

Molly: Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we want to thank our newest patron, Franziska. Welcome to the team. And as always, if you're interested in hearing Becca's first thoughts on *Persuasion*, hanging out with us on Discord and submitting your very own study questions, check out our Patreon at patreon.com/podandprejudice. And now, enjoy this week's episode covering Volume II, Chapters 1 through 3 of *Persuasion*.

[Ped and Prejudice theme]

Becca: This is Becca.

Molly: This is Molly.

Becca: We are here to talk about Jane Austen.

Molly: We are here specifically to talk about--

Molly and Becca: *Persuasion*.

Becca: Listeners, if you're new here, I, Becca, have read many Jane Austen novels throughout my life.

Molly: And I, Molly, am reading her for the first time through this podcast.

Becca: If you want to hear Molly read through *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility* or *Emma* for the first time, you can listen to Seasons 1, 2 and 3 of this podcast respectively. But that is not what we're doing here today.

Molly: No, today, we are talking about *Persuasion*, Volume II.

Becca: Oh, yes, if needed.

Molly: Yes. Chapters 1 and 2. Or, if your book is not [00:01:00] volumed, Chapters 13 to 15. Also, let us know if any of you actually have un-volumed chapters or if this is always done in two volumes.

Becca: I think it is done both ways, because I have my Kindle read book version-

Molly: Oh, I see.

Becca: -and my copy, that's like hard copy, and they are different.

Molly: Gotcha. Okay, great. Then in that case, we will continue to announce both numbers.

Becca: I don't know why that happens. Like, my guess is that Jane Austen intended these to be volumed, because otherwise, where would the editors know where to volume them out.

Molly: Right.

Becca: And so, it must be that like they were volumes, but then some editors are just like, "No, it's one book."

Molly: Yeah, I don't know. Anyway.

Becca: There's a lot to talk about this-- We'll call this the transformation chapters or the movement chapters, because every Jane Austen novel features these moments where it's like, "Okay, a lot has happened and now, we're going to swap places."

Molly: Yes. They swap places multiple times in these chapters.

Becca: Oh, we sure do. We are really at a different point in the novel.

Molly: Yes. So, should we tell the listeners where we left off at the end of Volume I?

Becca: [00:02:00] Did anything happen at the end of Volume I?

Molly: It was a boring last chapter.

Becca: Yeah. No one fell off of anything. [chuckles]

Molly: No, nobody got a concussion.

Becca: Exactly. So, listeners, we left off in Lyme. We were having a little vacation, and then Louisa did some free falling by Tom Petty off of the cob to fall into Wentworth's arms. He missed her. She fell and hurt herself very badly, and everyone panicked, except Anne, who was a queen.

And then, Wentworth's having a meltdown. The whole Musgrove family is having a meltdown, so eventually it comes to that Anne, Wentworth and Henrietta travel back to Uppercross, and basically, we leave off with Louisa not dying, but seriously injured. The Musgrove family very upset about this, obviously.

And then, Wentworth is distraught and has, at this point, actually put some reliance on Anne again. There's a glimmer of connection through the hopelessness, but also at the same [00:03:00] time, the woman he was courting is in dire medical needs. So, it's a complicated situation.

Molly: Yes. And also, speaking of noticing things about Anne, we have also noticed that Anne is hot, again.

Becca: Yeah, this is huge. The fact that Anne is hot-- Put aside the concussion, Anne is hot now. Oh, and we met a guy-

Molly: A guy.

Becca: -named Mr. Elliot, who uppy-downied Anne.

Molly: He fully uppy-downied her. He was totally checking her out. Wentworth noticed him checking her out.

Becca: Yes. I think we can say definitively at this point and we'll get into it in the chapters, that Anne is hot and it has been noticed by multiple men.

Molly: Yes, including Wentworth, Elliot and Captain Benwick.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: So, that is where we left off.

Becca: Yes. And we are in Volume II.

Molly: Volume II. What's going to happen?

Becca: Well, you know what's going to happen. [chuckles]

Molly: I know what's going to happen. So, let's get into it. So, we're back at Uppercross now. Anne stays the full-time at the great house, not at the cottage, [00:04:00] because she

wants to make herself useful to Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove.

The following morning after she arrives, they get a note that Louisa is still the same, not better, not worse. And then, Charles shows up and he's optimistic. The Harvilles are being so kind, they've left nothing for the rest of them to do. In fact, he wishes that Mary had come home the day before.

Becca: You get the sense that Mary is a hindrance rather than a help?

Molly: Yes. She's freaking out. She calmed down a little bit the night of the thing. And then, in the morning, she woke up and she was hysterical again.

Becca: Yeah. And Mrs. Harville is apparently just killing it.

Molly: Yeah. She's a nursemaid or whatever, and she knows what to do. Mary's just running around the house being and be like, "Oh, my sister-in-law."

Becca: Yeah. We've all been in a situation where someone is supposed to be helping us and making everything more difficult.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Mary's entire personality.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Exactly. So, Charles is going to go back to Lyme that afternoon, and his father wants to go too. But Charles is like, "No offense, but you're also not going to be any [00:05:00] help, and it'll probably just increase your stress levels." So, he decides that they're going to take Sarah, the nursery maid, back instead, because she has brought up every Musgrove child, and now that the youngest kids are in school, she has nothing to do except for mend people's socks. So, he's going to take her back with him.

The next day, Charles Hayter goes to Lyme and brings back an account home to Henrietta, which is very sweet. He was like, "Oh, your sister's in trouble?" and he went to Lyme to figure out.

Becca: King behavior from Charles Hayter.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: You understand a little bit why Henrietta's like, "Yeah, I'm going to embarrass myself a little bit with this connection, because I love this man."

Molly: Yeah, he's just a little like bean.

Becca: Yeah. That's peak good brother-in-law behavior-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -being like, "Let's make sure that you know how your sister is doing."

Molly: Yeah. Oh, we love him.

Becca: A little ship moment.

Molly: A little shipping moment, yeah. [00:06:00] He also tells them that Wentworth is staying in Lyme for the time being. They're all sad, because Anne is leaving the next day and she convinces them all to go to Lyme.

Now, this seems contradictory to what we were just talking about, which was that they would be a hindrance, but she's like, "You guys need something to do, and I'm leaving and you're going to be a mess here without me."

Becca: Yeah. I think the notion is-- I actually think it's Anne being like, "I'm doing a lot of emotional labor for you, and I need to go."

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, you need someone else to do emotional labor for you." And everybody who does the emotional labor for you is in Lyme right now.

Molly: Right.

Becca: And also, there's just a lot of travel back and forth right now. Charles Hayter and Charles Musgrove are both going back and forth updating people-

Molly: Every day.

Becca: -at this point.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: He might as well grab some rooms at the Inn and visit your daughter.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, I think it makes sense. And for the same reasons why they didn't initially want Mr. Musgrove to go, it's like, "You guys are a wreck."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: You should be around your people."

Molly: Exactly. When [00:07:00] they decided to send Sarah, Mrs. Musgrove and Henrietta both had quietly thought that that would be a good idea, but Anne is the only one who ever makes a plan and puts it into action. So, she's like, "You guys get in the carriage and go." And so, she waits the next morning, she puts them in a carriage, she sends them off, and then she is alone in the house and she's wandering around the hall is like, "Oh, this was one such a happy place. And now, it is so desolate."

