

# Side A Edward, Elinor

*everywhere. He sits and puts his pen to paper, but does not write. There is another brief moment of silence.*

Begin: EDWARD. Miss Dashwood. I fear I have not yet had a proper occasion to express to you, ah, personally, my very sincere condolences on the loss of your father.

ELINOR. Oh. Yes. Thank you.

*Another pause. They bend their heads to writing; neither of them is able to write. He clears his throat.*

EDWARD. Miss Dashwood. I hope that my presence here has not caused you any...additional distress in this sad time. My sister—I confess, I was not entirely informed of all the particular...particulars before my visit.

ELINOR. Oh. No. You needn't apologize, Mr. Ferrars. In fact, I must thank you—My mother said only yesterday that your presence at Norland is a comfort, and I am very grateful for anything that raises her spirits.

EDWARD. I am pleased that your mother is...pleased. (*Mentally kicking himself for that.*) That is, ah. Might I enquire after Mrs. Dashwood?

ELINOR. It is rather too early to think of any moderation in grief. My father's death—it is very difficult.

*She attempts not to get emotional.*

EDWARD. I am sure that you must be a great comfort to her.

ELINOR. I attempt to be.

## Side A, continued...

*Small pause.*

I am writing to our cousin, Sir John Middleton. He may have a cottage available for us in Devonshire. The rent is uncommonly moderate.

EDWARD. I imagine it must be very difficult. To leave your home.

ELINOR. Yes. We were...we have been very happy here.

*She attempts not to cry.*

I must not smudge this.

EDWARD. Miss Dashwood...please forgive me, I fear—I did not mean to upset you—

*Edward impulsively takes out his handkerchief and brings it over to her, half-kneeling. Elinor takes it, slightly mortified.*

ELINOR. Mr. Ferrars. I cannot use this.

*She shows him. There is ink all over the handkerchief, from his stained hand. There is a moment of awkwardness; then she begins to laugh a little. They both begin to laugh a little, despite themselves.*

EDWARD. Miss Dashwood, I beg your pardon...no, this is inexcusable...I am very, very sorry...

ELINOR. Oh, no—it's very—it's very kind of you—I beg YOUR pardon... Oh no, no, please stop, you're going to smear it...

*Fanny comes in and absorbs it all, Edward kneeling very close to Elinor. Edward looks up and starts guiltily, which makes it worse.*

EDWARD. Fanny! Miss Dashwood was just—she was kind enough to—

[FANNY. Edward. There is *ink* on your face.]

*Elinor and Edward freeze like guilty children. Edward turns away from Elinor. Slowly, haltingly, Edward begins to speak as we transition to:*

# Side B - John, Fanny

*Fanny Dashwood enters; all the Gossips "tsk" reprovingly.*

*Begin:* FANNY. My dear John, how can you think of taking four thousand pounds from the fortune of our dear little boy? What possible claim can the Miss Dashwoods, who are only related to you by half blood, have to so large an amount?

JOHN. My father's last request was that I provide for them, Fanny.

FANNY. Your father did not know what he was talking of, I dare say; ten to one he was light-headed at the time. Four thousand pounds!

JOHN. He did not specify any particular amount.

*Fanny waits.*

Perhaps if the sum were diminished by one-half. Five hundred pounds apiece would be a great increase to their fortunes!

FANNY. Two thousand pounds! What brother on earth would do so much for even his REAL sisters!

JOHN. One had rather do too much than too little. Do you think that they may expect more?

FANNY. Who knows what they may expect.

JOHN. Two thousand pounds, all at once, might overwhelm them and be spent unwisely, I suppose. Perhaps a yearly sum, instead?

FANNY. People always live forever when there is an annuity to be paid them. To be very honest, my love, I am convinced that your father had no idea of you giving them any *money*. I wager when he told you to "provide for them," he meant to help them to move their things, and send them occasional presents of fish and game, and so forth. My darling—may I risk being perfectly frank?

JOHN. Always, my angel.

