

“I See Every Thing As You Desire Me to Do”: The Scolding and Schooling of Marianne Dashwood

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Such behaviour as this, so exactly the reverse of her own, appeared no more meritorious to Marianne than her own had seemed faulty to [Elinor].¹

During the course of *Sense and Sensibility*, Marianne Dashwood's passionate beliefs are corrected; she learns to “compare” her conduct “with what it ought to have been” (p. 345) and to “counteract ... her most favourite maxims” (p. 378). *Sense and Sensibility's* status as a problem novel is well documented, and Marianne's transformation is considered particularly puzzling. Her marriage to Colonel Brandon, who “sought the constitutional safeguard of a flannel waistcoat” (p. 378), has disappointed many readers. If, however, we cease to read it as a problem novel—riddled with flaws which Austen learned to correct—this early work sets a precedent for dialogism in Austen. *Sense and Sensibility* illuminates a world of contesting ideas and shows that in this war of ideas, it is the strongest, those who can make others “submit” (p. 379), who survive. Austen's dialogic novel does not side with Elinor, or even Marianne; instead, it explores the struggle to achieve ideological dominance.

1 Jane Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*, ed. R.W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 104. References are to this edition.

Mikhail Bakhtin's critique of Dostoevsky scholarship as "too direct an ideological echoing of the voices of his heroes," which neglects the "*genuine polyphony of fully valid voices*," is relevant to Austen studies.² Readers of Austen often focus on the story of the great heroines—Emma, Elizabeth, Anne, and Fanny. The values the central heroine learns to embrace by the end of the novel are often taken to be those of Jane Austen and the novel itself.³ The "truth" the heroine arrives at is taken to be the novel's "truth" or ideology, and this move obscures the text's dialogism. Bakhtin argues that the representation of the hero's world-view as "*someone else's discourse*," separate from the author and novel as a whole, allows other characters and their world-views to coexist. Dialogism insists "that all meaning is relative in the sense that it comes about only as a result of the relation between two bodies occupying *simultaneous but different space*."⁴ Although some critics acknowledge the potential of other world-views represented in other characters, they render them in the light of attitudes the heroine successfully combats to achieve full maturity or happiness; ultimately, "the culminating marriages in Austen's novels lack the undercurrents of ambivalence."⁵

Part of the critical problem with *Sense and Sensibility* is that it resists this pattern of reading by presenting two heroines, both appealing in their own way, who meet radically different fates: Elinor is rewarded with the object of her affections, while Marianne has to learn to retrain her heart. The "reader must be made to accept the priority of ... [Elinor's] moral vision," Alistair Duckworth insists, but this "task is complicated by the author's refusal in any way to limit the attractive individualism of the other sister." In the other novels, "this problem is successfully avoided": "Whereas in *Sense*

2 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 8, 6.

3 Alistair Duckworth, *The Improvement of the Estate* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987); Jane Spencer, *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986); Jan Fergus, *Jane Austen and the Didactic Novel* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1983); Tony Tanner, *Jane Austen* (London: Macmillan, 1986); and A. Walton Litz, *Jane Austen: A Study of Her Artistic Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965).

4 Bakhtin, p. 65. Michael Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 20.

5 Mary Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 203. Similarly, Nancy Armstrong argues that Austen's "marriages ... make statements that are at once perfectly personal and perfectly political": "Austen's heroines marry as soon as their desire has been correctly aimed and accurately communicated." *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 192–93.

and *Sensibility* there is a bifurcation of action and reflection, in the later novels the two modes are one in the actions and retrospective reflections of the heroine.⁶ The system of contrasts, however, far from being a maze that the reader, along with the heroine, has to go through to arrive at the monologic truth, represents Austen's polyphonic vision. There is a bi- or even tri-furcation in *Emma* and in the other novels, too. And rather than being a "problem," this is where Austen's artistic success lies. The existence of "other" heroines posits the possibility of other marriages and other truths.