Becca: It's actually really sad,-

Molly: Now, it is.

Becca: -because at the beginning of this book, we talked about this, the warmth and the joy of the Musgrove house. We'll get into it later in this chapter, because you don't realize how lovely the Musgrove house is Uppercross is until you leave.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: But the loveliness of the boisterous household, and the loudness and the family dynamic is very palpable for the first half of the book. Anne is such a, not a morose character, so to speak, but like a reserved character, a serious character, [00:08:00] and

having these comedic people around her gives her a little bit more joy. So, to have her back in solitude for this last moment, there is actually a sad way to end things.

Molly: It's really sad. They put it really well. Well, they being Jane Austen.

Becca: Jane Austen actually wrote that better than Becca said it.

Molly: She wrote it really well. She said that, "Anne has no doubt of what will follow Louisa's recovery." Thinking specifically about Wentworth and Louisa, "The halls of Uppercross will be full of happiness, and gaiety and prosperous love all that is unlike Anne Elliot."

Becca: Oh, Anne.

Molly: Sad.

Becca: Pull out the sad girl playlist.

Molly: Yes, which our patrons lovingly made for us.

Becca: Yeah. Shouts to our patrons for making an incredible Anne Elliott sad girl playlist. If you want to go check it out, I highly recommend it. We'll post the link on our Instagram again.

Molly: Yeah, it's incredible. So, it's a gloomy, rainy day and she's also sad. So, she's walking around. It's gloomy. It's rainy. **[00:09:00]** And she hears Lady Russell's carriage arrive to scoop her up. Lady Russell's not in it, it's just the carriage. Even though she wants to be leaving, she feels nostalgic and sad as they drive through the town. It says that Uppercross had seen some semblance of friendship returning between her and Wentworth, and now she thinks that the chance of them rekindling that friendship is over. [sighs] Sad.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: It's all very sad.

Becca: Yeah. It's just such a sour note to go out on when it's been predominantly other than the ex-panic that has been persistent.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: It has been I think for Anne, a good time of her life.

Molly: Well, yeah. Anne, she had truly just started to feel like, "Okay, maybe me and Wentworth are okay."

Becca: She thought that she and Wentworth were okay. She had come to terms with the horrors of what happened with her father and his estate, especially knowing who's living in that estate, and we'll get into that. But now, spending a lot of time with people, getting to know the Musgroves even better. **[00:10:00]** You understand. this is why she's hot again. [chuckles]

Molly: She's been having a good time.

Becca: She's been having a good time.

Molly: Yeah. It's really depressing and then it's just like, "Oh, just kidding. Record scratch. It's over."

Becca: And in the worst way possible, like a near death experience for a lovely young woman who is also the quoted of Anne's beloved.

Molly: Yes. So, it's like she has no control over. She doesn't know. So, we can't blame Louisa for any of this.

Becca: No, no, no, Louisa did nothing wrong.

Molly: Other than jump off a wall.

Becca: Yeah, I would say that would be what Louisa did wrong. But again, we talked about-- I got emotional about this last episode. That's the dangers of courting, literally brought to life.

Molly: Yup. So, Anne arrives at Kellynch. This is her first time there since leaving. She goes straight to the lodge, and Lady Russell is happy to see her, but also anxious because she knows who's been visiting Uppercross.

I think that the sentence is left a little bit vague. It's like, "Her joy was mixed with anxiety." You're not sure who's [00:11:00] saying this, whether it's on Lady Russell's part or the narrator and saying that they're both anxious, because they both know that she knows who's visiting Uppercross, but it's just generally awkward.

Becca: Yeah. It's the one point where these two women just don't talk, and it's the most important point. It is the proverbial elephant in the carriage.

Molly: [giggles] Yes, it's the elephant in the estate.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Oh, my gosh, a T-shirt with a carriage and an elephant on top of it.

Becca: Yeah, and the elephant just says Wentworth.

Molly: [laughs] Yeah. And he's wearing a little suit. Okay.

Becca: [laughs] A little army uniform-- [crosstalk]

Molly: Army uniform.

Becca: A little naval uniform.

Molly: And he's in the carriage.

Becca: Oh, my God.

Molly: Oh, my God. So cute. Okay, we've got endless T-shirt ideas, y'all.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: So, Lady Russell is happy to see that Anne has gained some weight and is looking hot. And Anne, when she is told this by Lady Russell, finally connects that she looks hot, and that's why she got uppy-downied [00:12:00] by Mr. Elliot.

Becca: Come on, Anne.

Molly: She's like, "Oh, do I look good?"

Becca: Yeah. This is a really great portion, because how much is Anne's physical

appearance actually changed, is really a question.

Molly: I don't think much. She's definitely gained weight. She wasn't really eating before. Stress can make you lose a lot of weight. So, she's gained some weight. She's filled out a little bit, but I do think that it's mostly like a bloom in her cheeks, you know?

Becca: You know, when you go a lot of nights in a row without sleeping and you're working and you're stressed, you look a wreck.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I feel like Anne did that for eight years, and finally, she's gotten some rest and relaxation and people are like, "Wait a minute, she is one of the hottest women in the county."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: What?

Molly: What? Yeah. Also, when you look happy, it's different than when you're looking bereft.

Becca: Yes. I think the physical toll her father takes on her is a real, actual thing.

Molly: Yes. We'll get into that later, but she mentally prepares herself to silence herself and [00:13:00] to have nobody care about her. The Musgroves care about her. Oh, okay, wow.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: So, she also realizes that she's gone through a mental shift, as Lady Russell is giving her the lowdown on the house, and her father and her sister and Mrs. Clay, who I completely forgot about. [Becca [laughs] Anne realizes, "Oh, wait, I couldn't care less." She's like, I'm still thinking about my friends in Lyme and the Musgroves, and Captain Benwick and all of this stuff." She's embarrassed. She's like, I am glad Lady Russell can't read my mind right now, because I'd be ashamed if she knew that I didn't care about my family's drama, but she doesn't care anymore."

They talk about the accident. I was wondering how Lady Russell found out, because it said that she knew once it happened and she's curious about it.

Becca: I got the sense that she had just arrived in Kellynch, and someone-- Because you have to recall Wentworth was back and [00:14:00] forth, a little.

Molly: Oh, right. He was at Kellynch before.

Becca: Hall. And remember, servants talk.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, my guess is that this is a pretty big gossip story as well, and everyone in the area is talking about the girl who took a fall in Lyme.

Molly: Yeah. Oh, you're so right.

Becca: Especially, because it's Louisa Musgrove, from one of the most accomplished families in the neighborhood.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, I'm sure she just heard through the grapevine what happened to Louisa, which sucks.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: It does suck. They're awkward about talking about it, because the story necessitates them talking about Wentworth.

Molly and Becca: Mmm.

Molly: Anne thinks to herself that she is only awkward about it until she reveals that she thinks there's an attachment between Louisa and Wentworth. Once she gets that off her chest, she's fine which is totally a lie.

Becca: Well, she thinks she's fine, but I think the bigger thrust of it is that Lady Russell is worried that Wentworth rekindled the love between him and Anne.

Molly: Yes, and she's like, "Don't worry. That didn't happen." And then, Lady Russell is like, "Oh, phew, [00:15:00] that didn't happen." And then, they're like, "Okay, now, we can move past this, but Anne is still a little bit internally panicking."

Becca: Yeah. And then, Lady Russell has an interesting line.

