

ЛЕГКО ЧИТАЕМ ПО-АНГЛИЙСКИ

Джейн Остин
**Чувство
и чувствительность**

Jane Austen
Sense and Sensibility

Адаптация текста, словарь
и комментарии С.А. Матвеева



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Перед вами знаменитый на весь мир роман Джейн Остин «Чувство и чувствительность», рассказывающий о судьбе осиротевших дочерей небогатого дворянина. Сестры Дэшвуд, ещё совсем юные девушки, пытаются найти своё место в английском обществе, описанном со свойственными Джейн Остин наблюдательностью и иронией. Характеры сестер, рассудительной Элинор и чувственной Марианны, совершенно различны, но путь к счастью, согласно нравам того времени, у них только один.

Текст адаптирован для продолжающих изучение английского языка (уровень В1 — Intermediate). Помимо того, для удобства читателя книга снабжена словарем и грамматическим комментарием, объясняющим идиомы и сложные выражения.

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CHAPTER I

The family of Dashwood had long been settled in Sussex. Their estate was large, and their residence was at Norland Park, in the centre of their property, where, for many generations, they had lived. The late owner of this estate was a single man, who for many years of his life had a constant companion and house-keeper in his sister. But her death, which happened ten years before his own, produced a great alteration in his home. He invited and received into his house the family of his nephew Mr. Henry Dashwood, the legal inheritor¹ of the Norland estate. In the society of his nephew and niece, and their children, the old Gentleman's days were comfortably spent.

By a former marriage, Mr. Henry Dashwood had one son: by his present lady, three daughters. The son was provided for by the fortune of his mother, which had been large. By his own marriage, he added to his wealth. To him therefore the succession to the Norland estate was not so really important as to his sisters.

The old gentleman died: his will was read, and gave as much disappointment as pleasure. He left his estate to his nephew; but he left it to him on such terms as destroyed half the value of the bequest. Mr. Dashwood had wished for it more for the sake of his wife and daughters than for himself or his son. But to his son, and his son's son, a child of four years old, it was secured. As a mark of his affection for the three girls, the old gentleman left them three thousand pounds.

Mr. Dashwood's disappointment was, at first, severe; but his temper was cheerful and sanguine. He hoped to live many years, but the fortune was his only one year. He survived his uncle no longer. Ten thousand pounds was all that remained for his widow and daughters.

¹ **legal inheritor** — законный наследник

His son was sent for¹, and to him Mr. Dashwood recommended his mother-in-law and sisters. Mr. John Dashwood promised to do everything to make them comfortable, for example, to give them three thousand pounds from the fortune. He was not an ill-disposed young man. But Mrs. John Dashwood was a caricature of himself; narrow-minded and selfish.

No sooner was his father's funeral over, than Mrs. John Dashwood arrived with her child and their attendants. Of course, the house was her husband's from the moment of his father's decease; but the indelicacy of her conduct was great.

Mrs. Dashwood felt this ungracious behaviour, and she earnestly despised her daughter-in-law. But her own tender love for all her three children determined her afterwards to stay, and for their sakes avoid a breach with their brother.

Elinor, the eldest daughter, possessed a strength of understanding, and coolness of judgment, which qualified her, though only nineteen, to be the counsellor of her mother.

Marianne was the second sister. Marianne's abilities were, in many respects, quite equal to Elinor's. She was sensible and clever; but eager in everything: her sorrows, her joys, had no moderation. She was generous, amiable, interesting. The resemblance between her and her mother was strikingly great.

Margaret, the third sister, was thirteen. She was a good-humored, well-disposed girl; but she had already imbibed a good deal of Marianne's romance.

CHAPTER II

Mrs. John Dashwood now installed herself mistress of Norland. Her mother and sisters-in-law were degraded to the condition of visitors. However, they were treated by her with quiet civility; and by her husband with

¹ his son was sent for — послали за его сыном

kindness. He really pressed them to consider Norland as their home. Mrs. Dashwood remained there till she could accommodate herself with a house in the neighbourhood, so his invitation was accepted.

