

## ELINOR AND MARIANNE

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 am sure that he would read very well indeed.

MARIANNE I was only trying to help. Are you truly offended?

ELINOR Do you really think him so spiritless?

MARIANNE I have the highest opinion possible of Edward, I assure you! I think him everything in the world that is worthy and amiable. 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. (*Self-consciously stopping herself.*) 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. That I greatly esteem him. That I like him

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

ELINOR Excuse me for speaking in so quiet a way of my feelings. Believe them to be stronger than I have declared. But there are other points to be considered. 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.

MARIANNE 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? We must go in for dinner.