Molly: I wanted to read it out loud.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Also, I wanted to point out, before I read this line, that she had gone to Bath, which is I had been confused about what trip is Lady Russell going on when she's dropping Anne off at the Musgroves.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: It was that she was going to Bath to get her own lodgings and stuff.

Becca: Yeah. I think she traveled around a little bit. Bath amongst the places. I don't think she has been there the way that Elizabeth and Mr. Elliot-- Sir Walter.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Sir Walter have been there. But she definitely did stop in Bath, because she does intend to be in Bath with them.

Molly: Right. Okay. "Lady Russell had only to listen composedly, and wish them happy, but internally her heart revelled in angry pleasure, in pleased contempt, that the man who at twenty-three had seemed to understand somewhat of the value of an Anne Elliot, should, eight years afterwards, be charmed by a [00:16:00] Louisa Musgrove."

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: What does that mean?

Becca: There's a couple embedded meanings in that. I have gotten some criticism from saying that Anne is in, #not like other girls or a pick me. I do not mean Anne Elliott thinks herself above the Musgrove girls. I believe Jane Austen believes Anne Elliot above the Musgrove girls,-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -which I think is pretty clear in the book.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: Here, Lady Russell's agreeing with Jane Austen on that front.

Molly: That's what I thought.

Becca: What she's basically saying and this is relatable from my perspective, which is, if your friend dates a guy who you don't think is shit, and then afterwards he ends up with someone who is way less good than your friend, it's like one of those moments, it's like you never knew what you had and it's telling, because you're with this other person who's really not that good.

Molly: Right. I think that's completely what it is. But it's annoying, because Lady Russell had no reason to [00:17:00] dislike Wentworth other than the fact that he's poor. He was poor. He's no longer poor. He was of lower status. He's now of a higher status than he was.

Becca: I don't know that that's the only reason that Lady Russell disliked Captain Wentworth. It's an interesting question. But it is described early in the book that all the arrogance and ambition that Anne saw in him were faults in Lady Russell's eyes.

Molly: Interesting. So, she also didn't like his personality.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: I see.

Becca: There might be a misunderstanding in that front as well.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I think his insistence on breaking class norms by going for Anne--

Molly: She doesn't like that.

Becca: She doesn't like that either, because she is classist and disgusting.

Molly: Yeah, well, she's snooty. But even so, her reasons for disliking him are-- Because she never thought that he was good enough for Anne

Becca: For her, I think she's taking the fact that he's courting Louisa Musgrove as confirmation that she was right.

Molly: Ah, yes. As opposed to being [00:18:00] like, serves him right. It's like, "Ha-ha-ha."

Becca: It's like, "Ah, yeah, you never were good enough for her and now you're finally stooping." That makes sense.

Molly: That does make complete sense. Okay.

Becca: Which is a little rude considering Louisa almost died. [laughs]

Molly: No. I think we can also take from this that Lady Russell sucks.

Becca: Yeah. No, I've been a little anti lady Russell from the beginning. I think she's an interesting character. I find her to be one of the most classist characters Jane Austen has written. She's no Catherine de Bourgh, but she's getting up there.

Molly: Yeah. And also, again, she is Anne's only friend in life. So, it sucks, because she has basically ruined Anne's life, but also gaslit her into thinking she needs her.

Becca: She's the only person who takes care of Anne ever. On this one point, she failed utterly to do so and continues to fail all the time, to the point where Anne has [00:19:00] wasted away for eight years.

Molly: Yeah, it's a toxic relationship.

Becca: There is something very toxic in this relationship.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And so, this little delicious vindication on her part is, I think-- You could read into it a lot of things, but one of the things you could read into it is there is some question about how right she was considering where he ended up in life. I think she likes getting these little snippets of confirmation that she was right about him.

Molly: Mm-hmm. Okay. So, a few days pass, and they get some notes about Louisa from a mysterious source. They got letters, and Anne did not know how. And I'm like, "Well, what do you mean you don't know how," because they know where you are. Like, they could just send you a letter. But the reason they say that is because, as we'll find out later, someone is bringing the letters who's not the mailman.

Lady Russell says that she must call on Mrs. Croft as much as she doesn't want to. Will Anne come knowing that it will be painful for both of them to visit the house?

Becca: And Anne's like, "It's not painful for me anymore."

Molly: Yeah. She's like, "I've been in [00:20:00] town. I'm fine. Also, I really like the Crofts, but sure."

Becca: Yeah. Because the crofts are the best people in the universe, for Anne, this is nothing. This is for me the most interesting part of these chapters, which is that Lady Russell is living in the first two chapters of this book-

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: -and Anne has been living this entire book, and she's like, "We've forgotten about the Kellynch drama."

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Lady Russell has not. It's still defining her life, whereas with Anne, it's the interactions with Wentworth, the perplexing flirtations of Captain Benwick, the torture of Louisa's medical condition, there's so much to think about that's not Kellynch. But Lady Russell's still there and is somewhere completely different.

Molly: Yeah. Also, it's interesting, because Lady Russell never lived at Kellynch Hall. She lived at Kellynch Lodge and she still does.

Becca: Well, you must remember that she was best friends with Anne's mom.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: [00:21:00] So, she's attached to the hall for who used to live there.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: I can understand why it's painful.

Molly: Oh, I can understand why it's painful too. It's just that her pain-- Well, I'm not going to say it's lesser or should be lesser. It's just different.

Becca: It's very different. I also think it's just a matter of like, she thinks this is a bonding point for her and Anne, where she's like, "Oh, God, we're going to suffer together."

Molly: Right.

Molly and Becca: And Anne's like--

Molly: "Mm."

Becca: Awkward. I'm over it. [chuckles]

Molly: Yeah. In fact, Anne thinks to herself that the Crofts are-- Well, I'll just read it. "They were gone who deserved not to stay, and Kellynch Hall had passed into better hands than its owners." Sick burn.

Becca: Yeah, true though.

Molly: Yeah. She likes the Crofts better than her own family at this point. The only person she thought still deserved to live at Kellynch Hall more than them is her mother, who is dead.

Mrs. Croft gives her a warm welcome, and [00:22:00] she knows herself to be a favorite in her eyes. They discuss Louisa. They had both heard news of Louisa yesterday. Mrs. Croft heard the news from Wentworth. We learn that he is the one who left the note with Louisa's most recent update. So, he had come to Kellynch Lodge, and left a note and then gone to Kellynch Hall.

Becca: Specifically for Anne Elliot.

Molly: For Anne. And then, he asked about her.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: He said that he hopes that Anne is not worse for her exertions and that her exertions had been great indeed.

Becca: Yes. Oh, my God, Molly is like feral, guys.

Molly: Yeah. Well, that's exciting. She's like, "Oh, my God, he asked about me?"

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Incredible. The women all agree that the whole accident was a consequence of thoughtlessness and imprudence. And Admiral Croft sums it up very well by saying, "A new way this for a young fellow to be making love by breaking his mistress's head."

Becca: Which is iconic.

Molly: [00:23:00] I love it. And Anne loves it. She's like, "Oh, my God."

Becca: And Lady Russell does not.