A *Bildungsroman* with two heroines, *Sense and Sensibility* invites a dialogic reading, yet perhaps more than any of Austen's novels, it has been seen as didactic. The pros and cons of sense and sensibility have been debated, and Roger Gard and Claudia Johnson provide a welcome break from this polemic. Austen's target is the "unfeeling, unintelligent world" in which the sisters have to live, rather than the sisters themselves. As Claudia Johnson has pointed out, the problem lies in "those sacred and supposedly benevolizing institutions of order—property, marriage, and family."⁷ While it is true that neither Elinor nor Marianne is safe in this world, there is a pronounced inequality in the destiny of the heroines. Elinor gets Edward and although we may find him dull, she does not. Her lot may not be as exciting as that which awaits Elizabeth Bennet, but it is preferable to Marianne's.

Marianne comes very close to death; no other Austen heroine undergoes such a violent education. Although Marianne starts out as a heroine of sensibility, she becomes a member of the community of sense. Marianne does not successfully court her own death during the "indulgence of ... solitary rambles" (p. 303) around Cleveland, but when she recovers, she does so only to recant her sensibility. At the end of the novel, her individualism is renounced and she is defined strictly in terms of her role as a member of society: "she found herself at nineteen, submitting to new attachments, entering on new duties, placed in a new home, a wife, the mistress of a family, and the patroness of a village" (p. 379). To call *Sense and Sensibility* a novel of education is to leave out half the story. For obviously

6 Duckworth, p. 114. Marianne's appeal is frequently a problem in interpretations of this novel. Marvin Mudrick goes so far as to speculate that Marianne is "perhaps more winning and lovely even than Jane Austen had originally planned": "Against her own moral will and conscious artistic purpose, the creator makes her creature wholly sympathetic." *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 81, 91.

7 Roger Gard, *Jane Austen's Novels: The Art of Clarity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 93; Claudia L. Johnson, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 49.

Marianne has already been educated, namely, in the school of sensibility. What is involved here is a violent purgation, a re-education, and a rewriting of the past. Marianne dies, is reborn, and this birth is a birth into another ideology. In a memorable phrase, Louis Althusser states that “*individuals are always-already subjects*.”⁸ Austen stresses that Marianne “was born to an extraordinary fate” which is not natural birth, but ideological interpellation:

She was born to discover the falsehood of her own opinions, and to counteract, by her conduct, her most favourite maxims. She was born to overcome an affection formed so late in life as at seventeen, and with no sentiment superior to strong esteem and lively friendship, voluntarily to give her hand to another! ... But so it was. (p. 378)

Austen presents the conversion as unlikely and anything but voluntary. That Marianne’s “whole heart became, in time, as much devoted to her husband, as it had once been to Willoughby” (p. 379) is something we never see. What we do witness is the rather violent process which brings about the endings.

Inventing “a something ... in Willoughby’s eyes ... which I did not like,” Mrs Dashwood is “very sure” that Marianne “would ... never have been so happy with *him* as she will be with Colonel Brandon” (p. 338). Elinor “was half inclined to ask her *reason* for thinking so, because satisfied that *none founded on an impartial consideration* of their age, characters, or feelings, could be given” (p. 336, emphasis added). The “pang” (pp. 339, 379) that Elinor and Willoughby continue to feel about the match that was not meant to be further underscores the contradiction at the heart of Marianne’s marriage to Colonel Brandon. The text strips sense, the dominant discourse, of the power to legitimize itself. Marianne’s marriage to Colonel Brandon is not a natural occurrence. It needs some hefty assistance: John Dashwood, Mrs Dashwood, Elinor, and Edward “felt [Colonel Brandon’s] sorrow and their own obligations, and Marianne, by general consent, was to be the reward of all.” The novel asks “With such a confederacy against her ... what could she do?” (p. 378). Clearly, Marianne is powerless against this communal wish.

Claudia Johnson sees Austen’s resurrection of Marianne as part of the novel’s iconoclasm: she “is dangled over the brink of death only to be yanked back into a second and happy attachment which flies in the face

8 Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: New Left Books, 1971), p. 164.

of cultural ideals about women's sentimentally self-monitored loyalty to the men who first love them." The happiness of the "second attachment," however, is dubious at best. Austen has Marianne defy one social convention only to enter another one. Johnson's reading, in which Marianne is allowed "to withdraw from the world" and happily nestled within the privacy of the family circle, reinstates the very ideology that she argues the text unmasks: Burke's "little platoon."⁹ The novel's denaturalizing of the most natural of bonds—the family—goes beyond the novel's unlikeable Mr and Mrs John Dashwood and company, for the coercion of Marianne is brought about at the hands of the very family members she loves.

