

## **Audition Pieces Actor D**

Character Played:

MISS ELINOR DASHWOOD

20 turning 21. Sensible, steady, practical, modest, loyal. The anchor of the play. An artist.

## First Audition Piece – To be learned

*Italicised segments are stage directions.*

*The bed is wheeled on and Marianne helped onto it. [Devising moment - Intent to show tending for Marianne and her worsening state. Dr Harris administers. Marianne is gravely ill after wandering through a storm to see the house of her lost love. Here we see the sensible sister, become insensible with emotion, but still as Elinor]*

DR HARRIS

*gently* I am afraid her condition has deteriorated. You must prepare.

*Elinor is shocked and aghast Dr Harris leaves. Elinor sits on the bed and clasps Marianne's hand.*

ELINOR DASHWOOD

*crying and determined* Marianne, this will not do. Do you hear me. This will not do. Your heart may be fractured but I know how strong, how enormous it is. You are the sun of all of our lives, the gilder of my every pleasure and such a friend as can never be surpassed.. you must live, for without you I cannot. *tries to stop but cannot, cries on her* I cannot Marianne, do not leave me, you say I am too laced up.. well here I am, undone, laid bare, begging you to.. stay, stay, for ME Marianne, I need you, oh god please stay.

*Elinor cries enormous wracking cries til she falls asleep on Marianne and slow blackout. Maybe just one candle burning. Quite a long blackout, sun slowly rises, birdsong. Elinor awakes and looks at Marianne who is deathly still. Elinor has a sharp intake of breath as she shakes Marianne.*

Marianne! Marianne wake up! *Puts her head on her chest sobbing*

MARIANNE DASHWOOD

*extremely feebly* Come now Elinor, you will rattle my teeth out.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Marianne! Oh you are awake, and saucy. Dr Harris Dr Harris!

*Dr Harris runs in and checks Marianne's pulse and temperature etc...*

DR HARRIS

She is over the worst.

The noise of a carriage arriving.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Mama! *runs to the door* Mama, do not fear, she is well!

## Second Audition Piece – To Be familiar with to read

*Elinor and Edward flirt in their honest earnest way. The proto-feminism is delivered with a light touch.*

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Do you not wish for a real profession Edward?

MR EDWARD FERRARS

Ha. I am afraid I am, an idle, helpless being. Mama and I could never could agree. I have always preferred the church, but that was not smart enough for my family. They favoured the army. That was a great deal too smart for me. So doing nothing was settled upon, I was entered at Oxford and have been properly idle ever since.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

You are lucky that you have a choice, some of us have idleness thrust upon us.

MR EDWARD FERRARS

Hhhmm, it seems neither of our lives are our own. But I must say Miss Dashwood, that these past six months, becoming acquainted with you... and your wonderful family, has been the best of all occupations.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

I long to be able to provide for my family with a vocation, but respectability prevents it. Imagine a future where a woman's worth and security were not determined by the fatness of her father's pocket book, or her pretty face, but by her mind and her deeds. But *laughs sardonically* it will not be in my lifetime, and so I sketch. And speaking of Mr Ferrars, I have completed this small watercolour on ivory of your vague likeness, it is but two inches wide, but please do accept this as a trifling token for your kindness, which has eased all of our pain of losing Norland.

MR EDWARD FERRARS

*totally enraptured* This is masterful, so much better even than ones I have commissioned. I shall treasure it always. Though you should not have wasted the ivory on me, a portrait of yourself, Elinor, would have been priceless.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Well then it is settled, I shall sell it for 200 000 pounds and buy Buckingham Palace to live in, happily ever after. *Laughs* Mr Ferrars, you are a genius. Now are you ready to navigate the great Norland maze? It has confounded many.

MR EDWARD FERRARS

Margaret has entrusted me with her lucky string, some may call it cheating, I prefer to call it British ingenuity.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Hmmmm, I believe you may have a future in politics after all Edward.

MR EDWARD FERRARS

*holding up the string end..* I'm afraid not! See, it's a knot, and it's frayed... afraid not.. see etc, *keeps explaining it as they exit*

ELINOR DASHWOOD

*deeply unimpressed whilst being utterly charmed* Oh dear, oh dear dear dear..