Mrs. John Dashwood did not at all approve of what her husband intended to do for his sisters. To take three thousand pounds from the fortune of their dear little boy will be dreadful! She begged him to think again on the subject. How can he rob his child of so large a sum? Those young Dashwoods were related to him only by half blood (which she considered as no relationship at all)! Why did he want to ruin himself, and their poor little Harry, by giving away all his money to his half sisters?

"It was my father's last request to me," replied her husband, "I must assist his widow and daughters."

"He did not know what he was talking of, I dare say. Sure, he was a little bit crazy then: to give away half your fortune from your own child!"

"He did not stipulate for any particular sum, my dear Fanny. He only requested me, in general terms, to assist them, and make their situation comfortable. He required the promise, and I gave it. The promise must be performed. Something must be done for them whenever they leave Norland and settle in a new home."

"Well, then, let something be done for them; but that something need not be three thousand pounds. Consider," she added, "that when the money is once parted with, it never can return. Your sisters will marry, and it will be gone for ever. If, indeed, it will be restored to our poor little boy — "

"Yes," said her husband, very gravely, "that will make great difference. The time may come when Harry will regret that. If he has a numerous family, for instance..."

"Sure."

"Perhaps, then, it will be better... five hundred pounds will be enough for them!"

“Oh! What brother on earth does half so much for his sisters! And for half blood sisters! You have such a generous spirit!”

“I think I may afford to give them that money: five hundred pounds to every sister.”

“Perhaps they do not even want that. If they marry, they will have rich husbands, and if they do not, they may all live very comfortably together.”

“That is very true. And what to do for their mother? Something of the annuity kind I mean. A hundred a year would make them all perfectly comfortable.”

His wife hesitated a little.

“To be sure,” said she, “it is better than parting with fifteen hundred pounds at once. But, then, if Mrs. Dashwood lives fifteen years we shall lose the money anyway.”

“Fifteen years! My dear Fanny; her life won’t be so long.”

“Certainly not; but if you observe, people always live for ever when there is an annuity. She is very stout and healthy, and hardly forty. An annuity is a very serious business. You are not aware of what you are doing.”

“It is certainly an unpleasant thing,” replied Mr. Dashwood. “To be tied down to the regular payment of such a sum, on every rent day, is by no means desirable. It takes away one’s independence.”

“Undoubtedly; and after all you have no thanks for it. And it may be very inconvenient to spare a hundred, or even fifty pounds from our own expenses.”

“I believe you are right, my love; it will be better that there must be no annuity. A present of fifty pounds, now and then, will be enough, I think.”

“To be sure it will. Indeed, to say the truth, I am convinced within myself that your father had no idea of your giving them any money at all. The assistance he thought of, I dare say, was, for instance, looking out for a comfortable small house for them, helping them to move their things, and sending them presents, and so forth.”

“Yes,” said Mr. Dashwood, “I believe you are perfectly right. My father certainly meant nothing more by his request to me than what you say. I clearly understand it now!”

CHAPTER III

Mrs. Dashwood remained at Norland several months. She was impatient to go away. She was indefatigable in her inquiries for a suitable dwelling in the neighbourhood of Norland. To remove far from that beloved spot was impossible for her. But she heard of no decent house.

The contempt which she had felt for her daughter-in-law, was very much increased; and perhaps the two ladies would find it impossible to live together long, but there was a particular circumstance. This circumstance was a growing attachment between Mrs. Dashwood’s eldest girl and the brother of Mrs. John Dashwood, a gentleman-like and pleasing young man, who was introduced to their acquaintance soon after his sister’s establishment at Norland, and who had since spent the greatest part of his time there.

Some mothers could encourage the intimacy from motives of interest, for Edward Ferrars was the eldest son of a man who had died very rich. But it was enough for Mrs. Dashwood that he was amiable, that he loved her daughter, and that Elinor returned the partiality¹.

Edward Ferrars was not handsome, and his manners were not perfect. He was too diffident; but when his natural shyness was overcome, his behaviour gave every indication of an open, affectionate heart. His mother and sister wanted him to make a fine figure in the world in some manner or other. His mother wished to get him into parliament, or to see him connected with some of the great men of the day. But all Edward’s wishes centered in domestic comfort and the quiet of private life. Fortunately he had a younger brother who was more promising.