Central to bringing about the impossible match is the telling of stories. In Austen criticism, the story of the two Elizas is a neglected narrative, yet another flaw of the novel.¹⁰ This narrative plays an important function, however; spilling beyond its frame, it creates a rippling effect that changes the surface of the novel. The narrative has a "generalizing effect," revealing similarities between Edward and Willoughby, as Johnson argues,¹¹ but the parallels do not end there: the story threatens the construction of Colonel Brandon as the "good" hero. When Eliza is married against her will, Brandon is conveniently absent, as he is for all of the second Eliza's misfortunes. He claims that he "gladly would ... have discharged" his responsibility towards Eliza "in the strictest sense," but "the nature of our situations" did not "allow" it: "I had no family, no home," but even when he does, he keeps her away from himself and places her "under the care of a very respectable woman, residing in Dorsetshire" (p. 208). And his decision not to warn the Dashwoods about Willoughby is dubious at best: "what could I do? I had no hope of interfering with success" (p. 210).¹² Willoughby's forgetfulness—"I did not recollect that I had omitted to give her [Eliza] my direction" (pp. 322–23)—appears to be a rather common problem; both men know when to absent themselves from responsibility.

9 Johnson, pp. 69, 72, 51.

10 Susan Morgan, *In the Meantime: Character and Perception in Jane Austen's Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), refers to the story as "uncomfortably conspicuous" (p. 176). A "hackneyed tale" (Litz, p. 82), it marks the point at which "Jane Austen's control of her subject collapses utterly" and its "effect may verge on hilarity or acute boredom" (Mudrick, pp. 89–90). Others, giving the story its due, see a subversive potential, which, however, finds only covert expression. The story is "never permitted to become central": it is "tuck[ed] ... safely within the centre" of the novel "as if to defuse the sensitivity of the subject matter" (Johnson, p. 55). Cf. Poovey, p. 187.

11 Johnson, p. 57.

12 See Mudrick, pp. 85–86.

Colonel Brandon ostensibly tells the story for the remedial purpose of giving “lasting conviction” to Marianne’s “mind” (p. 204): “She will feel her own sufferings to be nothing” (p. 210). Yet, this is not the effect it produces: Elinor “did not see her less wretched. Her mind did become settled, but it was settled in a gloomy dejection.” If the tale’s healing power is limited, its coercive one is not, and Marianne is married off to the Colonel: with “a knowledge so intimate of [Colonel Brandon’s] goodness ... what could she do?” (p. 378). Willoughby and Colonel Brandon are not alone in “appropriat[ing] ... heroine’s stories” and making them “suit established social arrangements.”¹³ The same can be said of Elinor. After all, she is the one who always gets to hear the story first, both from Colonel Brandon and Willoughby. Willoughby’s objection to Colonel Brandon’s narration—“Remember from whom you received the account. Could it be an impartial one?” (p. 322)—is valid. Colonel Brandon is hardly an impartial narrator, and neither is Elinor. And while Elinor has less power than Colonel Brandon or Willoughby or Edward, she has more than Marianne and Mrs Dashwood. The only one who hears Willoughby’s confession, Elinor decides when and how much to tell Marianne and Mrs Dashwood. Elinor “was carefully minute ... where minuteness could be safely indulged” (p. 348). The “simple truth” that she “wished ... to declare” (p. 349) is shown to be anything but “simple.” Although a “thousand inquiries sprung up from her heart,” Marianne “dared not urge one” (pp. 347–48) and resigns herself to her fate: “I see every thing—as you can desire me to do” (p. 349). And as the newly programmed subject, Marianne recites “I wish for no change” and then “sighed, and repeated—‘I wish for no change’” (p. 350).

