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OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

JOHN SUTHERLAND AND
DEIRDRE LE FAYE

*So You Think You Know
Jane Austen?
A Literary Quizbook*

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that the money in the Tilney family has come from the mother's Drummond connections. General Tilney, we may further presume, was a successful fortune-hunter. What, one may ask parenthetically, was a 'set' of pearls? Presumably a headband, necklace and matching bracelets, earrings, and brooches.

4/8 *As they drive, John Thorpe asks Catherine: 'Old Allen is as rich as a Jew, is not he?' Later in the novel, he will make the same point about General Tilney being 'rich as a Jew'. What should we read into this apparent anti-Semitism? That John Thorpe has been dealing with money-lenders is one construction. Another is that he is thinking of the fabulous wealth of banking dynasties such as the Rothschilds, who were becoming commonly known at this period.*

4/9 *When, at the Thursday assembly in the Pump Room, John Thorpe comes up to Catherine and says 'I thought you and I were to dance together', she says: 'you never asked me'. She knows, and so do we, that this is not true ('when he spoke to her [she] pretended not to hear him'). John (with some justice) calls it 'a cursed shabby trick'. Is it? Catherine, we assume, is not lying but hinting, politely, that John should desist from his attentions. He was too rude to ask clearly and properly, assuming as he does that he is irresistible and so there can be no question but that she will want to dance with him, following some mumbled invitation. She is, quite legitimately, putting him in his place. The exchange suggests, however, that we should not always take her ingenuousness at face value. Later in the narrative we shall again catch her in what might seem like a white lie.*

4/10 *General Tilney, on his first inspection of Catherine, is described as 'a very handsome man, of a commanding aspect, past the bloom, but not past the vigour of life'. What do we know of his military career? Nothing, other than his rank. It is wartime, he is not disabled by age or physical handicap; why is he not serving his country? He may have sold his commission (money is very important to him), retaining a courtesy rank. It may be that he is*

waiting for orders from the War Office. From his taste for fruit (particularly 'pines', or pineapples) we may perhaps assume that military service took him to the West Indies, or India. He has, as far as we can make out, few military companions (the only one mentioned is General Courteney). The only companion of his whom we meet in the narrative is the wholly disreputable pup, John Thorpe, with whom he plays billiards (and certainly wins). Mysterious. Catherine's dark suspicions are not *entirely* unjustified.

4/11 *Does Catherine really not understand that John Thorpe is proposing marriage when he comes on her alone in Edgar's Buildings, before leaving for London? Isabella, the cunning minx, would certainly understand. Catherine, we assume, is far too naive and innocent to understand John's clumsy overtures.*

4/12 *Why does Henry seemingly acquiesce in his brother's campaign to seduce Isabella? What is he saying in the 'whispered conversation' that Catherine observes the brothers having, before Frederick embarks on his seduction of Isabella? It would be nice to think that Henry is giving his wayward brother wise fraternal advice. More likely, however, Frederick is manoeuvring to be introduced to Isabella. Later on, one may suspect, Henry may encourage his brother with the aim of ensuring that the odious Isabella will never be his sister-in-law. Immediately after the whispered conversation, Henry takes Catherine off, leaving the coast clear for his brother.*

4/13 *Catherine utters what looks like her second untruth when she tells Isabella that 'I did not see [John Thorpe] once that whole morning' when—as the reader will recall—the young man came to her alone, in Edgar's Buildings, to declare love and propose marriage (not something a young girl would readily forget). Catherine backtracks slightly by saying later, 'for the life of me, I cannot recollect it.' How should one react to this lapse of memory? Were Catherine Isabella, we might suspect duplicity (lying in the cause of true love is no sin). Given what we know of her innocence about the world, it is clear that she never understood that John was, in his*

great prize in money terms. As we learn later, he has his own financial independence from his mother's marriage settlement. He is not dependent on his father. He may even want his father, snob and fortune-hunter that he is, to be discomfited.

