man, who lived to a very advanced age, and who, for many years of his life, had a constant companion and housekeeper in his sister. But her death, which happened ten years before his own, produced a great alteration in his home; for, to supply her loss, he invited and received into his house the family of his nephew Mr. Henry Dashwood, the legal inheritor of the Norland estate, and the person to whom he intended to bequeath it. In the society of his nephew and niece, and their children, the old Gentleman's days were comfortably spent. His attachment to them all increased. The constant attention of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dashwood to his wishes, which proceeded, not merely from interest, but from goodness of heart, gave him every degree of solid comfort which his age could receive; and the cheerfulness of the children added a relish to his existence.

By a former marriage, Mr. Henry Dashwood had one son: by his present Lady, three daughters. The son, a steady respectable young man, was amply provided for by the fortune of his mother, which had been large, and half of which devolved on him on his coming of age. By his own marriage, likewise, which happened soon afterwards, he added to his wealth. His wife had something considerable at present, and something still more to expect hereafter from her mother, her only surviving parent, who had much to give. To him, therefore, the succession to the Norland estate was nor so really important as to his sisters; for their fortune, independent of what might arise to them from their father's inheriting that property, could be but small. Their mother had nothing, and their father only seven thousand pounds in his own disposal; for the remaining moiety of his first wife's fortune was also secured to her child, and he had only a life interest in it.

The old Gentleman died; his will was read, and like almost every other will, gave as much disappointment as pleasure. He was neither so unjust, nor so ungrateful, as to leave his estate from his nephew;- but he left it to him on such terms as destroyed half the value of the bequest. Mr. Dashwood had wished for it more for the sake of his wife and daughters than for himself or his son: but to his son, and his son's son, a child of four years old, it was secured, in such a way, as to leave to himself no power of providing for those who were most dear to him, and who most needed a provision, by any division of the estate, or by any sale of its valuable woods. The whole was tied up for benefit of this child, who, in occasional visits with his father and mother at Norland, had so far gained on the affection of his uncle, by such attractions as are by no means

unusual in children of two or three years old; an imperfect articulation, an earnest desire of having his own way, many cunning tricks, and a great deal of noise, as to outweigh all the value of all the attention which, for years, he had received from his niece and her daughters. He meant not to be unkind however, and, as a mark of his affection for the three girls, he left them a thousand pounds a-piece.

## APPENDIX C

### SENSE AND SENSIBILITY, CHAPTER 1

Elinor, this eldest daughter whose advice was so effectual, possessed a strength of understanding, and coolness of judgement, which qualified her, though only nineteen, to be the counsellor of her mother, and enabled her frequently to counteract, to the advantage of them all, that eagerness of mind in Mrs. Dashwood which must generally have led to imprudence. She had an excellent heart; her disposition was affectionate, and her feelings were strong; but she knew how to govern them: it was a knowledge which her mother had yet to learn, and which one of her sisters had resolved never to be taught.

Marianne's abilities were, in many respects, quite equal to Elinor's. She was sensible and clever; but eager in every thing; her sorrows, her joys, could have no moderation. She was generous, amiable, interesting: she was every thing but prudent. The resemblance between her and her mother was strikingly great.

Elinor saw, with concern, the excess of her sister's sensibility; but by Mrs. Dashwood it was valued and cherished. They encouraged each other now in the violence of their affliction. The agony of grief which overpowered them at first, was voluntarily renewed, was sought for, was created again and again. They gave themselves tip wholly to their sorrow, seeking increase of wretchedness in every reflection that could afford it, and resolved against ever admitting consolation in future. Elinor, too, was deeply afflicted; but still she could struggle, she could exert herself. She could consult with her brother, could receive her sister-in-law on her arrival, and treat her with every proper attention; and could strive to rouse her mother to similar exertion, and encourage her to similar forbearance.

Margaret, the other sister, was a good humoured well disposed girl; but as she had already imbibed a good deal of Marianne's romance, without having much of her sense, she did not, at thirteen, bid fair to equal her sisters at a more advanced period of life.