Molly: Lady Russell's like, "Read the room." And everyone's like giggling about it. I love it. Suddenly, Admiral Croft realizes that Anne is in her own home as a guest, and it must be painful for her. And he's like, "Don't stand on ceremony. You should walk around." And she's like, "Okay, maybe another time." And he says, "You're always welcome." Like, "Literally, come over whenever, just make yourself at home." He shows her where they keep the umbrellas and he says he thinks it's a good spot for them, even though he knows that they used to keep them in a different room. But "one man's way may be as good as another's, but we all like our own best," which is true.

And then he says they haven't made a ton of changes except for the laundry door, which he has no idea how they lived with for so long, the way it was I guess it was broken. I think he's being a little tactless here.

Becca: I think he's trying to be charming about it.

Molly: He is being charming.

Becca: I understand, but I think he's trying to be like, "Don't worry, your house is in good hands." And he's like, "You guys did perfect, [00:24:00] except this tiny little thing that I fixed, how dare you not fix it before I came in here?" I think he's joking around about it.

Molly: Yeah. But I feel like he goes on about it for a little while. He's like, "All of the improvements we've made have been for the better." And then, he realizes it and he's like, "But tell your father that we love it here, and we're so happy."

Becca: Well, I think that's not what he caught himself in there. I think what he's saying here is like, "If I were to be taking care of Milo for a week--" Milo, for listeners who may not know, is Molly's lovely little tiny puppy.

Molly: He's four pounds.

Becca: He's teensy. He's a good boy. He's like a little Ewok, but smaller and a stuffed animal. "If I were going to take care of him for a week, it'd be like--" If I called you, and I was like, "Oh, Milo's wonderful, but just terrible time. Can you believe that he stole one of Doc's toys and ran around with it for 10 minutes. I didn't know what to do with myself." Like, "Oh, my God, that was so much," basically joking around-- [00:25:00] Admiral Croft is like, "Your house is beautiful. It's very comfortable. The only thing I had to fix was the door on the laundry huge improvement,"-

Molly: Oh, I see, I see.

Becca: -which is like it's a door on the laundry room. I think what he caught himself in is he says to Anne like, "I had to remove all the looking glasses."

Molly: Oh, my God.

Becca: I don't know why.

Molly: That was so funny.

Becca: Yeah. [laughs]

Molly: He was like, "The only thing is in my room, I cannot escape myself. There are so many mirrors. Why does your dad have so many mirrors?"

Becca: So, that's what he was trying to catch himself from.

Molly: I see.

Becca: Because the implication was an insult to her father.

Molly: Which was spot on.

Becca: He's not wrong, but he embarrassed Anne lightly in that second. He caught himself embarrassing Anne and was like, "But your dad is so lovely, and we're so grateful he gave us this home to lead for this time."

Molly: Yeah. But I think what was especially funny is I don't think he necessarily embarrassed [00:26:00] Anne. I think Anne thinks it's funny, but she's amused in spite of herself and she's like, "I should be embarrassed." So, she just simply doesn't know what to say, because she doesn't want to let on that she agrees with him that her father is vain.

Becca: Yeah. I think it's a little embarrassing for her to know that though, because she does know it's a huge flaw in him.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: I think Admiral Croft is just being receptive in that moment and perceptive and just noticing, "Oh, shit, I shouldn't have said that." And then, backtracking a little bit back to being like, "Oh, but earnestly, we love it here."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I do that all the time where I'm joking around about something, and then I realize I said something slightly off and I'm like, "But in earnest, this is what I think."

Molly: Yeah. But it was such a funny interaction.

Becca: Yeah. I love Admiral Croft.

Molly: Same.

Becca: I know we talk about it literally every episode, but I love the Crofts.

Molly: Everybody loves the Crofts. The Crofts are the best. So, Lady Russell also loves the Crofts. She and Mrs. Croft are getting along well, but then the Crofts return the visit, I don't know, a couple days later, and they reveal that they're going away for a few weeks and they won't be at home again until after Lady Russell [00:27:00] has left for Bath, which is also when Anne is leaving for Bath.

Becca: So, we once again remove.

Molly: We once again remove. And Anne thinks, "Then, I'm safe from seeing Wentworth again." And girl, famous last words.

Becca: And I don't know, maybe that's the last you'll see him.

Molly: Maybe. Yeah, maybe the book is just over now. [Becca laughs] So, that brings us to Chapter 2 or chapter 14.

Charles and Mary return home. Are you laughing, because the narrator is like, "They were there for longer than Anne thought they would be wanted"?

Becca: Yeah. No, I'm laughing about everything about Mary. There's something about Mary.

Molly: She's incredible. There's something about Mary. Her spinoff TV show.

Becca: That's literally a movie. Have you seen that movie?

Molly: *There's Something About Mary?*

Becca: Oh, my God. It's a gross out humor movie from the late 1990s, early 2000s starring Cameron Diaz and Ben Stiller. And it is one of the most sexist movies I've ever seen.

Molly: [giggles] No. I have not seen this movie, but I think I've heard of it. **[00:28:00]**

Becca: So, the plot is basically that Cameron Diaz is really stunning, and she's really nice to ugly men and they all become obsessed with her and stalk her. It's played as a comedy.

Molly: Oh, I don't. I don't watch that.

Becca: Yeah. [laughs] Listeners, if I'm wrong about *There's Something About Mary*, you can let me know. But my experience of that film, is that I laughed at it when I was like a preteen, and then I rewatched it again later in life and was like, "Oh, this is actually one of the most problematic things I've ever seen."

Molly: All right. So, maybe we don't need to watch it.

Becca: No, no. [chuckles] I referenced it, because it's a very famous movie and we were talking about Mary, and I said, "There's something about Mary."

Molly: But this Mary has something different about her.

Becca: Yeah. There's something about Mary here is just a lack of self-awareness and self-centeredness that is chronic and dire.

Molly: Yes. So, Charles and Mary come back, and they drive to the lodge and they report that Louisa is sitting up. She's still **[00:29:00]** very weak, and there's no hope for Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove to bring her home for Christmas. She's just too weak.

They mention the younger Musgrove kids, but they mention Mr. and Mrs. Musgrove's younger kids. So, I'm confused, because I thought that it was Charles, Louisa, Henrietta and then Mary and Charles had younger kids.

Becca: The Musgroves have a fuck ton of kids.

Molly: They have a lot of kids.

Becca: They have a ton of kids.

Molly: Okay.

Becca: And Charles, Louisa and Henrietta are the eldest, other than poor Richard, who, may he rest in peace.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: And so, the rest of them are away at boarding school.

Molly: Gotcha.

Becca: It's mentioned a little bit when you hear about Sarah. So, the Musgrove's have other

children who are just away, but their adult children are those three.

Molly: I see. So, Mrs. Musgrove had been taking care of the Harvilles' kids, and the Harvilles had invited them over for dinner every night. It was basically a hospitality, more of like, "No, I'll do this. No, you do--" And everyone's just really nice to each other.

Becca: Yeah. [00:30:00] it's a horrible situation, and the Harvilles have really helped and nurtured the Musgroves in this moment. And the Musgroves have no shortage of gratitude.

Molly: Yeah, it's really sweet.

Becca: It's really, really nice. The combo is the two nicest families in the books are just like, "Oh, God, you've done so much for me." "Oh, God, no, you don't have to do anything back. It's totally fine." "No, but I must. I must insist." It's complete opposite of the Elliots.

Molly: Yes. Mary actually, for once, had more to like about Lyme than to complain about. She overall had an agreeable two weeks. Becca almost just spat out her coffee.