4/20 *Why has Eleanor not yet married?* She has an unnamed admirer who only becomes acceptable to the General as his son-in-law when he unexpectedly inherits a viscountcy. It may be, too, that the General, in his selfishness, is not displeased to keep her at home. Eleanor, unmarried, saves him the expense of a dowry. Who, one wonders, will serve as hostess at the Abbey when Eleanor leaves? Or, perhaps, like the married George and Emma Knightley, the newly-weds will take up residence at the Abbey.

4/21 *In his famous denunciation of Catherine's Gothic speculations, Henry talks of an England 'where every man is surrounded by a neighbourhood of voluntary spies, and where roads and newspapers lay every thing open'. What, historically, is he thinking of?* There was a lot of official espionage among the population during the French wars (Wordsworth, it is suggested, may even have spied on Coleridge). But Henry is probably thinking of the omnipresent servants and neighbours—unofficial espionage. A reading of the letters and literary remains of the Austen family at the period suggests that walls had ears. Not only that, gossip circulated at high speed.

4/22 *Why, given her preposterous and highly offensive conjectures, does Henry continue to 'indulge' Catherine, showing her, as we are told, 'rather more attention than usual'?* He has always wanted a 'simple' wife; not one of your Bath women of the world. Her gaffes certify her as, in his eyes, the genuine thing: an innocent girl. He is also very kind-hearted and willing to sympathize with Catherine for her (much regretted) foolishness.

4/23 *Catherine thinks Isabella is now engaged to Captain Tilney and that the Captain will gallop back to his father (as James rushed back to Fullerton) for paternal permission. Henry's guess is that his*

brother's marrying Isabella is 'not probable'. Has he known this from the first? Yes.

4/24 *Catherine, on receiving the letter from Isabella describing Captain Tilney's desertion, poses a pertinent question: 'I do not understand what Captain Tilney has been about all this time. Why should he pay her such attentions as to make her quarrel with my brother, and then fly off himself?' Why?* See above. Henry, rather lamely, suggests that 'mischief' was his motive. He still cannot bring himself to tell the innocent Catherine what his brother's motives were.

4/25 *Does Eleanor really not know why her father is so 'discomposed' and so furious with Catherine?* She must have some idea. She may even have known, before the General, the true nature of Catherine's prospects (they are, by now, intimate friends).

1/25 *Where does Tom have the accident which precipitates the fever which leads, eventually, to his moral regeneration? At Newmarket, drunkenly we presume, after a day at the races.*

Level Two

2/1 *We are told that Lieutenant Price's profession is such as 'no interest' (specifically Sir Thomas Bertram's) could reach. Is this true? The Marines (a relatively newly created arm of the military services, used to keep discipline in the Royal Navy) had a very low status at this period. He might have been willing to help, but there was no powerful person with whom Sir Thomas could use his influence. Nor, for perhaps the same reason, does he help William later—although Henry, through Admiral Crawford, does.*

2/2 *Why is Mrs Norris, the incarnation of selfishness, so keen that Fanny Price be brought to Mansfield Park? It is on the face of it odd. One assumes that Mrs Norris cannot resist interfering with everyone around her and, having effectively taken over the management of Mansfield Park, she now wants to widen her circle of influence and start patronizing her youngest sister. Once Fanny arrives, Mrs Norris makes full use of her as a hard-worked personal assistant—saving herself a wage in the process.*

2/3 *What can we read into the fact that Mrs Price has nine children (and more pregnancies), Lady Bertram has four children, and Mrs Norris none? Mrs Price is the victim of her husband's undisciplined appetites—released only by menopause. Sir Thomas is, by contrast, 'restrained'. Mrs Norris, perhaps because of her husband's age and gout, perhaps because of his 'narrow income' and her parsimony, has restrained herself absolutely.*

2/4 *What is Fanny's principal physical attraction? Henry Crawford admires 'that soft skin of her's, so frequently tinged with a blush', and Mary Crawford agrees that 'she has a sweet smile'. She is the only character said to 'blush' in the novel.*

Her complexion is, in fact, a kind of litmus paper. She wilts in Portsmouth, 'colours' when morally affronted, and goes pale when, for any period, plunged into unhappiness. The diagnosis is that she needs air and exercise—hence the 'old grey poney' and regular excursions.