FANNY. The painful truth is that even on his deathbed, your father was not thinking of us, nor of our little Harry—he thought only of THEM. So you owe no particular attention to his wishes, for given his way, he would have left them everything in the world. Remember, my dear—he left them all the best china.

JOHN. The china is a material consideration. It is absolutely unnecessary to do more, I think, than to help them move comfortably. How liberal and handsome you are, my lamb.

*She takes his arm. They exit.*

*End.*

# Side C - Sir John, Mrs. Jennings

Begin:

SIR JOHN. (*From outside the cottage.*) Hallllloooo!

MRS. JENNINGS. (*Echoing.*) Hallloooooooo, halllooooo!

*Sir John Middleton and Mrs. Jennings sweep in—they don't stop moving the whole time. Sir John is a boisterous middle-aged man; Mrs. Jennings, his even more boisterous mother-in-law.*

*She has a herd of noisy lapdogs—represented by the Gossips, yapping like dogs throughout. It is a circus. They constantly interrupt each other and overlap portions of lines throughout.*

SIR JOHN. Mrs. Dashwood! Welcome, welcome! May I present my mother-in-law, Mrs. Jennings?

MRS. JENNINGS. Hallo, how d'ye do? Always so thrilling to meet a relation! Excuse these noisy devils, they get over-excited. Hush!

~~MRS. DASHWOOD. Sir John. My daughters, Elinor, Marianne, and Margaret.~~

SIR JOHN. (*To Mrs. Jennings.*) Have you ever seen prettier girls in all the world? (*To the dogs.*) HUSH, HUSH, YOU!

MRS. JENNINGS. I am sure they have left many broken young gentlemen in Devonshire! HUSH!

*Marianne is repulsed.*

SIR JOHN. You must, of course, dine at Barton Park every day until you are settled. HUSH!

*Mrs. Dashwood opens her mouth to politely refuse. The dog barking reaches a crescendo.*

MRS. JENNINGS. Come! You must come! HUSH!

SIR JOHN. Come, come! You must come!

We shall not leave until you agree to come—HUSH!

~~MRS. DASHWOOD. We shall wait on you for dinner, if it is no inconvenience.~~

SIR JOHN. Lady Middleton will be so pleased.

MRS. JENNINGS. Oh, she shall be frantic with excitement!

We expect you tonight!

MRS. JENNINGS. Tonight! HUSH! HUSH!

SIR JOHN. The prettiest girls in all England! HUSH!

End.

*They sweep off as quickly as they swept on. Before the Dashwoods have any time to recover, the Barton Park dining table is wheeled on, fully set, and they are ushered in by Sir John.*

# Side D - Edward, Marianne, Mrs. D. (Elinor)

Begin: EDWARD.

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought—

*Marianne, the middle Dashwood sister, and Mrs. Dashwood enter as Fanny exits, looking balefully at Edward. Elinor sketches a portrait of Edward; Mrs. Dashwood embroiders. Edward reads from a copy of Hamlet.*

MARIANNE. With spirit, Edward!

EDWARD. (*Getting worse.*)

And enterprises of great pith and moment—

MARIANNE. (*Can hardly keep her seat.*) Edward, please. Hamlet is not making polite conversation! In this speech, he is all of mankind—all of humankind—railing against the forces that would keep us tame—that prevent us from acting upon our soul's truest impulses. It is a desperate cry against the futility of a life less than entirely lived! You must be driven almost mad by PASSION, by RAGE, by love for the FRAIL BEAUTY OF LIFE ITSELF!

EDWARD. (*Getting even worse.*)

With this regard their currents turn away—

MARIANNE. Edward, Shakespeare writes in a rhythm—

*Pounds iambically on the table, ba-bum ba-bum ba-bum.*

which matches precisely the beats of the human heart. If your heart also beats—which I presume it does—

EDWARD. ...Yes?

MARIANNE. —Then you cannot help but feel the impossible depth of all of Hamlet's text!

