

COL. BRANDON

You tease her, but I've rarely seen such affection between sisters. Sisters so different.

ELINOR

The difference can lead to bickering. But we are not competitive, I suppose, which, I think, is the downfall to any sisterly feelings. Were you close with your brother?

COL. BRANDON

No, quite the opposite: very competitive, in fact. [slight pause] He married my first wife, shortly after our divorce.

ELINOR

Wow.

COL. BRANDON

Yes, I've quite a family.

ELINOR

Do you mind if I ask why?

COL. BRANDON

My brother felt a lot of pressure from our father and that drove him to be a bit –not the best brother and, as it turns out, not a good husband.

ELINOR

Are you still in contact with your ex-wife?

COL. BRANDON

No, she passed away several years ago, a casualty to my family's internal battle. My father disapproved of *our* marriage and thus, my brother used her as a point of cruelty towards both me and my father. She became sick – of us all- and died shortly after her second wedding.

ELINOR

I'm sorry.

COL. BRANDON

Yes, the cruelty of men.

ELINOR

BRANDON & ELINOR

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You've not met my sister-in-law.

COL. BRANDON

It was an important lesson learned: family disapproval should never stand in the way of one's desire. I bent to my father's will and now carry the blame and regret of another's downfall. I did so – I was told- to preserve family honor and expectation. But there is no honor in such a family. [pause – he selected some sketches from the portfolio and presents them] I quite like this series of sketches, here. This young man, is he a friend?

ELINOR

Family, actually. Well- I'm not sure. He is my half-brother's wife's brother. So he is my -?

COL. BRANDON

Sounds like a friend, not a relative. There are quite a few sketches here.

ELINOR

He was a patient subject. [bringing out the painting of Marianne] Would you like to have this one?

COL. BRANDON

Very much. How much is it?

ELINOR

It's a gift.

COL. BRANDON

I couldn't -

ELINOR

Please! It's very important that my work goes to the right people. You are *'right people.'*

COL. BRANDON [looking at the canvas]

Your sister – she doesn't believe in second attachments, does she?

ELINOR

Attachments? Oh, no. She is quite old-fashioned. She conveniently forgets, however, that our mother was our father's *second* wife. I hope she hasn't offended you.

COL. BRANDON

Never. The young can afford to be old fashioned.

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ELINOR

She's not had her heart broken yet. I'm sure she'll find the necessity in second and even third attachments once she's older.