2/5 *Why does Lady Bertram give up the family house in town? 'In consequence of a little ill-health, and a great deal of indolence'. There is, throughout the novel, a suggestion that she is agoraphobic—hating to leave the confinement of her drawing-room. It is odd, too, that Sir Thomas, being in Parliament, does not insist on keeping it.*

2/6 *Sir Thomas's comment that William, when he comes to Mansfield Park, 'must find his sister at sixteen in some respects too much like his sister at ten' induces bitter tears in Fanny. What does the remark mean? That she is still shy and schoolgirlish at the age of 16. It is unfair since, for seven years, her upbringing has been in his hands. Maria and Julia are, by contrast, naturally self-confident young ladies. In their presence, Mary Crawford finds it difficult to believe that Fanny is 'out' (that is, marriageable).*

2/7 *What are the Crawfords worth, and why do they come to stay with the Grants at Mansfield Park? Henry has a good estate in Norfolk worth £4,000 a year, Mary a fortune of £20,000. Her fortune makes it somewhat surprising that she should contemplate, however flightily, marriage with Edmund—particularly after she discovers he intends to be a country parson (see her contemptuous remark, 'I had not imagined a country parson ever aspired to a shrubbery'). Mary cannot stay in the Hill Street house of her uncle, the 'vicious' Admiral Crawford after he brings his mistress to live with him, his wife having died (the Admiral's wife, we are told, doted on Mary; she was evidently cooler towards her nephew). Henry is oddly averse to Norfolk—he is, indeed, averse to any 'permanence of abode or limitation of society'. He lacks, of course, any occupation beyond that of 'improving' his own, and his friends', estates.*

each side, tall iron gates in the centre. Henry, Maria, and Julia manage to squeeze through between the gatepost and the lower range of spikes, and still find foothold on the path the other side. In all probability they squeeze through rather than clamber over—to swing their legs across would be really rather improper for the Miss Bertrams.

2/12 Who gives whom a lesson on astronomy, and with what results? Edmund instructs Fanny in 'star-gazing'. He breaks off his instruction to her, at the window at Mansfield Park, however, when the 'glee' begins. She remains alone at the window 'till scolded away by Mrs Norris's threats of catching cold'.

2/13 What 'duties' do we presume bring Tom back before his father, in September? The duties of the hunting field and game coverts in Mansfield Wood.

2/14 Who 'rants'? Mr Yates, in the part of Baron Wildenheim. Jane Austen assumes that her readers know Kotzebue's play well enough to pick up all the in-joke references to its convoluted plot of illicit amours, and marriage plans going astray. The play was popular at the time—regrettably less so today. Kotzebue's play was performed at least seventeen times on the public stage at Bath between 1801 and 1806.

2/15 In helping Mr Rushworth learn his part, Fanny is said to attempt to make 'an artificial memory for him'. What does this mean? Miss Lee's lessons would have involved a huge amount of rote learning (of the popular primer, Mangnall's *Questions*, kind). As a clever little girl, Fanny would have devised mnemonic devices to remember his 'two and forty' speeches

2/16 When he sees Fanny again, after four years, what is the first feature in her appearance which strikes William? Her hairstyle. As he says, 'Do you know, I begin to like that queer fashion already, though when I first heard of such things being done in England I could not believe it'. From a later remark by Henry about an

errant curl falling down on to Fanny's brow, we assume that the style, at this point in time, is for an upswept coiffure.

2/17 Why cannot Fanny play an instrument—the piano (like her cousins) or the harp (like Mary)? Fanny said, on arrival at Mansfield Park, that she did not want to learn music. Doubtless she was terrified by the prospect of mockery from Julia and Maria, already playing duets. She has consoled herself with reading and 'poetry' (from Sir Thomas's library) and is the better, and more cultivated, for it.