And thus the native hue of resolution

Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought—

EDWARD. (*As she claps the meter at him.*)

...With THIS reGARD their CURrents TURN aWAY  
And LOSE the NAME of ACTion—

## Side D, continued...

MARIANNE. (*Unsubtly turning him to face Elinor.*)

Soft you now!

The fair Ophelia!

[ELINOR. Marianne.]

EDWARD.

Soft YOU now!

The FAIR OpHELia!

MARIANNE. (*Milking it.*)

Nymph, in thy orisons—

EDWARD. (*To Elinor.*)

NYMPH, in THY orISONS,

Be ALL my SINS reMEMber'd!

*Pause. Mrs. Dashwood politely claps.*

MARIANNE. Oh, Edward.

*She takes Hamlet from him.*

EDWARD. I'm sorry.

MRS. DASHWOOD. A noble effort! (*Aside.*) Why would you give him *Hamlet* to begin, Marianne?

MARIANNE. Nay, Mamma, if one is not to be animated by *Hamlet*! (*With an effort to be polite.*) —But I suppose we must allow for differences of taste.

EDWARD. In truth, you have done me a service. I may now tell my mother in all seriousness that I have no talent for public speaking.

MRS. DASHWOOD. Will she take such a defeat willingly, Edward? Your sister is always telling us you are destined to be a very great orator.

EDWARD. My life's work seems to be to convince both Fanny and my mother that I am unsuited for public scrutiny.

MRS. DASHWOOD. Then how is your fame to be established? For famous you must be to satisfy them!

EDWARD. I cannot be forced into greatness, thank heaven.

MRS. DASHWOOD. And do you have no ambition?

EDWARD. My ambition is to be happy, but I fear it must be in my own way. Wealth and fame would not make me so.

End. —

# Side E - Elinor, Marianne

Begin:

MARIANNE. What a pity it is, Elinor, that Edward reads so spiritlessly.

ELINOR. Marianne, you have been hectoring him all afternoon, and you have only made him more self-conscious. If you would leave him alone for a moment, I'm sure that he would read very well indeed.

MARIANNE. I was only trying to help.

ELINOR. Mm.

MARIANNE. Elinor, are you truly offended?

ELINOR. Do you really think him spiritless?

MARIANNE. I have the highest opinion possible of Edward, I assure you! I think him every thing in the world that is worthy and amiable.

ELINOR. (*Slightly mollified.*) Must you always speak so warmly?

MARIANNE. Don't you agree?

ELINOR. I think that Edward is very...sensible. His mind is excellent, and if he is not always a brilliant orator, it is only shyness that impedes him.

MARIANNE. Indeed.

ELINOR. He may sometimes appear awkward. But I believe that is only because he strives so earnestly never to hurt any living creature by careless thought or action.

MARIANNE. Yes.

ELINOR. —I grant you, perhaps he is not fashionable.

MARIANNE. No—

ELINOR. —Perhaps he is not even widely considered "handsome." But once you notice his eyes, which are uncommonly good, and consider the general sweetness of his expression...well, I find him very handsome indeed. (*Self-consciously going back to her drawing.*) But what say you, Marianne?

MARIANNE. I swear that when you tell me to love him as a brother, I shall think him perfect indeed.

ELINOR. Marianne! I do not deny that I think very highly of Edward.

*Marianne springs up.*

That I greatly esteem him! That I like him.

MARIANNE. *Esteem him! Like him! Cold-hearted Elinor!*

## Side E, continued...

ELINOR. Excuse me for speaking in so quiet a way of my feelings. Believe them to be stronger than I have declared. But I am not sure that Edward feels anything for me beyond friendship.

MARIANNE. Elinor.

ELINOR. He may have a kind of a...preference!

MARIANNE. Ah-ha!

ELINOR. But there are other points to be considered, Marianne! He is dependent on his mother for a living, and must obey her wishes in all things. Edward would face many obstacles if he wished to marry a woman with no fortune.

*A servant enters. They hush.*

SERVANT. Miss Dashwood. Dinner is served.