Becca: No, it's just so funny, because Mary is like, "Oh, yeah, Lyme was great. Louisa, she's recovering, but I went on a bunch of walks."

Molly: "I went to the library."

Becca: "I took a Bath."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: "And just generally, people were nice to me and understood my position. It's so unhinged." If you're on vacation and you're like, "Oh, I had a really good time." Yes, someone was concussed and ended up in the hospital for the [00:31:00] last week of the trip, but the all you can eat buffet. Oh.

Molly: [laughs] Yes, it's exactly that. [Becca laughs] She was like, "No, it was good. It was good." And was like, "What about the trauma?" And she was like, "But I went for a walk."

Becca: [laughs] Bless her heart.

Molly: Anne asks about Benwick, and Mary's face darkens and she's like, "He's really an odd person." She says that Charles had invited him to come shoot. And at first, he'd said yes, but then later was like, "Oh, wait, I never shoot. I misunderstood. I can't come." She's super offended. Charles starts laughing, and he says he only said he would come, because he wanted to see Anne. When he found out that she'd be three miles away, he was like, "Never mind."

Becca: Quick side note. Great moment for Charlie Musgrove.

Molly: Yes, very perceptive.

Becca: Very perceptive boy. Also, first of all, clearly shipping in an adorable way-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -for Anne, which shows he has no ego about the fact that she rejected him.

Molly: Oh, yeah, I forgot. [00:32:00] They-- [giggles]

Becca: I know. Exactly.

Molly: It's so easy to forget, because he's just living his life now.

Becca: Exactly. He didn't take it personally. He took the rejection well, because he's an adult man.

Molly: Because he's an adult man.

Becca: Yeah, we love him. And now, he's just like, "Ooh, things are beginning to grow in the lasagna."

Molly: Ah, yes, the lasagna is back.

Becca: This is a lasagna, and things are growing.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: You know?

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Charles Musgrove is like, "You know, he likes you, Anne. Mm, mm, mm, hmm."

Molly: Yeah. This obviously does not make Mary feel any better, either because she thinks that Captain Benwick isn't high enough status to be in love with an Elliot, or because she doesn't like that Anne is a stronger attraction at the Uppercross than herself.

Becca: I think it's a yes and situation.

Molly: It's all of the above.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: She likes to be the center of attention and she does not think that he is good enough. Anne is like, "Well, I'm flattered." And Charles says that Benwick talks of Anne, and Mary interrupts him to say that she's [00:33:00] never heard him talk of Anne. And Charles is like, "Okay, maybe not directly, but he's reading books that Anne recommended, and he overheard him talking to Henrietta about it and heard him mention Ms. Elliot and her elegance, sweetness and charms."

Becca: Hmm. Elegance, sweetness and charms.

Molly and Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: And Mary is like, "Well, that's a red flag, because his fiancé literally just died in June." "Such a heart is very little worth having" as in, he moves on too fast-

Becca: Yup.

Molly: -and she turns to Lady Russell for backup. Lady Russell says she will have to see Captain Benwick before she decides, which I thought was interesting, because Captain Benwick--

Becca: Lower ranked than Captain Wentworth.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: So, wouldn't Lady Russell be able to make her asshole decision in the moment?

Becca: Well, there's a couple things to note there. One, Anne's [00:34:00] no longer 19.

Molly: True.

Becca: Number two, Benwick is ranked higher than Wentworth was when he initially was courting Anne.

Molly: At the time. Right.

Becca: Yeah. Listen, Benwick is not super desirable as a match, just generally, for a lot of reasons. Most of them having to do with money. Economics of Dating Jane Austen. Graham, the sound effect.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: But you must recall now that Anne is 27.

Molly: Right.

Becca: In Lady Russell's eyes, she's like, "No, no, no, you have to go for someone high." And then, it went down a peg and it was like, "Okay, Charles Musgrove is okay." And then, now she's 27 and it's still been nobody. So, the fact that Anne is showing interest in anybody-- You could read it a couple ways. One, I think she could just be an acquaintance of Anne's is an acquaintance of mine.

Molly: Which she does say.

Becca: Yeah. Or, you could read it-- I do think there is some interest on her part in wanting to keep an open mind about Benwick as a romantic suitor for Anne. [00:35:00] The reason I think that is because of the way that she has the specific interest in meeting him-

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -before he comes to visit and everything. So, I think that Lady Russell has gotten less picky for Anne.

Molly: Yeah. I wish we get less picky in one specific direction, but we'll get there, eventually, I'm sure. Charles says that he's sure that she'll have a chance to meet Benwick soon, because he had told him how to get here and told him that the church in town was worth seeing and he knows that nerd will come to see a nice church. So, he's like, "That'll be his excuse, and then he'll come and call on you. I'm certain of it."

Becca: Well, I think Charles is basically giving him an excuse to see Anne.

Molly: Yeah, exactly. He's shipping and he was like, "Hey, listen, if you need an excuse to go, they live near a cool church."

Becca: Yeah, basically.

Molly: That's when Lady Russell says, "Any acquaintance of Anne will always be welcome to me." I said, "Yeah, right. Because that's not always true." [Becca laughs] [00:36:00] Mary says, "Well, wait a minute, he's more my acquaintance. I was with him more recently. Anne was only there for a couple of days." And Lady Russell's like, "Okay, then your acquaintance will always be welcome here."

Becca: Oh, my God. Mary.

Molly: And Mary's like, "Well, I don't think you're going to like him. He's dull and ill bred." And Anne's like, "I think that Lady Russell will like him a lot." Charles agrees and says that, "If you give that man a book, he'll read all day." And that's just Lady Russell's type person. And Mary says, "Well, that's a bad thing, because he can read all day but still not know what to do when someone talks to him or drops their scissors, like he doesn't have any manners."

Lady Russell is surprised that there's so much disagreement on whether or not she's going to like this person, and she considers herself a very matter of fact, so she's like, "I feel like it'd be easy to figure out whether I'll like someone." So, now, she's curious to meet this person who can give occasion to such direction opposite notions.

So, then we move on to Mr. Elliot. Lady Russell says that's someone she has no wish to see. I was curious **[00:37:00]** if Mary knows the tea because I feel like she--

Becca: She knows tea but has not internalized the tea in the same regard.

Molly: Mm-hmm. Because she wasn't living there.

Becca: She wasn't living there at the time.

Molly: I see.

Becca: She was at school. Or, I don't know where she was, but she wasn't there. Anne was not there either, I don't think.

Molly: No.

Becca: But it's just more astute and attuned to the goings on of her family than Mary.

Molly: Right. Well, I think they were in London for most of what happened, her father and Elizabeth, and they never brought Anne with them to London, so that's why she wasn't there.

Becca: Lady Russell and Anne are just both astute enough to have glommed onto the drama.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Mary's just self-centered and gets distracted easily. So, she's like, "Oh, my God, shiny object. Oh, my God, future baronet." She doesn't think about the fact that like, "Oh, there's drama."

Molly: Right. And so, when Lady Russell shuts it down, Mary's like, "Oh, oops." Anne does not need to ask about Wentworth, because they give the info voluntarily. **[00:38:00]** Wentworth is in much better spirits as Louisa improves. He has not seen Louisa, because he doesn't want to overexert her with a visit. So, he's been there in Lyme, but not seeing Louisa. Because he hasn't been seeing Louisa, he is planning to go away for a week or 10 days and is trying to bring Benwick with him. But Charles insists that Benwick would rather go to Kellynch. This is all very interesting.