2/18 Why is Mrs Norris so obsessed with saving Sir Thomas money (in such matters as forbidding any fire in Fanny's East room)? She has appointed herself, we guess, the mistress of the house at Mansfield Park. Doubtless she contrives to skim some useful profit to herself from the housekeeping and weekly accounts. Lady Bertram, of course, is far too indolent to attend to such things, and someone must.

2/19 What Shakespeare play does Fanny read to Lady Bertram, and what is its significance? It is *Henry VIII*. Divorce is hinted at, later in the narrative.

2/20 Why does Fanny insist (justifying her rejection of Henry) that 'we have not one taste in common', when they have recently been concurring in their love of Shakespeare, both of them knowledgeable? She is rationalizing her instinctive feelings about his character. In fact, in terms of intelligence and native wit, she and Henry would be very suitable mates.

2/21 At what time of year is Fanny packed off to Portsmouth? 'The dirty month of February'. Given the fact that she is chronically 'delicate' (and given the prevalence of contagious diseases such as consumption in cramped urban houses), Sir Thomas is forgetting the possible risk to her health and well-being. He none the less conceives what he is doing as 'medicinal' (morally, that is).

She is not, of course, deluded that (at this stage) his intention is to marry her. He merely wants a conquest ('Is she prudish?'). Why confide this unworthy plan to another woman? Presumably he wants Mary's help in his contemptible campaign and both of them are, as Fanny inwardly suspects, corrupted morally and not above a little *Liaisons dangereuses* recreation, to while away the short days and long nights in Northamptonshire. That Mary is so complaisant makes for one of the most shocking moments in the narrative. As the narrator observes, 'she left Fanny to her fate' (a broken heart, or—given Henry's later conduct with Maria—seduction). It is striking, too, that this is one of the two or three scenes in the novel which take place beyond Fanny's range of overhearing or witnessing.

4/16 *When Edmund goes off to be ordained, and stays with the Owen family, Mary apprehends that his friend Mr Owen 'had sisters—He might find them attractive'. Why is she never jealous of Fanny?* It evidently never crosses her mind that someone as meek as Miss Price (who cannot even play an instrument) could be a rival—although her assistance in Henry's campaign to 'make Fanny Price love me' may be motivated by a covert desire to put the young lady well and truly out of play.

4/17 *Mary calls her brother's plan to make Fanny fall in love with him a 'wicked project'. How wicked? Does he intend seduction? Yes, we may deduce. Fanny is, after all, a person of little consequence. If he treats 'ladies' as he does, we may assume that Henry has left behind him a string of ruined servant girls and other sexual victims of the lower classes. He is no respecter of propriety.*

4/18 *Admiral Cramford (like Miss Lee) is a felt, but never seen presence in the novel. He is roundly described as 'vicious'. Mary suspects that Henry's manners may have been 'hurt by the contagion of his'. Does the remark have any overtones? Contagion may, plausibly, carry an implication of the contagious disease (associated with sexual immorality) that is everywhere, but never mentioned, in the nineteenth-century novel. The Admiral's*

immorality lours, like a dark cloud, just over the horizon of the novel.

4/19 *As she leads the ball, Fanny thinks of her cousins, Julia and Maria, 'so often as she had heard them wish for a ball at home as the greatest of all felicities'—a felicity evidently denied these beautiful and eligible young women. Why has Sir Thomas decided to throw a ball for Fanny? One has to assume that something profound has happened to him while in Antigua. It is said that Fanny undergoes great physical change in this period—acquiring the 'bloom' which is so important to Jane Austen's heroines. It is possible that Julia and Maria make their debut, however, while Sir Thomas and his son are away on his Antigua business and Edmund at Oxford—so with no host at home at the Park the all-important date in their growing up passes by without ceremony. They must have come across eligible young men like Mr Rushworth at local balls (it seems that neither of them, and certainly not Fanny, has been to the great marriage mart at Bath).*