MARIANNE. (*As soon as the servant leaves.*) You must not be diffident, Elinor! Edward is obviously desperately in love with you, and no material obstacle can stand in the way of love for long. That means it is only a matter of time...

ELINOR. Before?

MARIANNE. Before he binds his soul to yours, forever!

ELINOR. ...Where do you pick up these phrases?

*Marianne pokes her.*

Stop! You are a goose.

*Marianne pokes her many times, she flees.*

Stop, we must go in for dinner!

*Rather giggly, they head into dinner.*

End.

(2)

Side F - Marianne,  
Willoughby,  
Mrs. D., Elinor

*Willoughby sits with Marianne, Elinor, and Mrs. Dashwood.  
Marianne's foot is propped up.*

Begin:

MARIANNE. Cowper!

WILLOUGHBY. Yes. I daresay that Scott or Pope is a more serious-minded answer, but I am afraid that Cowper is my favorite poet of our time.

MARIANNE. Cowper may indeed be the greatest poet of *any* time. Pray, what is your favorite poem, Mr. Willoughby? Mine must be "Hope."

ELINOR. I think—

WILLOUGHBY. (*Interrupting, quoting "Hope."*)

—Oh, see me sworn to serve thee, and command  
A painter's skill into a poet's hand!

MARIANNE.

That, while I, trembling, trace a work divine  
Fancy may stand aloof from the design,

WILLOUGHBY.

And light, and shade, and  
ev'ry stroke, be thine.

MARIANNE.

And light, and shade, and  
ev'ry stroke, be thine.

*Pause.*

MRS. DASHWOOD. Mr. Willoughby, won't you join us for dinner?

WILLOUGHBY. I beg your pardon, ma'am, but I must dine with my cousin at Allenham. I had no idea it was so late. Might I enquire after Miss Marianne again tomorrow?

MRS. DASHWOOD. By all means.

MARIANNE. Until tomorrow.

*He bows to the ladies and exits.*

ELINOR. Well, Marianne! Nobody can ever accuse you of being too reserved.

MARIANNE. You are right, Elinor. I have been too much at ease, too happy, too frank. I have been open and sincere when I ought to have been spiritless and dull! I suppose you think I should have talked solely of the weather, and the roads, and only spoken once every ten minutes—or better yet, never spoken at all?

MRS. DASHWOOD. My love, she is only teasing you. Elinor, surely we would never wish to check Marianne's conversations with her (*Significantly.*) new friend.

End.

①.

*Willoughby, Marianne, and Elinor amuse themselves on the lawn at Barton Park.*

*Begin:*

WILLOUGHBY. Colonel Brandon is the kind of man everybody speaks well of, and who nobody cares about.

*Marianne giggles at his badness.*

ELINOR. Why should you dislike him?

MARIANNE. Why should you like him?

ELINOR. He is very civil. He has seen a great deal of the world, and always answers my inquiries with good breeding and good nature.

MARIANNE. That is to say he has told you that in the East Indies the climate is hot, and the mosquitoes are troublesome!

ELINOR. You are both unfair to him, and it is not witty in either of you.

WILLOUGHBY. Oho! In defence of your protégé, Miss Dashwood, you can even be saucy!

ELINOR. My protégé, as you call him, is a sensible man, and sense will always have attractions for me. Yes, Marianne, even in a man over forty.

WILLOUGHBY. Oh, he is very respectable! As respectable as a statue or a monument, our terrible stiff perfectly inhuman colonel. I'm amazed he can still bend at the waist.

*He struts around imitating Brandon's stiff walk. Marianne giggles again.*

ELINOR. *(Rather stiffly herself.)* Well. I have always found him to be a perfect gentleman.

WILLOUGHBY. ...But not me?

MARIANNE. Elinor!

WILLOUGHBY. No, no—I fear she is only too right. Miss Dashwood, forgive me. In utter self-reproach, I cast myself at your feet. To once again bask in the light of your sweet approbation, I surrender my case entirely. I, John Willoughby, confess that Colonel Brandon's character is completely and entirely irreproachable! And yet, somehow, I dislike him as much as ever.

