

Sense and Sensibility

JANE AUSTEN

- 1 Mrs Dashwood had been the second wife of Henry Dashwood and was now his widow. For six months after her husband's death, she had gone on living at Norland Park with her three daughters. But the house now belonged to her step-son, John Dashwood, and he and his family came to live there too. Fanny Dashwood, John's selfish wife, soon made it clear that she wanted Mrs Dashwood and her daughters to leave Norland Park and she did her best to make their lives very unhappy. Six months later, they went to live in a little cottage in Devon.
- 2 (a) Sir John Middleton, his wife Lady Middleton and their four children, live at Barton Park, in Devon.
(b) Mrs Dashwood and her three daughters, Elinor, Marianne and Margaret, live at Barton Cottage, a little house on Sir John's land.
(c) An old lady called Mrs Smith lives at Allenham Court.
(d) Colonel Brandon, an unmarried man of about 35, lives at Delaford.
- 3 (a) John Dashwood is Mrs Dashwood's stepson. She is his stepmother.
(b) Sir John Middleton married one of Mrs Jennings' daughters, so he was her son-in-law and she was his mother-in-law.
(c) John Dashwood married Fanny, Edward Ferrars' sister. So John and Edward were brothers-in-law.
(d) Mrs Smith is Willoughby's aunt. Willoughby is the old lady's nephew and also her heir.
(e) In Chapter 3, Mrs Jennings gossips about Colonel Brandon and tells Elinor that Eliza Williams is his daughter. That is not true. She is his niece. (We hear her sad story in Chapter 9).
- 4 (a) Marianne is very upset when Willoughby tells her that he is leaving Devon and going to London. He has to go there on business for his aunt, Mrs Smith, and he will probably be away for some time. Marianne is, by now, deeply in love with Willoughby and cannot bear to see him go. Marianne later makes herself even more upset, by singing all Willoughby's favourite songs.
(b) Willoughby was unhappy about leaving. Earlier, he had been upset when Mrs Dashwood spoke about her plans for changing Barton Cottage. Willoughby says that he had been very happy there and that the little house was perfect.
(c) Edward is upset and unhappy when Mrs Dashwood tells him that he should have a profession. He knows that this is true. Against his family's wishes, he wants to be a clergyman, but he fears that he will never be able to.
(d) Elinor does not show her feelings. But Edward's unhappiness during his visit to Barton Cottage upsets her. She is sorry to see that he does not seem very pleased to see her.
- 5 (a) Lady Middleton and Charlotte Palmer are the daughters of Mrs Jennings, but they are not alike. Lady Middleton is tall and good-looking. She is not clever or well-educated and she does not enjoy conversation. Lady Middleton is bored unless she is with her four noisy children. She has no idea how badly behaved they are. Charlotte Palmer, the younger sister, is short, with a round, pretty face. She is very cheerful and laughs and smiles all the time. Charlotte, like her mother, Mrs Jennings, is always talking. Charlotte loves gossiping about people. She sometimes says things about them that are not true, but she has a kind heart.
(b) Sir John Middleton and Thomas Palmer, Mrs Jennings' sons-in-law, are very different from each other. Sir John is noisy and cheerful and he loves company, especially that of young people. He thinks the best of everyone and he wants all his friends to be happy. Thomas Palmer is a very quiet man. He does not enjoy company and he complains about nearly everything.
(c) Fanny Dashwood and Edward Ferrars are brother and sister, but they are completely different. Fanny is confident and she says what she thinks. She is also very mean and selfish. She only cares about money and her position in society. Edward Ferrars is very shy. He hides his feelings, unless he is talking to good friends. He seems to be unhappy and he has a very poor opinion of himself.

