



*'I just want to know – have Willoughby and Marianne agreed everything? Will they marry soon?'*

'Everybody? That's not possible! Her family don't know about it – how can other people think this?'

'I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be rude. I just want to know – have Willoughby and Marianne agreed everything? Will they marry soon?'

Elinor could see his love for Marianne clearly, and so she tried to explain everything to him. It was better to be honest; there was not much hope for Colonel Brandon.

No other visitor came, and there were no letters for Marianne during the next few days. Marianne wrote another letter to Willoughby, but there was no reply.

'This is very strange,' Elinor thought. She decided to write home. Her mother *must* ask Marianne about the engagement.

A few days later, they all went to a party. It was a large party, with crowds of well-dressed people, and the room was very hot. Elinor found two chairs for them by the wall. Suddenly she saw Willoughby. He was standing near them, talking to a young lady.

Marianne saw him too. Light came into her face, and she jumped up. Elinor pulled her down again.

'Sit down! Be calm!' she ordered.

'Why doesn't he come and speak to me?' Marianne asked.

'Perhaps he hasn't seen you yet.'

Then Willoughby turned round and looked at them. He held out his hand – but to Elinor, not Marianne.

'Willoughby! What does this mean?' Marianne asked. 'Didn't you get my letters?'

He looked very uncomfortable. 'Yes, thank you. You kindly sent me news of your arrival! Then he turned away to the young lady again.

Marianne's face was white now. 'Go to him, Elinor! He must explain! Surely there's some mistake!'

'No, my dear sister. It's not possible now. Wait until tomorrow.'