## APPENDIX D

### SENSE AND SENSIBILITY, EXTRACT FROM SCREENPLAY

MRS DASHWOOD

I think - I believe - that Edward and Elinor have formed an attachment.

*Marianne nods, a little reluctantly.*

MRS DASHWOOD

It would be cruel to take her away so soon - and Devonshire is so far.

MRS DASHWOOD *makes her decision. She takes the letter and hides it in the pocket of her gown.* MARIANNE *looks on frowningly.*

MRS DASHWOOD

Why so grave? Do you disapprove her choice?

MARIANNE

By no means. Edward is very amiable.

MRS DASHWOOD

Amiable - but?

MARIANNE

But there is something wanting. He is too sedate - his reading last night...

MRS DASHWOOD

Elinor has not your feelings, his reserve suits her.

MARIANNE *thinks for a little.*

MARIANNE

Can he love her? Can the ardour of the soul really be satisfied with such polite, concealed affections? To love is to burn - to be on fire, all made of passion, of adoration, of sacrifice! Like Juliet, or Guinevere or Heloise -

MRS DASHWOOD

They made rather pathetic ends, dear.

MARIANNE

Pathetic! To die for love? How can you say so? What could be more glorious?

MRS DASHWOOD

I think that may be taking your romantic sensibilities a little for...

MARIANNE

The more I know of the world, the more I am convinced that I shall never see a man whom I can truly love.

MRS DASH WOOD

You require so much!

MARIANNE

I do not! I require only what any young woman of taste should - a man who sings well, dances admirably, rides bravely, reads with passion and whose tastes agree in every point with my own.

33 INT NORLAND PARK. ELINOR'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

ELINOR *is in bed deep in thought.* MARIANNE *enters in her nightclothes, currying a book of poetry. She reads, teasingly.*

MARIANNE

Is love a fancy, or a feeling? No  
It is immortal as immaculate truth  
Tis not a blossom shed as soon as Youth  
Drops from the stem of life - for it will grow  
In barren regions, where no waters flow  
Nor ray of promise cheats the pensive gloom -

*She jumps onto the bed. ELINOR smiles - somewhat suspiciously.*

MARIANNE

What a pity it is that Edward has no passion for reading.

ELINOR

It was you who asked him to read - and then you made him nervous.

MARIANNE

Me?

ELINOR

But your behaviour to him in all other respects is perfectly cordial so I must assume that you like him in spite of his deficiencies.

MARIANNE *(trying hard)*

I think him everything that is amiable and worthy.

ELINOR

Praise indeed!

MARIANNE

But he shall have my unanswering devotion when you tell me he is to be my brother...

ELINOR *is greatly taken aback and does not know how to reply. Suddenly MARIANNE hugs her passionately.*

MARIANNE

How shall I do without you?

ELINOR

Do without me?

MARIANNE *pulls away, her eyes full of tears.*

MARIANNE

I am sure you will be very happy. But you must promise not to live too far away.

ELINOR

Marianne, there is no question of - that is, there is no understanding between...

ELINOR *trails off MARIANNE looks at her keenly.*

MARIANNE

Do you love him?

*The bold clarity of this question discomforts ELINOR.*

ELINOR

I do not attempt to deny that I think very highly of him - that I greatly esteem -that I like him.

MARIANNE

Esteem him! Like him! Use those insipid words again and I shall leave the room this instant!

*This makes ELINOR laugh in spite of her discomfort.*

ELINOR

Very well. Forgive me. Believe my feelings to be stronger than I have declared -but further than that you must not believe.

MARIANNE *is flummoxed but she rallies swiftly and picks up her book again.*

MARIANNE

'Is love a fancy or a feeling?' Or a Ferrars?

ELINOR

Go to bed!

ELINOR blushes in good earnest. MARIANNE goes to the door.

MARIANNE (*imitating Elinor*)

'I do not attempt to deny that I think highly of him - greatly esteem him! Like him!'

*And she is gone, leaving ELINOR both agitated and amused*