- (d) Anne and Lucy Steele are sisters. Anne is plain and silly. She talks too much and does not think before she speaks. Her younger sister, Lucy, is pretty and clever. She hides her feelings well and does not always tell the truth. Both sisters prefer to know rich, important people. The Dashwood sisters soon dislike Anne and Lucy and feel that they cannot be trusted.
- 6** (a) The Miss Steeles both flatter the Middletons. Anne Steele flatters Lady Middleton by saying that she is a good mother. Both sisters flatter her children by saying how clever and lively they are. In turn, Lady Middleton flatters Anne and Lucy by saying that they are the sweetest girls in the world.
- (b) Lucy Steele is very sly. She hides her own feelings, but tries to find out other people's secrets. She pretends to be Elinor's friend because she wants to find out how Elinor and Edward feel about each other. At the same time, Lucy asks Elinor for advice about her engagement. Lucy is playing a cruel game with Elinor.
- (c) Mr Palmer frowned when Charlotte mentioned his name and suggested that her mother had arranged their marriage. Mrs Jennings laughs and teases her son-in-law by saying that it is too late for him to be angry.
- 7** Marianne Dashwood is happy about the invitation to London, because Willoughby will be there. She wants to see him and find out his true feelings for her. Elinor does not want to go to London at first, because she does not want to see Edward and Lucy together. But then Elinor remembers that Edward will not be in London until February. She agrees to please her sister and go to London with her.
- 8** Willoughby's letter starts coldly, because he does not use Marianne's name, but writes "My Dear Madam". He also signs his full name at the end, which is very formal and cold, as is the language of the whole letter. He is cruel, because he writes "I was never in love with you" and he talks of the "friendship" between them, rather than love. He also says that he had "loved another lady for some time". Willoughby cruelly puts all the blame on Marianne by using the words "You say that I have upset you" and "I am afraid that you have misunderstood". As well as returning Marianne's letters, which she had asked him to do, he also returns the lock of her hair. It is cruel to say "that you so kindly gave me" because he had asked her for it, in a loving way, when he was at Barton Cottage.
- 9** Before he arrived at Barton, Willoughby had behaved shamefully to Eliza Williams, Colonel Brandon's niece. She was only seventeen, but Willoughby had seduced her, taken all her money and then left her completely alone.
- 10** John Dashwood is talking to his step-sister, Elinor. John had married Fanny Ferrars, a rich woman. He hopes that Elinor will make a good marriage too. Then he will not have to worry about giving her and her mother any money. So John asks Elinor about Colonel Brandon's house and money and advises her to "catch" him. John also tells Elinor that Mrs Ferrars has found a suitable lady for her son, Edward. The lady is the daughter of a lord and she is very rich. John hints to Elinor that if she and Edward get married to rich people, not each other, everyone in the family will be very pleased. In John's opinion, people can only be happily married if they are rich too. Edward and Elinor cannot marry each other, because they will both be poor.
- 11** Fanny Dashwood has become very friendly with Anne and Lucy Steele and they are staying at her house in London. Fanny is very fond of Lucy and Lucy is looking forward to having Fanny as her sister-in-law. Fanny begins telling Anne that her brother Edward is going to marry the rich and important Miss Morton. Anne stupidly decides to tell Fanny the truth – Edward is engaged to her sister, Lucy. Fanny is horrified. She starts screaming so loudly that John and Lucy hurry into the room. Fanny calls Lucy "wicked and sly" and the sisters are told to leave the house. John sends for Mrs Ferrars and she soon knows the secret too.
- 12** (a) Colonel Brandon offers to give Edward Ferrars the position of curate at Delaford and Elinor is delighted.
- (b) Mrs Jennings is disappointed when she hears that Elinor is not going to marry Colonel Brandon.
- (c) Robert Ferrars is very amused when he hears that Edward is going to be a clergyman and marry Lucy. Robert knows that they will be poor and he is sure that they will have a dull life. That makes him laugh.

- 13** (a) After Marianne's walk, her shoes and stockings are very wet, but she does not take them off at once. She catches a cold, which turns into a fever and she becomes very ill.
- (b) The doctor tells Elinor that Marianne's life is in danger. Elinor must send for Mrs Dashwood at once.
- (c) When Elinor hears the carriage at eight o'clock, she is surprised that Colonel Brandon has returned so quickly. She looks out of the window and sees why. The carriage has four horses, not two. Elinor runs downstairs to greet the Colonel, but finds that the visitor is Willoughby.
- 14** Elinor is upset that Edward has gone to Oxford, without saying anything to her. She is even more upset when a servant tells the Dashwoods that Edward Ferrars has married Lucy Steele. Elinor is very happy when she finds out the truth from Edward himself. Lucy has married his brother, Robert. Elinor runs from the room, crying with happiness. She is even happier when Edward returns and asks her to marry him. They can now show their true feelings for each other and look forward to a happy life together.
- 15** 1 Someone with sense, looks at the facts clearly, before making up their mind about anything. They think before they speak. People with sense understand people's true characters too. Someone with sensibility puts their feelings before facts. They make up their minds quickly about people and sometimes do things without thinking. They do not think that they should hide their thoughts.
- 2 At the beginning, Elinor is the one who has sense. Marianne and her mother, Mrs Dashwood, have sensibility.
- 3 By the end of the story, Elinor learns that it is important to show her true feelings. Marianne and her mother now have more sense. They are able to see facts more clearly and understand people too. At the beginning of the story, both Colonel Brandon and Edward Ferrars are men of sense who hide their feelings. By the end, they both see the importance of sensibility too.