¹ returned the partiality — отвечала взаимностью

Edward had been staying several weeks in the house before he attracted Mrs. Dashwood's attention. She noticed the difference between him and his sister. It was a contrast which recommended him most forcibly to her.

"It is enough," said Mrs. Dashwood; "to say that he is unlike Fanny is enough. I love him already."

"I think you will like him," said Elinor, "when you know more of him."

"Like him!" replied her mother with a smile. "I will love him."

"You may esteem him."

"I have never known what it was to separate esteem and love."

Mrs. Dashwood speedily comprehended all his merits. Soon she perceived symptoms of love in his behaviour to Elinor, and she considered their serious attachment as certain. So she looked forward to their marriage as rapidly approaching.

"In a few months, my dear Marianne," said she, "Elinor will be settled for life. We shall miss her; but she will be happy."

"Oh! Mama, how shall we live without her?"

"My love, we shall live within a few miles of each other, and shall meet every day. You will gain a brother, a real, affectionate brother. But you look grave, Marianne; do you disapprove your sister's choice?"

"Perhaps," said Marianne, "I am surprised. Edward is very amiable, and I love him tenderly. But yet — he is not the kind of young man — there is something wanting¹. His figure is not striking; it has none of that grace which I expect in the man who can seriously attach my sister. And besides all this, I am afraid, Mama, he has no real taste. Music seems scarcely to attract him, and though he admires Elinor's drawings very much, it is not the admiration of a person who can understand them. He admires as a lover, not as a connoisseur. To satisfy me,

¹ **there is something wanting** — чего-то недостаёт

the characters must be united. I cannot be happy with a man whose taste did not in every point coincide with my own. He must read the same books, the same music must charm us both. Oh! mama, how spiritless, how tame was Edward's manner in reading to us last night! I wanted to run away. To hear those beautiful lines, pronounced with such calmness, such dreadful indifference!"

CHAPTER IV

"What a pity it is, Elinor," said Marianne, "that Edward has no taste for drawing."

"No taste for drawing!" replied Elinor, "why do you think so? He does not draw himself, indeed, but he has great pleasure in seeing the performances of other people. He distrusts his own judgment, so he is always unwilling to give his opinion on any picture. I hope, Marianne, you do not consider him as deficient in general taste."

Marianne hardly knew what to say. She did not want to wound the feelings of her sister, and yet to say what she did not believe was impossible. She replied:

"Do not be offended, Elinor, if my praise of him is not in every thing equal to your sense of his merits. I have the highest opinion in the world of his goodness and sense. I think him worthy and amiable."

"I do not perceive," replied Elinor, with a smile, "how you can express yourself more warmly. Of his sense and his goodness, no one can, I think, be in doubt. He and I have been often together. I have seen a great deal of him, have studied his sentiments and heard his opinion on subjects of literature and taste. I venture to pronounce that his mind is well-informed, enjoyment of books exceedingly great, his imagination lively, his observation correct, and his taste delicate and pure. At first sight, his person can hardly be called handsome, till the expression of his eyes, which are uncommonly good is perceived. At present, I know him so well, that

I think him really handsome; or at least, almost so. And you, Marianne?"

"I shall very soon think him handsome, Elinor. When you tell me to love him as a brother, I shall no more see imperfection in his face."

Elinor started at this declaration. She felt that Edward stood very high in her opinion.

"I do not attempt to deny," said she, "that I think very highly of him — that I greatly esteem, that I like him."

"Esteem him! Like him! Cold-hearted Elinor! Oh! worse than cold-hearted! Use those words again, and I will leave the room this moment."

Elinor laughed.

"Excuse me," said she. "I am by no means assured of his love for me. There are moments when the extent of it seems doubtful. But there are other points to be considered. He is not independent. What his mother really is we cannot know. Edward himself can understand that there will be many difficulties, if he wishes to marry a woman who has not either a great fortune or high rank."

"And you really are not engaged to him!" said Marianne. "Yet it certainly soon will happen."