4/20 *Apropos of his 'improving' tendencies, Henry Crawford lightly says, 'I never do wrong without gaining by it'. Is this the final outcome for him in the novel? No. Had Fanny accepted him, she might, perhaps, have corrected his morals. What is interesting about the statement is the implication that Henry—whose motives are not always easy to make sense of—has a personal 'philosophy'.*

4/21 *'I am quite determined to marry Fanny Price', says Henry. Why? He is always challenged by resistance, needing—if necessary at the cost of his own, or others', destruction—to overcome it. Fanny evidently does not want to marry him. Therefore, as he conceives it, she must. At the melodramatic climax of the novel Henry is impelled (madness) to elope with Maria Rushworth because, initially, she receives him 'with a coldness which ought to have been repulsive . . . but he was mortified, he could not bear to be thrown off by the woman whose smiles had been so wholly at his command . . . he must get the better of it, and make*

judging by those he makes in the novel proper, will have been very guarded).

4/15 *Why are the Woodhouses 'first in consequence' at Highbury when they have no land, no grand house, no title? Mr Woodhouse is not (like Mr Knightley) a squire or a JP. What, then, is their 'consequence'?* It could be a projection of Emma's own inflated sense of self-worth. But their old money will certainly give them social standing.

4/16 *Where do the Bates ladies (and, presumably, Jane Fairfax) stand in the Highbury hierarchy, and who owns their home?* In Emma's eyes, they are second or third rate. Unnamed 'people in business' own their house.

4/17 *What kind of farmer is Mr Knightley?* His discussions of such matters as the 'common field' and 'drainage' and his admiration for the resourceful Robert Martin make it abundantly clear that the owner of Donwell, and its lands, is an 'improver'. A scientific farmer—unlike Mr Bennet, for example, who seems to have no interest in his many acres. In terms of livestock and crops, we learn that Mr Knightley has a flock of sheep (as does Robert Martin) and that he raises wheat, corn, and turnips (the last, probably, as winter fodder for the sheep). And, of course, the owner of Donwell has apple orchards and strawberry beds, both of which feature directly in the novel.

4/18 *How many characters in Jane Austen do we know to wear spectacles, and what is the only work we ever see Frank Churchill carrying out?* Old Mrs Bates. Mending her spectacles is the only occupation which we see, or hear, Frank engaged in—and that to further his secret engagement with Jane.

4/19 *It is clear from the Donwell picnic that Emma rarely visits the Abbey. Why not?* Mr Knightley does not entertain. The reason is that his household has no hostess: no wife, sister, or aged aunt to attend to the needs of female guests and make them feel

chaperoned and secure. For the same reason the unmarried Mr Elton cannot entertain, which is why Mrs Elton is so keen to make up lost ground, with her elegant programme of entertainment, when she arrives in Highbury. For the same reason (no female in his household), Mr Knightley keeps no carriage.

4/20 *What other functions than Frank Churchill's ball take place at the Crown Inn?* Gentlemen have their 'club nights' there at which, we assume, whist is played for small stakes. Officials of the town, like Mr Elton and Mr Knightley, conduct parish and district business there (to do with poor relief, hospital tickets, the workhouse) on Saturday mornings. It is where the post arrives, and the landlord keeps horses for the regional postal service (the post-office is along the street). Mrs Stokes, who prepares the ballroom, is probably his wife.

4/21 *Why does Mrs Weston think so highly of Jane Fairfax?* Because, unlike Emma, she was a good pupil and a credit to whoever taught her. Where, one might go on to ask, did Jane get her clearly superior education? She was brought up and educated (informally adopted, one might say) by the admirable Campbells as their daughter's equal—which is why they are so reluctant to see her going out to work as a governess.

4/22 *What is John Knightley's gruff commendation of Britain's excellent postal service?* It is a government-run agency. According to John Knightley 'The public pays and must be served well.' It seems that, when he has reached the top of the legal slippery pole, John may go into politics—as a Tory. Who is returned for the borough of Highbury is not indicated in the novel. But, as the principal landowner in the area, the constituency will be in Mr (George) Knightley's pocket.