Becca: Yes, it is.

Molly: Like, what is going on at Lyme. Obviously, he's there and he is getting the news, but he's also stepping back and letting her family be with her, which is nice. But he's also improving as her condition improves. So much to consider.

So, for a week, now after this conversation, a week passes, and Anne and Lady Russell are both on edge thinking that Benwick is going to come, because they really took Charles' word

there, and they're like, "Oh, the doorbell rang. Is that Benwick?" [00:39:00] But he doesn't come. Eventually, Lady Russell decides he's not worthy of her interest or at least not worthy of the interest she had begun to feel.

Becca: Because he didn't show up.

Molly: Right.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Which he never promised to, but understood.

Becca: Well, it's one of those things where it's like, if you see some promise between your friend and somebody and they never text, it's like, "Okay, then, not worth it." Because if they were interested, they would have come.

Molly: Right. The Musgroves then return, and they bring all of the rest of their kids from school. The Harville kids are also with them. Henrietta stayed with Louisa, but everyone else is now back. Anne and Lady Russell go to visit. Anne feels the Uppercross is back to its usual liveliness. The children are being rowdy. Mrs. Musgrove is protecting the Harville kids from the other kids, because they're so rowdy. The fire is blazing, and Mr. Musgrove is talking to Lady Russell, and the kids are crawling on his legs, and Anne's just looking and she's like, "This is such a nice family scene."

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: But for Anne, if she had been [00:40:00] still stressed, the chaos would not have been restorative to her nerves, just with her temperament. But for Mrs. Musgrove, she's talking to Anne, she's thanking her for all of her attention. She's looking around and she's like, "This is exactly what I needed." It's really sweet.

Becca: Yeah. It says something about who Mrs. Musgrove is, as a person, that she's like, "You know what would really make me feel better? Like, "What would soothe me, is having a bunch of rambunctious children running around me on Christmas."

Molly: Yeah. Oh, yeah and it's Christmas, also.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: She says that nothing would do her so much good as a little "Quiet cheerfulness at home." I was like, "This is quiet cheerfulness for her?"

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: It's sweet.

Becca: Genuinely, it gives you so much affection for the Musgroves.

Molly: Yeah. And also, the fact that it's Christmas, and they're just hanging out and it just gives such a vision of a lovely Christmas day, where everyone is happy.

Becca: Yeah. It reminds me a little bit of *Pride and Prejudice* in the way that they're using Christmas here, which is a little break in the story.

Molly: Yeah. [00:41:00] Exactly. Mrs. Musgrove says that the Harvilles are planning to bring Louisa back soon, and they're going to come and stay with them and that Wentworth is away finally visiting his brother who just got married.

Becca: The curate.

Molly: The curate. Yes. On the way back to Kellynch, Lady Russell says she wants to remember in the future not to visit Uppercross at Christmas. And I'm like, "That just says so much about her, because everyone's thinking about how lovely this is," and she's just like, "This is too much for me."

Becca: Again, it shows a divide between Anne and Lady Russell, because Lady Russell lives in this colder, crisper world than Anne does. No matter how close they are, Anne found comfort and joy in Uppercross, and its boisterousness.

Molly: Yes. Even she said that it wouldn't necessarily be restorative to her nerves, but I think that's because she's an introverted and she needs to rejuvenate herself by being alone, but she likes to be around people.

Becca: I think she finds joy in the Musgroves and [00:42:00] the people she was hanging out with there for a lot of reasons. As we've discussed, the emotional labor Anne does for this family is intense, but there's warmth and there's friendliness to them. She finds a lot of appreciation for a louder, more chaotic, family-oriented environment than she herself could create or that she herself is used to.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: And Lady Russell, it's a little classless.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: It's not as proper.

Molly: Yes. It's not the noisiness that's the problem, because we go on to learn, that as they're driving to Bath, so bit of a time jump, they're driving to Bath, Lady Russell doesn't mind a little noise when it's city noise and like sophisticated people and horses and blah, blah, blah. It says, "After being long in the country, nothing could be so good for her as a little quiet cheerfulness." So, it's a different quiet cheerfulness.

Anne, however, still hates Bath and she's like, "Who's going to be glad to see me when [00:43:00] I arrive?" which is sad. She misses the bustle of Uppercross and the seclusion of Kellynch. She does not want to go to Bath. And also, it's raining again.

Becca: Yeah. But we're finally headed to Bath.

Molly: We are finally headed to Bath.

Becca: We've been talking about it since Chapter 2-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -and here we are in Bath-

Molly: In Bath.

Becca: -finally.

Molly: Yes. Elizabeth's last letter had communicated that Mr. Elliot was also in Bath.

Becca: Record scratch. Who could have seen it coming?

Molly: [giggles] Not me, except I did.

Becca: On air you did.

Molly: I did on air. Apparently, he has called on them multiple times and seems to be making as much effort to rebuild his connection with them as he had once made tunic liked them.

Becca: Hmm.

Molly: Hmm.

Becca: Hmm.

Molly: Hmm. Lady Russell is already going back on what she had literally just said about never wanting to see Mr. Elliot. She actually greatly wants to see him, because she thinks that if he's trying to reconcile himself, he should be forgiven.

Becca: Hmm.

Molly: Anne also wants to see him, because she is intrigued. [00:44:00]

Becca: Mm.

Molly: So, she gets dropped off, and lady Russell continues on to her own lodgings and that brings us to Chapter 3 or Chapter 15.

Becca: And this one is, I would say, just let's remember who Sir Walter and Elizabeth are.

Molly: Yeah, we've forgot about them.

Becca: There was a certain point in the book, we were like 10 chapters in and I was like, "Where the fuck are Sir Walter and Elizabeth? Are we ever going to see them again?" And finally, we're back with them. We haven't seen them in 12 chapters.

Molly: Yeah. Wild. Anne is dreading this. She feels like it's going to be an imprisonment of many months.

Becca: Oh.

Molly: But oddly enough, she is met with a degree of cordiality and kindness, and they are happy to see her.

Becca: They're in a really good mood.

Molly: They're in a great mood. Hmm. Mrs. Clay is also there and she is also pleasant. But that's not as surprising to Anne, because she has to be,-

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: -because she's not their family. Now, the Elliots fish for some [00:45:00] compliments, asking Anne how much everyone Mrs. them and she's like, "Umm."

Becca: So much.

Molly: [giggles] She can't really say much on the subject. But they are in excellent spirits. And now, Anne must listen to the reasons why though they have very little desire to hear anything about what's been going on with Anne, it's time for them to talk.

Becca: Yup.

Molly: Their house is in Camden Place, and it is the best in Camden Place. Everyone wants to visit them. They get so many calling cards they don't know what to do with.

Becca: Oh, my gosh.

Molly: They're so popular.

Becca: They're so popular.

Molly: Anne isn't surprised, but she still sighs at the fact that her father seems to not feel any degradation in the change of situation for himself.

Becca: Yeah, because he's a shallow man-

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: -like the loss of his estate versus now just getting constantly flattered.

Molly: Right.

Becca: The implication here is like, when you're living in the country in a grand estate and managing that estate, that is the [00:46:00] highest you can get in English society, essentially. But here we are in Bath in the town-- We're not even in London. We're in Bath. And you're at the top of Bath society in a townhome there, significantly smaller than your estate.