*Colonel Brandon approaches.*

Speak of the devil...

MARIANNE. Oh, we are never safe from him!

WILLOUGHBY. You have poor timing, Brandon—I was just about to take Miss Marianne to look at the greenhouse. There are some very interesting orchids there.

MARIANNE. Orchids? Yes, we must go look at the...orchids. I so adore an orchid. Please do excuse us, Colonel. *End.*

①

Side G-  
Willoughby,  
Marianne,  
Elinor

# Side H - Margaret, Elinor

Begin: *Elinor, Mrs. ~~Dashwood~~, and Margaret walk on the lane.*

MARGARET. (*Dancing around.*) I have such a secret to tell you both about Marianne! I am sure she will be married to Mr. Willoughby very soon.

ELINOR. You have said that almost every day since they met, Margaret.

MARGARET. But indeed now I am sure they will be married very soon, for he has got a lock of her hair.

*Mrs. Dashwood and Elinor exchange glances.*

ELINOR. How do you know?

MARGARET. I know MANY secrets, Elinor.

ELINOR. Margaret.

MARGARET. I saw him take it! Last night after tea, when you and Mamma went out of the room, they were whispering together, and he took up her scissors and cut off a lock of her hair, and he kissed it, and put it into his pocketbook! And today she asked to stay at home, ALONE... I am sure that he must be visiting with her now!

~~MRS. DASHWOOD.~~ (*Half-heartedly chiding.*) Margaret...

*Elinor* *They arrive back at the cottage.*

MARGARET. It is Mr. Willoughby's curricle outside! I told you, he DID visit her!

End.

# Side I - Fanny, John

Begin:

FANNY. ~~Edward. Do not make promises that you cannot keep.~~

*Moment of awkward silence. Fanny addresses this to the table at large:*

My brother, you know, is soft-hearted, and always wishes to please everybody at every time. But we must not allow him to become too distracted! We have such great expectations for him. There is truly no limit to what Edward may accomplish—whether in the army, the law, or the government.

JOHN. Hear, hear!

FANNY. You know, it is quite burdensome to have such very very high potential, as our Edward does. And I confess, it does make me fear for him.

JOHN. What do you mean, my love?

FANNY. Why, my poor brother is a fox—and hallooing all around him are hunters and hounds. (*Doing an extremely ladylike imitation of a hound.*) Aooo, aooo.

JOHN. A fox, Fanny?

FANNY. Oh, I am sorry—am I being very abstract? He is a target, my love. He is...prey. Opportunists are always circling, eager to pounce. An eligible man of my brother's station will always attract, for example—upwardly-minded young ladies. There is no predator so fierce, no creature so shameless, as an unmarried woman in the desperate pursuit of a wealthy man. It is a sad reflection of our libertine age, but I assure you that such fortune-hunters are all too common—and I do use that term broadly.

[EDWARD. Fanny!]

End. FANNY. What? I am merely making conversation.

①

# Side J - Anne

LUCY. ~~What a lovely room this is! So very well-appointed.~~

~~Marianne is silent.~~

ELINOR. ~~Indeed!~~

~~Pause.~~

Begin:

ANNE. *(To Elinor.)* How do you like Devonshire, Miss Dashwood? I suppose you were very sorry to leave Sussex, and that big fine house—When your father died, and you lost all your money.

~~ELINOR. *(Taken aback.)* We were very sad to leave Norland.~~

~~MARIANNE. *(Mortally offended.)* Excuse me.~~

~~*She goes to the piano and begins playing an angry march that continues, under.*~~

ANNE. *(Leaving no room for response.)* And had you a great many smart beaux there? There may be a vast many smart beaux in Exeter, I'm sure; but Lord knows if I can tell what beaux there might be about Norland! And perhaps the Miss Dashwoods might find it dull here if they do not have so many as they used to have. But perhaps you two do not care about the beaux, and had as lief be without! For my part, I think they are vastly agreeable provided they dress smart and behave civil. I can't bear to see them dirty and nasty. Now there's Mr. Rose at Exeter, clerk to Mr. Simpson, if you do but meet him of a morning he is not fit to be seen! I suppose your brother was quite a beau, Miss Dashwood, before he married, as he was so rich, and—

~~LUCY. —ANNE!~~

ANNE. *(Unchastened.)* Well. Sir John tells us Miss Marianne has a special admirer who is VERY handsome. And I hope you will have as good luck yourself soon—but perhaps you have a gentleman friend, already?

