

An analysis on characterization in sense and sensibility



1. Introduction In the novel *Sense and Sensibility*, the biggest bright points is around the two heroines—the Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne. The former is a sensible, rational creature, while the later is wildly romantic, which was represented on one thing that when the Dashwood family have to leave Sussex and move to Dever, for the sensible daughter Elinor, the move is painful separation from the man she loves. However, her sentimental sister Marianne find in the new place the romance which she likes. The two different personalities give the basic materials of sense and sensibility. This passage catches the two characteristics by comparing and contrasting them to put forward to the correct attitude of sense and sensibility to deal with marriage and other things.

2. The difference between the two heroines 2. 1 Different personality “Elinor, the eldest daughter, had an excellent heart—her disposition was affectionate, and her feeling were strong ; but she knew how to govern them: it was a knowledge which her mother had yet to learn.”(Jane Austen 5) As the eldest daughter, Elinor was more cautious than the other two sisters and even than her mother to deal with matters happen at home. She was good at dealing with housework and relationships with other people. After her father died, she was intellectual enough to advise her mother to avoid a breach with their brother, and it was so effectual. “ Marianne , the sister, was, in many respects, quite equal to Elinor.

She was sensible and clever; but eager in everything: her sorrow, her joys, could have no moderation. She was generous, amiable, interesting: she was everything but of prudent.” (Jane Austen 5)As to such characteristics,

Marianne always deal with thing without twice thinking, which makes Elinor

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concern the excess of her sister's sensibility may bring trouble to her. This different personality caused the two sisters to different life, such as on choosing lover.

2. 2 Different outlooks on love and marriage Through the whole novel, we can see Elinor persist in loving Edward all the time, even when she knew Edward has been engaged, she was injured but she tried her to control her feeling in order not to let her mother and sisters know the truth. " Elinor has ' an excellent heart', and strong feeling as well as prudence. The opposing values of romance and practical realism are debated as each sister takes issue with the conduct and the ' doctrine' of the other." (Jane Austen 72) Elinor went through many sufferings during her love to Edward but she never lost her mind and hope.

And she thought it's her principle to choose a lover, stuck to one man she really loved and loved her very much. And to Marianne, when she meets Willoughby, she can't help falling in love with him at the first sight.

Willoughby is a handsome man with charming appearance and perfect personality. And it's only just Marianne's taste of making friends. So he attracts Marianne's much attention. Marianne loves the poetry of Cowper and Scott, and picturesque landscapes, which makes her always believe in first sight and passionate love and her conduct can be easily guided by her emotion.

After she finds Willoughby was not that much into her, she became too crazy. " ' Go to him, Elinor,' she cried, as soon as she could speak, ' and force him to come to me, tell him I must see him again must speak to him

instantly. I can't rest I shall not have a moment's peace till this is explained- some dreadful misapprehension or other oh go to him this moment'" (Jane Austen 101) At this point, she was not rational as Elinor when facing her lover's leave.

3. The similarities between the two heroines 3. 1 Same living environment Elinor and Marianne have lived together for a long time. They meet the same person around their house, make the same friends and share the same stories occurred about them.

3. 2 Same dream The two heroines both have dream in finance and have strong belief in true love. Because of the death of their father and the selfishness of their brother, their living condition become worse than they used to. " ' About eighteen hundred or two thousand a year; not more than that;' Marianne confides. ' Two thousand a year!' cries Elinor, shocked ' one is my wealth.' Marianne defends two thousand a year as she specifies the consumer expenses appropriate to it; ' I am sure I am not extravagant in my demands. A proper establishment of servants, a carriage perhaps two, and hunters, cannot be supported on less'" (Jane Austen 56). They both look forward to having a better life. And on the background of the society, women marry a man according to social status, financial security rather than women's personal sentiment and their rights. So the two heroines, as the pioneer of women's pursuit of true love, need to have strongest courage.

3. 3 Same destiny Elinor and Marianne both suffered the greatest dismay on their way of pursuing their true love. Because of Elinor's sensible and rational personality, even though she encountered a lot of misfortune, she

never felt disappointed about her life. She waited and finally got her true love. Marianne's emotional personality makes her choice of the first love not exactly suit for her. She felt heart-broken for a long time because she was controlled by her fancy. Fortunate for her, at last, she finally realized what is real importance of love. She recognized the Colonel Brandon who loved her silently all the time and after using her rational mind, she accepted him willingly. Both of them had a happy ending.

4. Conclusion The whole passage is organized by two main parts: the differences and similarities between the two heroines. It pays more attention on the details of differences and portrayed the vivid image of two opposite characteristics. We can see how the personality affect people's life and how sensible and rational sentiments can turn people's life into a total different change as before. And we can also make it clear that how to use the sense and sensibility properly. Jane Austen use these two images to reflect the marriage in that era. It's a complete decription of sense and sensibility. After analyze on the characterization in Sense and Sensibility, we can understand how she developed the whole article and give readers a good explanation of sense and sensibility.