4/23 *Austen previewed, in her mind, the novel as a three-volume affair—each volume having to 'sell itself' to the library subscriber. What are the big events of the respective volumes?* Volume 1, Harriet and Elton, climaxing at Christmas; volume 2, the arrival of Frank

a martyr to nerves. Captain Benwick is obliged to 'whisper' his poetry, in reciting to her. Her taste for poetry is, apparently, a post-accident thing.

3/16 *How is it that Mrs Smith is so 'penetrating' on the subject of Anne's personal situation at Bath—notably her suspicion that her friend is in love?* Mrs Smith does not go into society, but she uses spies and gossip mongers like Nurse Rooke (carrion-consuming bird) very astutely. But on this occasion there is a basic misunderstanding and some cross-purpose. Mrs Smith thinks Anne is yielding to Mr William Elliot's courtship; she doesn't know anything about Anne's secret love for Frederick. Anne thinks for a moment that her secret has been guessed by her friend.

3/17 *Anne, for (an impressed) William Elliot's benefit, translates the words of an Italian song they have been listening to. Where has she learned the language?* She has either taught herself, or was taught the rudiments in her smart Bath school (opera would have been performed in the town). Perhaps, too, Sir Walter engaged a Italian master for her at some time, as he did to teach her music (she is a good piano performer). It is a love song and, quite likely, the cunning and worldly William (who may know the language himself) feigns ignorance so that words of love will fall from Anne's (innocent) lips.

3/18 *What is the one violation of the 'laws of honour' for which the reader can indict Anne Elliot?* Reading William Elliot's despicable letter of 1803 to Charles Smith.

3/19 *What term of address does Anne use towards her father?* 'Sir'. It is not a concession to his snobbery. Other daughters in Jane Austen's fiction address their fathers by this title.

3/20 *Will the several captains (three of them) remain in the naval service, after the narrative reaches its romantic conclusion—professions often lasting longer than love?* Probably yes, on half pay until such time as any of them is offered a command again. It may

be a long wait. Benwick, as Admiral Croft notes, has no friends in high places. Harville is not a well man. He does not seem on the way to physical recovery at Lyme. Wentworth is a 'post captain' which means he is on a seniority ladder which, eventually, should yield him high promotion. But peace time postings are boring and will mean long separation from Anne. It is a nice question whether his exuberant energies will be fully occupied by domestic life—he may, like others, run away to sea.

3/21 *What is Mary's ostensible reason, and what may we assume her covert reason, for approving of Anne's marriage to Frederick?* 'It was creditable to have a sister married' and she enjoys the sense of being a matchmaker. Not that there is now any risk, but she may also be recalling that Anne was once preferred to her by Charles, and it is comfortable to think of her disposed of elsewhere.

3/22 *What will happen, we apprehend, to Mr Shepherd?* Sir Walter's solicitor and agent is, putatively, one of the novel's big losers. Clearly, after his wanton daughter has eloped with the villainous William Elliot (and not married him), the lawyer will not be able to continue in Sir Walter's service. He will have lost his principal client. The errant daughter may not, one imagines, expect a warm welcome at Mr Shepherd's house—unless, that is, she traps the future heir into marriage. For a Lady Elliot, fences might be mended.

3/23 *What reason does Captain Wentworth give for not having proposed again to Anne when he returned, 'in the year eight, with a few thousand pounds' and what would have happened had he done so?* His reason for not renewing his suit is, he says, 'I was proud, too proud to ask again'—which seems unlikely. There was, surely, some lingering resentment. Anne gives him to understand that she would have accepted him. She would have been 21 in 1808, and could have married without parental consent. But, one wonders, would she have withstood, as she had not before, the persuasions of Lady Russell? And would a displeased Sir Walter have withheld any dowry—precipitating the kind of 'love in a

would see as psychiatric disorders—vide *Lady Bertram's* 'indolence' and *Mrs Bennet's* 'nerves', *Mrs Norris's* kleptomania. What, if anything, should we read into *Mary Musgrove's* chronic hypochondria? She is terminally bored and depressed with the husband whom Anne, very wisely, rejected. She was, of course, 'taken' only as second best. 'Even in her bloom', we are told, she was no beauty (unlike her sisters), and had 'only reached the dignity of being "a fine girl"'. As a girl no longer, what has she left?