End.

~~SIR JOHN. *(Shouting from offstage.)* His name is Ferrars, but pray do not tell it, for it's a great secret.~~

~~ANNE. Ferrars! Mr. Ferrars is the happy man? Your sister-in-law's brother, Miss Dashwood? Why, we know him very, very well.~~

~~LUCY. Anne! We have met Mr. Ferrars once or twice at our uncle's, but we hardly know him well.~~

Side K - Mrs. Jennings

Begin:

MRS. JENNINGS. (*Bustling in, leaving no room for response.*) Oh! Colonel, I am monstrous glad to see you—beg your pardon, but I have been on my feet all day.

*Collapses.*

I have brought two young ladies with me, you see—you see but one of them now, but there is another somewhere—and it is your friend, Miss Marianne! Yes! I thought that would please you. I do not know what you and Mr. Willoughby will do between you about her! It is a fine thing to be young and handsome—or so I think, I never was handsome, but I was young once, or so I seem to remember—Oh! Pardon me a moment, I have forgot to speak to Cook about dinner. One has always a world of little odd things to do after one has been away, and I have had old Cartwright to settle with—Lord, I have been as busy as a bee!

*She bustles out again; as she does:*

Buzz buzz buzz buzz!

1.

End.

**Side L - Lucy, Elinor**  
Begin:

LUCY. Miss Dashwood. Please pardon me, but I wonder if I might ask you something rather odd? Pray, are you closely acquainted with your sister-in-law's mother, Mrs. Ferrars?

ELINOR. No. I have never met her.

LUCY. Truly? Oh. I supposed she might have visited Norland sometimes.

ELINOR. No, I am afraid not.

LUCY. You must think me very strange for enquiring about her. I wish I could tell you why I ask; but I do not wish you to think me impertinent.

ELINOR. I—

LUCY. I could not bear to have you think me impertinent. I would rather anything in the world than be thought impertinent by a person like you.

ELINOR. I assure you—

LUCY. —And I do wish, so much, that I could tell you my reasons—and I would indeed be very glad of your advice in a trying matter. But I do not want to trouble you. I am sorry that you do not happen to know Mrs. Ferrars.

ELINOR. I am sorry that I do not. But I confess, I did not know that you were at all connected with that family.

LUCY. Forgive me, it was an odd question. Do not think of it any more.

*Pause.*

ELINOR. Tea?

LUCY. Dearest Miss Dashwood, can I trust you?

ELINOR. Pardon?

LUCY. Can you—would you—keep a very great and grave and

## Side L, continued...

important secret? If I unburdened myself to you entirely, would you solemnly promise never ever ever to tell anyone what I will tell you now?

*Elinor nods, nonplussed.*

Mrs. Ferrars is indeed nothing to me at present—but the time will come—when we may be very intimately connected indeed!

ELINOR. Good heavens! Have you an understanding with (*Lowering her voice.*) Mr. Robert Ferrars?

LUCY. No—I never saw him in my life; but I am engaged (*Fixing her eyes upon Elinor.*) to his eldest brother.

*Pause.*

I dare say he never dropped the smallest hint of it to you or your family? It is a great secret, for I have no fortune, and we fear his mother will take away all his inheritance if he chooses to marry a girl with no money.

ELINOR. I beg your pardon, but there must be some mistake. We cannot mean the same Mr. Edward Ferrars.

LUCY. I assure you, I am not mistaken about the name of the man on whom all my happiness depends. Mister. Edward. Ferrars.