This is not to suggest that Marianne’s sensibility, which is crushed out of her, was natural or even preferable. As a heroine of sensibility, Marianne follows a particular code of conduct, and, as the reformed heroine, she follows another code. In both ways she is a subject of a discourse. Critics often point out that Marianne’s behaviour is undercut as contrived. Indeed, Marianne’s behaviour is artificial in the sense that it is dictated by something bigger and outside herself, not her own unique sensibilities, as she believes. Ideology works by disguising itself as the independent, “natural” desire of individuals: Althusser tells us that “every ‘spontaneous’ language is an *ideological* language” and “there is no practice except by and in an ideology.”¹⁴ When we see that Marianne “would have thought herself very inexcusable had she been able to sleep at all the first night after

¹³ Johnson, p. 68.

¹⁴ Althusser, pp. 207, 159.

parting from Willoughby” (p. 83), we observe her replicating a predetermined code of conduct, rather than following her “unique” sensibilities. The artificiality of Marianne’s behaviour is obvious, but not for the reasons usually given: not because Austen is on the side of sense; not because Austen has not yet outgrown the burlesques of the juvenilia; and not because, as Poovey suggests, Austen must make Marianne “seem intermittently ridiculous” for “to take Marianne’s passions and longings seriously on their own terms would be to call into question the basis of ... the social order.”¹⁵ Rather, the overtly dramatic Marianne is the key to the text’s exposure of individual language as always already an acting out of an ideologically constituted language. This does not make Marianne’s suffering any less painful or significant. We may laugh at Marianne, but we are also moved by her. That Marianne’s behaviour is constructed, moreover, is only half the story. Foregrounding the denaturalized position of Marianne, the text invites us to recognize the way in which Elinor’s naturalized position is manufactured.

Marianne’s grief is treated ironically, but it is seen from the point of view of Elinor, hardly an impartial observer. *Sense and Sensibility* does not allow us to see only through Elinor’s eyes, for Austen makes us aware of gaps, omissions, and contradictions, stories that sense cannot tell, stories that do not make sense. By incorporating contradictions, Austen incorporates contrary discourses, thus giving us a glimpse of the polyphonic world that the dominant ideology, in order to legitimize its hegemony, needs to repress. Austen shows how any discourse tries to deny the validity of another discourse. To validate her own behaviour, Elinor has to undercut Marianne’s. Elinor’s self-righteous statement—“I will not raise objection against any one’s conduct on so illiberal a foundation, as a difference in judgement from myself, or a deviation from what I may think right and consistent” (p. 81)—can hardly be taken at face value in the way Jan Fergus does: Elinor “tries to allow for differences between her opinions and conduct and other people’s.”¹⁶ Clearly, the novel suggests otherwise. When Marianne realizes the dangers of sensibility and Mrs Dashwood confesses “imprudence,” Elinor was “satisfied that each felt their own error” (p. 352). Throughout the novel, Elinor polices Marianne’s behaviour; on their return to Barton, Marianne

grew silent and thoughtful, and turning away her face from their notice, sat earnestly gazing through the window. But here, Elinor could neither wonder nor blame;

¹⁵ Poovey, pp. 188–89.

¹⁶ Fergus, p. 47.

and when she saw, as she assisted Marianne from the carriage, that she had been crying, she saw only an emotion too natural in itself to raise anything less tender than pity, and its unobtrusiveness entitled to praise. In the whole of her subsequent manner, she traced the direction of a mind awakened to reasonable exertion. (p. 342)

Elinor observes and approves of Marianne's reformed behaviour. However, there are contradictions in this code. Marianne's emotion is "natural in itself," but subjected to "reasonable exertion." What is at stake here is not emotion, but its codification. Readers who side with Elinor often remind us that Elinor has feelings, too, and, of course, she does. But the text emphasizes that both exertion and indulgence are performances; both are directed to something or someone beyond the self; both are answers to the calling (interpellation) of ideology, be it that of sense or of sensibility. Elinor is unaware that she is used as a tool by the ideology of sense, and that her affection for Marianne is recruited by the dominant ideology to secure her sister's subjection, for Elinor feels she is acting in her sister's and family's best interests. It is owing to her own ideological positioning that Elinor thinks these two interests can be reconciled. Repeatedly, we see Elinor attempting to find happiness by acting in accordance with society's expectations. Elinor's self-denial is not the unequivocally heroic self-sacrifice it is often made out to be, for Elinor does find satisfaction in "feeling that I was doing my duty" (p. 262). Elinor's "plan of general civility" (p. 94)—frequently cited as selflessness in comparison to Marianne's selfish insistence on individual happiness—is, however, also shown to be motivated by self-interest. The point here is not to demonize or, alternatively, to humanize Elinor, but to show how Elinor's "selflessness" is a flattering construction facilitated by discursive power: Elinor subscribes to an ideology which places individual happiness within the community and, hence, her behaviour is no more selfless or selfish than Marianne's, which is constituted by an individualistic ideology. For example, Elinor's offer to help Lucy complete "a fillagree basket for a spoilt child" (p. 144) of Lady Middleton's appears to be generous. Elinor "joyfully profited" (p. 145), however, for she receives an opportunity to satisfy her curiosity about Lucy and Edward's engagement and "to convince Lucy ... that she was no otherwise interested in it than as a friend" (p. 142). Thus, "by a little of that address, which Marianne could never condescend to practise, [she] gained her own end, and pleased Lady Middleton at the same time" (p. 145). The self-gratification Elinor finds in appearing selfless is further parodied when she leaves the room to give Edward and Lucy Steele some privacy:

Her exertions did not stop here; for she soon afterwards felt herself so heroically disposed as to determine, under pretence of fetching Marianne, to leave the others by themselves; and she really did it, and *that* in the handsomest manner, for she loitered away several minutes on the landing-place, with the most high-minded fortitude, before she went to her sister. (pp. 241–42)

Elinor's "exertions" are shown to be as contrived and staged as Marianne's indulgences. Elinor is not exempt from Austen's irony: the language in both cases is denaturalized.

That Austen puts Elinor and Marianne in parallel situations is obvious, but instructive. Much of their behaviour is similar, but Elinor presents hers in a reasonable light. Her sister is instrumental in this process. Elinor has much at stake in portraying Marianne as over-indulgent, for her own identity as a woman of sense depends on it. For someone so discreet about Mrs John Dashwood and Lucy Steele, Elinor is remarkably frank about Marianne's flaws: "Her systems have all the unfortunate tendency of setting propriety at nought; and a better acquaintance with the world is what I look forward to as her greatest possible advantage" (p. 56). Elinor insists to Colonel Brandon that Marianne is still excusing Willoughby—"I have been more pained ... by her endeavours to acquit him than by all the rest" (p. 211)—even when this does not appear to be the case. In fact, if anyone is prone to make excuses, it is Elinor, who is "consoled by the belief that Edward had done nothing to forfeit her esteem" (p. 141). The similarities between Edward's and Willoughby's conduct are striking, and it takes all of Elinor's resources to rationalize them away. Again and again we see Elinor engage in the same behaviour that she chides in Marianne. When she sees "a plait of hair" (p. 98) in Edward's ring, Elinor "instantaneously felt" that "the hair was her own": she "was conscious [it] must have been procured by some theft or contrivance unknown to herself" (p. 98). Similarly, Elinor interprets Edward's "want of spirits, of openness, and of consistency" in a way that is consistent with her own desire: "it was happy for her that ... [Edward] had a mother whose character was so imperfectly known to her, as to be the general excuse for every thing strange on the part of her son."

It is the novel's triumph that it keeps hinting at the "other" side, a liberality extended even to the villains. From Elinor's perspective, poor Edward was trapped by the scheming Lucy; clearly, Marianne is not the only quasi-quixotic character: the young man seduced by the money-hungry schemer is one of the oldest stories in the book and one that Elinor has to believe. But, as Johnson reminds us, Edward "forms an early attachment out of the idleness endemic to landed gentlemen" and Lucy is one of his victims. Elinor's conflicted emotions about Willoughby are another case in

point, and, indeed, many readers cannot help but have some sympathy for Willoughby. Even Johnson argues that Willoughby is “in some senses the victim” of property arrangements.¹⁷ And however culpable he is in his treatment of the second Eliza, he also is right in questioning the objectivity of Colonel Brandon’s narration: “I do not mean to justify myself, but at the same time cannot leave you to suppose that I have nothing to urge—that because she was injured she was irrefragable, and because I was a libertine, *she* must be a saint” (p. 322).

