

FANNY [hushed to John]

-Had your father been in his right senses, he could not have thought of begging you to give away half the fortune from your own child.

JOHN

He only requested me, in general terms, to help them to be *comfortable*. He expects me to provide for them. Something must be done -

FANNY

Well, then, *let* something be done for them; but *not* a huge sum of money that once parted with, can never be returned-

JOHN

Fanny, they're my sisters-

FANNY

Only half blood! -- There is no knowing what *they* may expect. The question is: what can you *afford* to do?

JOHN

I think I may-

FANNY

Remember – all three are *very* pretty -if they marry, they will be sure of doing well; and if they do *not*, they may all live very comfortably together on the interest of your father's savings.

JOHN

That is very true. Therefore, perhaps it is better to do something for their mother rather than for them- they would benefit; something of the annuity kind?

FANNY [hesitating]

It *is* better than parting with a bulk inheritance at once. Then if your stepmother should live another *30 or 40* years, we are stuck with yearly payments-

JOHN

30 or 40 years!