

## **Audition Pieces Actor F**

Characters Played:

### **MISS MARGARET DASHWOOD**

11, Youngest sister of Marianne and Elinor. Tom-boyish. Rambunctious, immature, still learning how to be proprieties, wants to join in more than she is allowed.

### **MASTER HARRY DASHWOOD**

AGED 8, Son of John and Fanny Dashwood. Spoilt brat.

### **COLONEL BRANDON**

35, Quietly considered, intense, passionate but keeps it simmering beneath to boil out now and then, completely in love with Marianne from first sight, quintessential gentleman, Army Colonel, Inherited a large estate on the death of his brother, kind, loyal, fan of flannel waistcoats.

### **MISS LUCY STEELE**

Very early 20's. Mrs Jennings' cousin. Lower ranking family. Has aspirations of greater things, lesser intellect than the Dashwood sisters. Obsequious to those more powerful, cloying, cunning. Ultimately highly opportunistic.

### **MR PALMER**

Early 40's. Charlotte's Husband. Excessively dry and sarcastic. Ultimately a good heart under it all also. Weary of society's nonsense.

### **FOOTMAN**

As per usual.

## First Audition Piece – to be learned – Colonel Brandon

*Italicised segments are stage directions.*

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Colonel, do come in.

COLONEL BRANDON

Good Morning Miss Dashwood. Please forgive my intrusion, but my object in coming. I believe... is purely to be useful; by relating some circumstances of previous blackguard [*pronounced blaggard*] behaviour.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

You have something to tell of Willoughby?

COLONEL BRANDON

Indeed.. you will remember the day of the abandoned Delaford picnic,..but no, I must go farther back. I hardly know where to start. *ponders* Once, many years ago I deeply loved a girl, with the same warmth of heart and spirit as your sister, the same musical gift..and she loved me. But at 17 she was married, against her will, to my older brother, purely for her fortune. He did not deserve her or even love her and soon his cruelty became too much, too physical, and so she took flight. I was deployed overseas at the time but upon my return I scoured England for her. It took months, but when I did find her she was withered, used, wracked with consumption, and in her final days. Penniless. She died in my arms.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Oh Colonel.

COLONEL BRANDON

Before she passed Eliza pleaded with me to care for her only child, an illegitimate girl, Isobel Williams. I looked after Issy's education and visited her as often as I could. She was so precious to me, I called her a distant relation; though I am aware some... Mrs Jennings.. thought me her father. But almost a year ago, aged 16, she disappeared. Led astray by, well, I shall save you my soldier's vocabulary. She vanished and for eight long months, I could only imagine the worst.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Good heavens, not Willoughby?

COLONEL BRANDON

*nods gravely* On the morning of our intended picnic I received news; she was found, with child, her youth and innocence defiled by one who had promised to return; but instead vanished, like a ghost.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Willoughby....

COLONEL BRANDON

When you told me Miss Marianne was promised to him, it twisted like a knife, but I stayed silent, clinging to a hope that he might be improved through her pure nature. But it was not to be. At the time when I discovered his actions I called him to a duel, but he was already

banished from Allenham by Miss Smith and all funds cut off when she learned of his philandering.

**Second Audition Piece – To be familiar to read**

LUCY STEELE

And how do you like Devonshire, Miss Dashwood? I suppose you were very sorry to leave the exquisite Norland.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

We were... but how do you know of it?

LUCY STEELE

From a very close mutual friend. Miss Dashwood, you may think my next question odd, but are you personally acquainted with your brother John's mother-in-law? Mrs. Ferrars?

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Fanny's mother? No I am not.

LUCY STEELE

Oh...Oh no. So, you cannot tell me what sort of a woman she is?

ELINOR DASHWOOD

I cannot. And I am at a loss how my opinion of her could be of use to you.

LUCY STEELE

I dare say you are confused, but I have good reason to ask. Mrs. Ferrars is certainly nothing to me at present -- but in time I hope we may be very intimately connected.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

You mean...? Are you engaged to Mr. Robert Ferrars?

LUCY STEELE

No, not to Mr. Robert Ferrars--I never saw him in my life; but to his eldest brother, Edward.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Ed...Edward?

LUCY STEELE

You must be surprised; He would not speak of it, but we have been secretly engaged these last four years. Though he would not mind my telling you, he looks upon you all quite as his own sisters.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Four.. four years...I did not know that you were even acquainted.

LUCY STEELE

Oh of many more years than that. He was under my uncle's tutelage, Mr Pratt, in Plymouth.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

Plymouth?

LUCY STEELE

Indeed. It was there we became attached and engaged. I was very unwilling to enter into it, without his mother's knowledge; but I was too young and too besotted for prudence. Though, Miss Dashwood, you must have seen how he is very capable of making a woman sincerely attached to him. Even his terrible jokes are endearing.

ELINOR DASHWOOD

I'm sorry but we cannot mean the same Mr. EDWARD Ferrars?

LUCY STEELE

But of course, I know the man on who all my happiness depends.

### **Third – With time allowing prepare to improvise as Margaret Dashwood 11**

Example of her dialogue:

MRS JENNINGS

And reddening further! A face like a beet, which can only mean... a beating heart! Margaret, do share, what is his name?

MARGARET DASHWOOD

I must not tell, may I Elinor.

MARIANNE DASHWOOD

Margaret, you know very well that there is no such person in existence.

MARGARET DASHWOOD

But there is! It was you who told me of it.

MRS JENNINGS

Pray, Miss Margaret, tell all, What is the gentleman's name? His occupation?

MARGARET DASHWOOD

He has no profession.... But his name begins with an F.

MRS JENNINGS

An F! Well then the game is a Foot! Hmmm Farquar... Frittersby, Flopsy...

MRS HENRY DASHWOOD

Margaret, let us take a turn about the grounds....

MARGARET DASHWOOD

But...

MRS HENRY DASHWOOD

Come child!