It was impossible for Elinor to feel easy on the subject. The longer they were together the more doubtful seemed the nature of his regard. Sometimes she believed it to be no more than friendship.

But his sister was uneasy. She took the first opportunity of affronting her mother-in-law on the occasion, talking to her expressively of her brother's great expectations, of Mrs. Ferrars's resolution that both her sons could marry very well.

One day a letter was delivered to Mrs. Dashwood. It contained a proposal. It was the offer of a small house, belonging to a relation of her own, a rich gentleman from Devonshire. The letter was from this gentleman himself, and written in the true spirit of friendly accommodation. He understood that she was in need of a dwelling. Though the house he now offered her was merely a cottage, he

assured her that everything was good there. He invited her to come with her daughters to Barton Park, the place of his own residence. There she will judge, herself, whether Barton Cottage is comfortable to her. He seemed really anxious to accommodate them and the whole of his letter was written in a friendly style. Her resolution was formed as she read. She instantly wrote Sir John Middleton her acceptance of his proposal; and then hastened to show the letters to her daughters.

CHAPTER V

Mrs. Dashwood announced to her son-in-law and his wife that she was provided with a house. So she will incommode them no longer than till everything is ready for her inhabiting it. They heard her with surprise. Mrs. John Dashwood said nothing; but her husband hoped that she would settle not far from Norland. She had great satisfaction in replying that she was going into Devonshire. Edward turned hastily towards her and, in a voice of surprise repeated, "Devonshire! Are you, indeed, going there? So far! And to what part of it?"

She explained the situation. It was within four miles northward of Exeter.

"It is a cottage," she continued, "but I hope to see many of my friends in it. A room or two can easily be added."

She concluded with a very kind invitation to Mr. and Mrs. John Dashwood to visit her at Barton.

Mr. John Dashwood told his mother again and again how exceedingly sorry he was that she had taken a house at such a distance from Norland.

Mrs. Dashwood took the house for a year; it was ready furnished. The servant and one of the maids were sent off immediately into Devonshire, to prepare the house for their mistress's arrival. In a very few weeks from the day which brought Sir John Middleton's letter to Norland,

everything was settled in their future abode as to enable Mrs. Dashwood and her daughters to begin their journey.

“Dear, dear Norland!” said Marianne, as she wandered alone before the house, on the last evening; “when shall I cease to regret you! Who will remain to enjoy you?”

CHAPTER VI

As a house, Barton Cottage, though small, was comfortable and compact; but as a cottage it was defective, for the roof was tiled, the window shutters were not painted green, nor were the walls covered with honeysuckles. A narrow passage led directly through the house into the garden behind. On each side of the entrance was a sitting room, about sixteen feet square; and beyond them were the offices and the stairs. Four bedrooms and two garrets formed the rest of the house. It had not been built many years and was in good repair. In comparison of Norland, it was poor and small indeed!

It was very early in September; the season was fine. The situation of the house was good. High hills rose immediately behind, and at no great distance on each side. The village of Barton was chiefly on one of these hills, and formed a pleasant view from the cottage windows. The hills surrounded the cottage.

With the size and furniture of the house Mrs. Dashwood was well satisfied.

“As for the house itself, to be sure,” said she, “it is too small for our family, but we will live here for the present, as it is too late in the year for improvements. Perhaps in the spring, if I have plenty of money, we may think about building.”

Soon after breakfast their landlord appeared. He came to welcome them to Barton, and to offer them every accommodation from his own house and garden. Sir John Middleton was a good looking man about forty. His countenance was thoroughly good-humoured; and his manners

were as friendly as the style of his letter. He invited them to dine at Barton Park everyday till they were settled at home. Within an hour after he left them, a large basket full of garden stuff and fruit arrived from the park.

Lady Middleton had sent a very civil message. Her ladyship was introduced to them the next day.

Lady Middleton was not more than six or seven and twenty; her face was handsome, her figure tall and striking. Her manners had all the elegance which her husband's wanted. Sir John was very chatty, and Lady Middleton brought with her their eldest child, a fine little boy about six years old. It took up ten minutes to determine whether the boy was most like his father or mother.