Molly: Yeah. You're a big fish in a small pond, but you're popular as opposed to actually having any kind of gravity.

Becca: Well, it's more like-- How do I put this without being really mean?

Molly: You can be mean.

Becca: I'm trying to. So, there are people you meet who tend to surround themselves with people who are not as smart or as engaging as them, and they do it so they can lead the group.

Molly: So they can look really good.

Becca: And they can be the smart, interesting, pretty one of the group. It is I think a sad way to live to feel in competition with those around you. But there is a way in which if you lower [00:47:00] the society around you, then it's easier to be at the top of that society.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: And what Anne feels has happened, is that Sir Walter and Elizabeth have lowered their place in society, so they can be at the top of the society in a smaller scale.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: It's more secluded, but they were the wealthiest, grandest estate in the county. Now they're in Bath being near the top of Bath society, which is very different. And so, they've shrunk the scale they can be on. Once they shrink the scale, it's easier for them to feel superior.

Molly: Right. The thing is that Anne doesn't really care about status. It's more like she thinks that they should feel more that they have shrunk and sunk.

Becca: There's a perception thing to it. There is a status thing to it. It's embarrassing, just generally. But it's also like, they sank in society because of Sir Walter's lavish spending.

Molly: Mm-hmm. [00:48:00]

Becca: What we're seeing here is that he's learned no lessons from that. He has not been humbled by this experience.

Molly: JoJo, Have You Learned Nothing?

Becca: I have no idea what you just said, but--

[laughter]

Molly: *Dance Moms*, which I do not watch. I just happen to have gone through a JoJo Siwa phase. We'll continue.

Becca: Yeah. So, they've learned nothing. What they've done is they've continued to spend lavishly in a cheaper market,-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -which means that they still get to spend more than everybody else.

Molly: Right.

Becca: But they're not putting themselves out of house and home anymore, because things in Bath are less expensive than like say, London, which is where they used to do all their spending.

Molly: Yes. So, yes, that's all bad. But in terms of the perception of their place in society, at least they're making the most of it, I guess.

Becca: Yeah. I think that Anne is a little embarrassed by her family situation, but not unhappy with where they are, because it makes them much more pleasant to be around.

Molly: Yes. She's just sighing at it. She's like, "Okay, they haven't [00:49:00] really changed." But she wonders at the fact that Elizabeth, for example, who was once the mistress of Kellynch Hall, is now so proud of her two drawing rooms in her townhouse. And she's like, "This is not a great situation, but you don't seem to mind at all."

Becca: Yeah, I think what it is Anne's like, "Oh, Jesus, you guys really haven't developed at all. You haven't learned anything. I thought this time might have humbled you. I'm not going to complain about it, because if you had been humbled, my life would have been 10 times more miserable."

Molly: Very true. So, now we move on to talking about Mr. Elliot, which is the meat and potatoes of this chapter.

Becca: Oh, the meat, the potatoes, the drink on the side, the side vegetables, the appetizer, everything.

Molly: Yes. They love Mr. Elliot.

Becca: Boy, do they?

Molly: Boy, do they. He had come through in November and heard that they were in town.

He was there for like 24 hours and immediately heard that they were in town. This was right after Anne saw him.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: I don't know if he called on them at that point, but [00:50:00] he has now, It's December, been back a fortnight. It might be January. It's December or January.

Becca: I think it's January at this point, because Christmas is over.

Molly: Christmas is over, so it's going to be January. He immediately called on them when he arrived and apologized for the past. He claims that the whole thing was a misunderstanding. He thought that they hated him and he didn't know why, so he stayed away, giving the appearance of him neglecting them. And in terms of the rumors of him shit talking them, he is indignant.

Becca: How dare.

Molly: He says, "How dare? I who have always been proud to be an Elliot. You can ask anyone that I know. I always boast that I'm an Elliot."

Becca: How dare? [chuckles]

Molly: Yeah. I am curious about this sudden change though, like, "Why is he apologizing now after all these years?"

Becca: It's a great question, particularly, because and we'll get to it, you don't get the sense that he knew Anne was--

Molly: He did not.

Becca: Yeah. Oh, he did.

Molly: He definitely did not.

Becca: So, this is organic. It didn't come from his interaction with [00:51:00] Anne.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, there's a real question, why now for Mr. Elliot? Do you have any predictions?

Molly: No, but his wife has been dead for a little while.

Becca: Yeah. he's still in "mourning."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: But it's been a while at this point, and he's like, I think ready to move on in life from there. So, that's part of it.

Molly: Yeah. My only prediction is that something happened to cause him to feel like he needed to come here and make amends.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I don't know what it is. It's probably financial, but we'll get into it in a little bit. So, with regards to his marriage which they were also pissed about, they've heard some things from one, Colonel Wallis, who is a friend of Mr. Elliot's and who lives nearby in some fancy house.

He knows the whole story. He was friends with Elliot. He's friends with his wife. Elliot's wife was not highborn, but she was educated, accomplished, rich and very in love with Mr. Elliot.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Her money [00:52:00] would not have tempted Elliot if it was just her money, but it was the love. There was love. At least on her part, it is not said whether he loves her, but I assume he does. And for Sir Walter, this excuses it. He says, "For him to leave Elizabeth to be with a very fine woman with a large fortune in love with him, that is enough for him," which like what else is there I guess in a lot of these books, it's like, "Is she rich? Is there love?"

Becca: Well, sometimes it's about the accomplishments and the stature in society.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: As we've learned, she's rich, but not well bred in love and accomplished, which, as far as matches go, Economics of Dating and Jane Austen wise, it's probably a pretty good match, especially considering the fact that Mr. Elliot already had a title like that he would inherit one day.

Molly: Right. And that's the thing is he is going to inherit the title and the estate [00:53:00] regardless of their fight. Like, he can't be written out.

Becca: He cannot be written out.

Molly: It's entailed on him.

Becca: It's entailed on him.

Molly: So, he doesn't actually have to be making up with them right now.

Becca: Not at all.

Molly: So, what is it?

Becca: Yeah, that's what's interesting here, is that in terms of inheritance, you don't actually have to get along to inherit, because it's done. He's their only male relative living.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, that's what's interesting to think about.

Molly: Mm. For Elizabeth, the love doesn't excuse it. She is still salty, but she's, whatever.

Becca: Well, she's only salty to an extent.

Molly: She's salty to an extent. She's now pleased that he is here, because she believes that he is back to courting her, but she's still mad that he fell in love with someone else and left her. So, now, Elliot has visited them several times. He's dined with them once, which is a big deal, because [00:54:00] they don't host dinners.

Anne knows that she should take everything they're saying with a grain of salt. She's like, "They're probably exaggerating the extent of this makeup." So, I hadn't thought of that, actually, I'm taking everything they say at their word, but it's possible that it wasn't so much of like, "Everything is better now. We're fixed."

Becca: Well, yeah. But you do see him at the end.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Spoiler.

Molly: Yes, we are about to see him. So, Anne thinks that there's more than meets the eye as to why he is trying to reconcile with them, which I agree. He has nothing to gain from this as we've talked about. He's a sensible man, or at least he looked sensible, which I don't know how you can look sensible but okay. She's like, "Why does he care? He must be courting Elizabeth." That's her assumption.

Becca: And to be fair, Elizabeth is extremely hot.

Molly: Elizabeth is hot, and not rich at the current moment.