*The piano finishes in a huge, angry flourish as Elinor sits, alone.*

End. —

②

# Side M - Col. Brandon, Elinor

[SERVANT. Colonel Brandon, miss.]

*Elinor hurriedly hides the letter and smooths her hair. Colonel Brandon enters.*

Begin: ELINOR. I am afraid Mrs. Jennings is away from home, Colonel.

COL. BRANDON. And your sister?

ELINOR. Marianne is...unwell.

COL. BRANDON. Perhaps, then, what I heard this morning—there may be more truth in it than I thought possible.

ELINOR. What did you hear?

COL. BRANDON. It concerned a certain gentleman.

ELINOR. You mean Mr. Willoughby's sudden engagement to Miss Grey. Have you also heard that Miss Grey has fifty thousand pounds?

COL. BRANDON. ...How is your sister?

ELINOR. Her sufferings have been very severe.

COL. BRANDON. Miss Dashwood, I may be able to offer some comfort—no, not comfort, but I may be able to relate some—history about Mr. Willoughby which may bring some...clarity.

ELINOR. Please go on.

COL. BRANDON. You may find me a very awkward narrator.

ELINOR. Please.

COL. BRANDON. In my youth, I knew a lady who...was very like your sister Marianne, both in person and in temperament. I loved her, and she loved me in return—but Eliza had no fortune, and I was a young man with no independence and no occupation. I was under my father's power.

*Beat.*

He forbade the match, of course. A marriage of that kind was impossible, he said, unthinkable—and though I protested violently, I am ashamed to say that he won his point at the last. Threatened

## Side M, continued...

with disinheritance and disownment, I faltered. And Eliza was sent away.

*Pause.*

At seventeen, I was also shipped off to my regiment in the East Indies, and there lost contact with Eliza entirely. A man came along, and treated her kindly for a time...and then another, and then another. I returned to England a grown man, independent—and determined to find her. By the time I did, she was dying in the poorhouse, her infant by her side. You may have heard some rumors about my ward, Miss Jane Williams. She is Eliza's daughter, whom I swore to look after as my own. That was fifteen years ago. Last February, Jane suddenly disappeared from her boarding school; for months, I could not find her. Finally, I received a letter from her—on that evening I left Barton so suddenly. In it, she did not name the man who had seduced her—his luck, for I would have done him violence at the table, even as he basked in your sister's smiles.

ELINOR. Mr. Willoughby.

COL. BRANDON. He left Jane in a situation of the utmost distress, with no home, no help, no friends, ignorant of his whereabouts. She is fifteen. And now she is with child.

ELINOR. This is beyond everything!

COL. BRANDON. When I came to you last week, I thought that all was settled between your sister and Mr. Willoughby. I did not know how I could stop the marriage without heaping scandal upon both her and my poor Jane.

ELINOR. Who knows what his designs on Marianne were!

COL. BRANDON. I promise you, Miss Dashwood, if I did not from my heart believe that this might eventually lessen Miss Marianne's regrets, I would never have burdened you with such troubling information.

*He bows.*

I am sure I keep you from your sister.

*End. He leaves. Elinor, with a heavy heart, goes up to the bedroom.*

# Side N - Edward, Elinor, Marianne, Lucy

*The door is thrown open.*

[SERVANT. Mr. Edward Ferrars, Miss.]

*Edward walks in. It is impossibly awkward. Edward starts violently and almost walks right back out.*

Begin:

ELINOR. Mr. Ferrars!

EDWARD. Miss Dashwood. Miss...Steele.

*He lurches unsteadily towards the chair. He manages to knock a book off the table, grabs it, and puts it on the table again. He then bobs to sit, then stands.*

ELINOR. Please, do be seated.

EDWARD. I...thank you. Miss Dashwood.

*He covers the ring on his hand, then uncovers it under Lucy's sharp eyes.*

I came to...enquire after your mother.

ELINOR. She is very well, thank you.

EDWARD. Excellent. And young Miss Margaret? (*Unnecessarily.*)  
...Your sister?