Sir John did not leave the house without their promise of dining at the park the next day.

CHAPTER VII

Barton Park was about half a mile from the cottage. The house was large and handsome; and the Middletons lived in a style of equal hospitality and elegance. They were scarcely ever without some friends staying with them in the house. It was necessary to the happiness of both. Sir John was a sportsman, Lady Middleton was a mother. He hunted and shot, and she humoured her children; and these were their only resources. Continual engagements supplied all the deficiencies of nature and education; supported the good spirits of Sir John and his wife.

The arrival of a new family in the neighborhood was always a joy to Sir John. The young Dashwoods were really young, pretty, and unaffected. It was enough to secure his good opinion. He was happy to accommodate those, whose situation looked as unfortunate. In showing kindness to his cousins therefore he had the real satisfaction of a good heart.

Mrs. Dashwood and her daughters were met at the door of the house by Sir John, who welcomed them to

Barton Park with unaffected sincerity. He was sorry to be unable to get any smart young men to meet them. They will see only one gentleman there besides himself; a particular friend who is staying at the park, but who is not very young. He hoped they will all excuse the smallness of the party, and assured them it will never happen so again. Luckily Lady Middleton's mother arrived at Barton within the last hour, and she was a very cheerful agreeable woman. The young ladies, as well as their mother, wished for no more.

Mrs. Jennings, Lady Middleton's mother, was a good-humoured, merry, fat, elderly woman, who talked a lot, seemed very happy, and rather vulgar. She was full of jokes about lovers and laughter. Marianne turned her eyes towards Elinor to see how she bore these Mrs. Jennings's attacks with an earnestness which embarrassed her far more than Mrs. Jennings could.

Colonel Brandon, Mr. John's friend, was silent and grave. His appearance however was not displeasing. Marianne and Margaret decided that he was an absolute old bachelor, for he was thirty-five. Though his face was not handsome, his countenance was sensible.

In the evening, as Marianne was discovered to be musical, she was invited to play. The instrument was unlocked, everybody prepared to be charmed, and Marianne sang very well, too.

Marianne's performance was highly applauded. Sir John was loud in his admiration at the end of every song. Colonel Brandon alone, of all the party, heard her without raptures. He paid her only the compliment of attention; and she felt a respect for him.

CHAPTER VIII

Mrs. Jennings was a widow. She had only two daughters, both of whom were respectably married, and she had now therefore nothing to do but to marry all

the rest of the world. In the promotion of this object she was zealously active. She was remarkably quick in the discovery of attachments. It enabled her soon after her arrival at Barton to pronounce that Colonel Brandon was very much in love with Marianne Dashwood. It must be so. She was perfectly convinced of it. It will be an excellent match, for he is rich, and she is handsome. Mrs. Jennings was anxious to see Colonel Brandon well married since she met him.

This idea supplied her with endless jokes against them both. At the park she laughed at the colonel, and in the cottage at Marianne, who hardly knew whether to laugh, or to censure it.

Mrs. Dashwood, who did not think a man five years younger than herself, ventured to clear Mrs. Jennings from the probability of wishing to throw ridicule on his age.

“But at least, Mama, you cannot deny the absurdity of the accusation, though you may not think it intentionally ill-natured. Colonel Brandon is certainly younger than Mrs. Jennings, but he is old enough to be my father. It is ridiculous! And I suspect infirmity.”

“Infirmity!” said Elinor, “do you call Colonel Brandon infirm? I can easily suppose that his age may appear much greater to you than to my mother; but he uses his limbs very well!”

“Did not you hear him complain of the rheumatism? Is not that the sign of infirmity?”

“My dearest child,” said her mother, laughing, “at this rate you must be in continual terror of my death. It must seem to you a miracle that my life has been extended to the age of forty.”

“Mama, I know very well that Colonel Brandon is not old enough to die. He may live twenty years longer. But thirty-five has nothing to do with matrimony.”

“Perhaps,” said Elinor, “thirty-five and seventeen have nothing to do with matrimony together. But if there is a woman who is single at seven and twenty, Colonel Brandon can marry her for sure.”