4/5 *There is a long rhapsody, by Frederick Wentworth, on his first command, the Asp. It is the first occasion in the novel on which he may be said to be eloquent. What about the Asp particularly recommends it?* It is a 'dear old *Asp*', an 'old thing'. It bodes well for the similarly antique Anne. Old women, like old vessels, have charms. The name of the *Asp*, with its association with Cleopatra, reminds us of another heroine whose salad days have passed. Anne has a similarly meaningful musing on 'autumn' a few pages later. On a November walk around the Charles Musgroves' grounds, her pleasure arises 'from the view of the last smiles of the year upon the tawny leaves and withered hedges'. She, too, may be seen as a last rose of summer.

4/6 *Why does Frederick Wentworth, a gallant sailor who has been under fire, seen men killed alongside him, and taken French ships in battle, behave like a helpless girl when Louisa falls and bangs her head, jumping from the Cobb? 'The horror of that moment to all who stood around!', the narrative breathlessly comments (among those standing around are two active service, wartime, naval captains). Wentworth's reaction is histrionic, kneeling by the fallen lady, 'with a face as pallid as her own . . . "Is there no one to help me?" were the first words which burst from [him], in a tone of despair, and as if all his own strength were gone.' It is Anne who takes charge and calls for a surgeon. One has to assume that petticoats unman Frederick. Perhaps it is natural modesty—clearly Louisa's stays will have to be loosened, her wrists chafed, the omnipresent smelling salts applied to her nostrils. This is not the kind of action he has been trained for.*

4/7 *Lady Russell does not catch sight of Frederick Wentworth all the months he is visiting and staying at Kellynch Hall. She and Anne come across him (Lady Russell for the first time since 1806) in Pulteney Street. Does Lady Russell recognize him then? Anne is petrified that she will do, but Lady Russell claims that her fixed gaze, in Wentworth's direction, was merely to seek out some window curtains 'which Lady Alicia and Mrs Frankland were telling me of last night'. We may suspect it is perhaps generosity on her part, not to wound Anne's feelings (as she expects) by pointing out the man whom she was induced (by her companion) to turn down, all those years ago. A tactful white lie. Or it could be that she was genuinely on the lookout for curtains. She left for Bath before Captain Wentworth arrived at Kellynch, so she may not recognize him after all these years. Were she more alert, she might, perhaps, notice how perturbed Anne is.*

4/8 *Overheard conversation plays a major part in the plot of Persuasion. Anne, for example, happens by chance to be behind a hedge and hears Frederick lecture Louisa, at great length, on the moral quality of the hazel nut. What, relevant to Anne's personal attractions, is accidentally overheard about her at Molland's shop in Bath? That she is 'pretty . . . very pretty'. But the men of the town 'are all wild after Miss [Elizabeth] Elliot. Anne is too delicate for them.' At this point, Anne has already left Mollands on the arm of the attentive Mr William Elliot. Captain Wentworth overhears the backhanded compliment which, presumably, inflames his jealousy and growing love for Anne.*

4/9 *What are Mrs Smith's motives in renewing, so intensely, her friendship with Anne and how do her motives change as the friendship is renewed? Initially, having learned (presumably from the omniscient Nurse Rooke) that there may be romance between Mr Elliot and Anne, she hopes to work on her friend to work on him to negotiate the return of her West Indian property (which, presumably, he is currently profiting from financially). Then, as the friendship deepens, she feels obliged—at the cost of her own hopes—to enlighten Anne as to the true nature of the villain.*