ELINOR. Very well. Very well, thank you!

*Marianne rushes in, holding out her hand to be shaken, with great relief and joy.*

MARIANNE. Edward! I heard you announced.

EDWARD. Miss Marianne. How do you do?

MARIANNE. Oh, I am very unwell. But don't think of me, Edward! Elinor is well, you see. And surely that is all that matters.

EDWARD. Does not... (*Tripping over his words.*) does not London not agree with you?

MARIANNE. Not at all. I expected to find much pleasure here, but...the sight of you is the only comfort it has afforded thus far.

EDWARD. (*Half-listening to her.*) Ah.

MARIANNE. (*Pause.*) We spent such a terrible, wretched day at Harley Street yesterday, Edward! I have so much to say to you about it, (*Looking at Lucy.*) which cannot be said at the moment. But why weren't you there?

## Side N, continued...

EDWARD. I am afraid I was engaged elsewhere.

MARIANNE. Engaged elsewhere?! When such friends were to be met?

LUCY. Perhaps, Miss Marianne, you think that young men never keep any engagements at all!

*Elinor is very angry, but the sting goes right over Marianne's head.*

MARIANNE. Not so, indeed; I am sure he must have had something very important to do, to keep him from us. Did you have some pressing previous obligation, Edward?

*Edward chokes on some tea—vaguely nods.*

I knew it! What else could have kept you away? Edward really has the most active conscience in the whole world, you know, and would only have disappointed us because he did not want to break his word to another. Indeed, he is the most fearful of failing expectations, or causing pain to others of anybody I ever met, and he always tries to do the right thing—whether it makes him happy or not! Edward, it is so, and I will say it!

*The nature of her commendation is very un-exhilarating to Edward.*

EDWARD. Please do excuse me, I have only come for a moment, I have an appointment to see a horse. To buy. I may buy the horse. If it is a good horse.

MARIANNE. Going so soon! Again! Edward, this must not be.

LUCY. I am afraid I must also be on my way. If you are leaving, Mr. Ferrars, perhaps you would be so good as to escort me as far as the park?

EDWARD. I...why, yes. Delighted. Miss Marianne. Miss Dashwood.

*Lucy sweeps a curtsy. They exit.*

MARIANNE. What could have brought her here? Could she not see that we wanted her gone!—How teasing to Edward!

ELINOR. Why so?—We are all his friends, and he has known Lucy the longest. I am sure that he was happy to see her.

MARIANNE. (*Looking at her steadily.*) You know, Elinor—I cannot bear when you say things that you know are not true.

# Side O - Marianne, Margaret, Mrs. D, Elinor

Begin:

MARIANNE. Margaret, will you go and get your boots on?

MARGARET. We're not still going for a walk, are we? It is goiiiiiiing to raiiiiiin!

MARIANNE. No, it is not. Now go and get your boots, please.

MARGARET. Oh, boots. Boots boots boots!

*Margaret exits.*

MARIANNE. Mamma, I have had an alarum on the subject of sickness, which I must share with you. I am sure that Edward Ferrars is not well!

MRS. DASHWOOD. Oh?

MARIANNE. We have been here almost a fortnight, and he has not yet come. What else but grave illness could be keeping him away?

MRS. DASHWOOD. Does Elinor expect him?

MARIANNE. She must!

MRS. DASHWOOD. She has said nothing to me.

MARIANNE. It is all so strange! Do you know—I purposely left them alone together twice on our last morning at Norland, and each time he most unaccountably followed me out of the room!

*Margaret reenters.*

MRS. DASHWOOD. (To Marianne.) Shh.

MARGARET. ...What?

*Elinor reenters.*

ELINOR. Are you still walking? It looks as though it is going to rain.

MARGARET. Mariaaaaaanne!

MARIANNE. All this talk of a wet spring! It is NOT GOING TO RAIN, the day will be everlastingly fair! NOW COME ALONG!

*They exit, Margaret dragging her feet.*

End.

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