Throughout, the novel points out that nature is a carefully wrought artifice. The Palmers’ Cleveland gardens may flaunt their artistry with Grecian temples, and Edward may tease Marianne’s interest in books that “tell ... her how to admire an old twisted tree” (p. 92), but the utilitarian “pleasure” that he finds in “a snug farmhouse ... and a troop of tidy, happy villagers” (p. 98) is hardly more natural. In *Sense and Sensibility* equally “natural” possibilities intersect. Elinor’s opinions are juxtaposed to Marianne’s and both think they are right: “Such behaviour as this, so exactly the reverse of her own, appeared no more meritorious to Marianne than her own had seemed faulty to” Elinor (p.104). That is, of course, until the conversion. The underdeveloped character of the third sister, Margaret, further illustrates the point. In the story of war between sense and sensibility, there is no room for a third. By the end of the novel, there is no room even for one “other” sister, as all difference has been neutralized into a harmonious melting pot: “there was that constant communication which strong family affection would naturally dictate ... they could live without disagreement between themselves, or producing coolness between their husbands” (p. 380). The way of achieving this harmony, however, has been less than peaceful. Marvin Mudrick’s provocative reading is partly right: the story *is* “tidied up into its prudent conclusion,” but not because Jane Austen is an emotionally stunted author who uses irony as “a defense against feeling.” Marianne is indeed buried “in the coffin of convention,”¹⁸ but the text exposes this burial—not because it is an early, clumsy work, which failed to “pull off” its didactic message, but because the text foregrounds, rather than naturalizes, this process of coercion.

The recent film, unapologetic in its celebration of *Sense and Sensibility*, which “has never been allowed its full weight in Austen’s canon,”¹⁹ will give it a more prominent status. On the other hand, it corrects precisely those areas that have been identified as the novel’s weaknesses.

17 Johnson, pp. 56–57.

18 Mudrick, pp. 85, 91.

19 Johnson, p. 72.

Edward's personality and honesty are greatly improved (as are his looks); he attempts to tell Elinor about his engagement and it is the evil sister that prevents the disclosure. Elinor's sense did steer her in the right direction, whereas Marianne has to become more like her sister. In this way, the film presents a didactic reading of the novel. Moreover, Marianne appears to learn her lesson quite happily. The film gives us moving scenes of Marianne falling in love with a Colonel Brandon who is as full of passion as Willoughby. He, too, can read with great feeling, and the film invents a dramatic second rescue: carrying Marianne in his arms out of the rain storm, Colonel Brandon looks like "Willoughby's ghost." The film reassures us that "there is nothing lost, but may be found, if sought." In order not to disrupt this narrative, Willoughby's confession had to be cut. Emma Thompson admits that "bringing Willoughby back at the end" is a "wonderful scene in the novel," but it "unfortunately interfered too much with the Brandon love story."²⁰ Naturalizing what the novel denaturalizes, the film tells a great love story, but it is not Jane Austen's.

Sense and Sensibility's two heroines, at odds for much of the novel, allow us to recognize a pattern in the later novels. Austen's closures are full of gaps that speak of the inadequacy of the endings which fail to fulfil everyone's desire. These closures entail exits and silences on the part of figures, the "other" heroines, who throughout the novel competed for centrality. Their stories must be exiled to the margins or come to an abrupt end if the story of the central heroine is to be resolved. In *Persuasion*, for example, Louisa Musgrove is forcibly dropped from the Cobb and the main action to allow Anne's rise in the narrative. Mary Crawford's "lively mind" must degenerate into a "corrupted, vitiated"²¹ one to make room for Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park*. *Sense and Sensibility* is a profoundly dialogic text, filled with contradictions and active dissent, and a closure which reveals the process of achieving ideological dominance. The dialogic design of competing heroines documents the cost of "general consent" (p. 378): the scolding, schooling, and finally silencing of Marianne Dashwood's voice.

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20 Emma Thompson, *Sense and Sensibility: The Screenplay and Diaries* (London: Bloomsbury, 1995), pp. 179, 187, 272.

21 Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, ed. R.W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 64, 456.



Painted by F. Winterley

Engraved by P. W. Simpson & Co. London

WINTER.

Bless my heart how cold it is. Ah men! I'm quite fast-frost!

Pub^d Feb^r 1849 by T. Simpson St Pauls Church Yard.