Becca: No, but titled. There's something tidy about the [00:55:00] fact, because now Sir Walter is rich,-

Molly: Right.

Becca: -because his wife was super rich.

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: So, he doesn't need money from them. He doesn't need a title from them, because he's going to inherit no matter what. But Elizabeth is a hot woman who has-- There's a certain cleanliness to the family connection. It's like, Anne de Bourgh, Mr. Darcy situation.

Molly: Yeah, it would be nice.

Becca: Exactly.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: So, there is something that makes sense to that match, except for, and this is crucial, Elizabeth's personality.

Molly: Right.

[laughter]

Molly: He thinks that he likes her, but her true character never came through for him, because he knew her when they were both young and only knew her in public which, as we know, an acquaintance in public doesn't always mean that you know someone. Anne thinks to herself, "Most earnestly did she wish that he might not be too nice, or too observant if Elizabeth were his object."

Becca: Sick burn. [chuckles]

Molly: She's like, "If he's trying to get with her, he better not get to [00:56:00] know her too well."

Becca: It's like, "I'm weak." It's like, her basically saying something to the effect of like, if she's going to court him, she better do it quick, because those looks will only take her so far. [chuckles]

Molly: Exactly. Anne then mentions that she saw him in Lyme, like, trying to contribute. And they're like, "Oh, yeah, maybe. Maybe you did."

Becca: You're like, "Yeah, I bet it wasn't him though." And she was like, "Oh, you're describing him, and it does sound like the same guy." And they were like, "No, it could be anybody."

Molly: They're like, "We met him. We met him. We would know."

Becca: "No, no. We met him."

Molly: "He's our friend." [giggles] Sir Walter describes him and mentions that he has an underbite, and he mentions that Mr. Elliot told Sir Walter, "He hadn't changed a bit in the intervening years." Walter couldn't say the same to him, because he's aged.

Becca: Which is like, it's so funny because it's been 10 years everyone fucking changes.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: But he's like, "This was like a really big thing for me. I couldn't tell him that he looked no different, because he did age 10 years."

Molly: It's like, "So did you, dude."

Becca: Oh, my God. So did your fucking daughter.

Molly: Yes. Everybody did.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: However, [00:57:00] he's still better looking than most men, Mr. Elliot.

Becca: Leading to one of the funniest passages in this entire book.

Molly: The fact that the worst thing about Bath, is that there's-

Becca: No hot women.

Molly: -no hot women.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: All the women are plain. He once counted 87 women walk by and not a tolerable face among them.

Becca: And he's like, "To be fair, it was cold out."

Molly: He's like, "It was cold out. Their noses were probably red." He also mentions that there are even uglier men. And that you can tell that all the men are ugly, because when he goes out and walks with Colonel Wallis, all the women stare, because Colonel Wallis is the only attractive man in town. And then, Elizabeth and Mrs. Clay are both like, "They were probably staring at you. You're so hot."

Becca: Which Elizabeth weird.

Molly: Elizabeth weird. Elizabeth, like cute, "If you're like flattering your father, Mrs. Clay."

Becca: Get it. [laughs] No, I'm like, "Get it." Go for it, girl.

Molly: Sure. So, this flattery puts him in a good mood, and [00:58:00] he asks then about

Mary. And Anne says, "Well, she's in good health and good looks," because he was like, "Oh, is her nose still red?"

Becca: I love the fact that Sir Walter seems to despise Mary. She's never there. He's never once asked about her. We'll talk about this later. There is a moment in the book where he just forgets she exists.

Molly: This is very soon, and it is my favorite moment in the book.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: He says that he would send Mary a new hat and please, if he didn't think it would tempt her to go out in sharp winds. And Anne is like, "I don't think anything would tempt her to go out in sharp winds. It's Mary." But at that moment, there is a knock.

Becca: [gasps] Who could it be?

Molly: They're all like, "It must be Mr. Elliot," and it is. He comes in and he's like, "Oh, all my compliments to Elizabeth and Mrs. Clay." Sir Walter then presents Anne as his youngest daughter.

Becca: Which is the funniest thing that could possibly happen, because he just forgets Mary exists.

Molly: He literally just asked about her-

Becca: I know.

Molly: -five seconds [00:59:00] ago. [Becca chuckles] He's like, "Oh, how's your friend Mary?"

Becca: Where do we place Sir Walter in terms of bad parents in Austen so far, do you think?

Molly: Oh, God, he's the worst.

Becca: I'm trying to think if that's true.

Molly: I can't think of anyone worse than him.

Becca: It depends how far we cast the net, because Mrs. Ferrars in *Sense and Sensibility* is pretty bad.

Molly: Mrs. Ferrars sucks, but I feel like she does care about Fanny.

Becca: No. Kind of, but she mostly gives a shit about Robert to everybody else's detriment.

Molly: Right. Yeah, I guess-- But the thing about Mr. Elliot, is that-

Becca: Sir Walter.

Molly: - Sir Walter, he is the worst to Anne. He forgets about Mary. And Elizabeth, he's not even trying to secure her spot.

Becca: Well, I think it's because he adores her and he's stupid.

Molly: Well, that's what I'm saying is like, if we're going to talk about-- People are always saying that Mr. Bennet's a bad father, because he doesn't see the urgency [01:00:00] of getting his daughters married off.

Becca: No. And Sir Walter is like an extreme version of that.

Molly: Yes, exactly.

Becca: I don't disagree with you. I do think he's probably the worst parent we've seen in Austen, if I'm thinking about it and forgetting Mary exists after literally just asking about her and being like, "Is she still ugly?"

[laughter]

Becca: Oh, boy. Yeah, there's not enough to be said about how crazy Sir Walter is. The fact that his complaint about Bath is like not enough hot women, and he's talking about it with his daughters constantly.

Molly: Yeah, he's nasty.

Becca: Yeah, Sir Walter's a wild dude.

Molly: And he's also hot. We must remember.

Becca: Yeah, superficially, definitely.

Molly: I keep forgetting that he is a certifiable daddy.

Becca: Yeah. He's literally a daddy, but he's-- Ladies, make sure you look underneath the daddy. This goes for people of all genders who are into daddies. Make sure the daddy has a heart underneath.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Never go for pure daddy.

Molly: Anyway, so he introduces Anne as his youngest daughter. **[01:01:00]** And Elliot looks at Anne and stops in his tracks.

Becca: Because she's so hot.

Molly: She's so hot, and he had no idea that this woman that he met in Lyme.

Becca: Who he uppy-downied.

Molly: He fully uppy-downied her, is an Elliot and is honestly a great match for him if he was not going to go for Elizabeth, like he could have fucking had-- Anyway, that's a whole road I could go down.

Becca: I'll give you a road to go down it in the study question.

Molly: Excellent.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: He's like, "Oh my God, you?" And he looks baffled, and then he's so happy to see her and he's like, "Oh my God, we met before." He looks good, and his countenance is only improved by speaking. His manners are excellent. She can only compare them to one person in her mind.

Becca: That tells you a lot about what she's thinking about with him, if she's comparing him

to one person.

Molly: Right. That's true. This is like her second top pick.

Becca: Yeah. [01:02:00] She's like other than Wentworth, which, spoiler alert, that's the one person.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: The fact that she's the only person who has better manners than him is Captain Wentworth is like-- That is a huge compliments coming from Anne Elliot.

Molly: And he's uppy-downeying her again in front of her dad.

Becca: And he's like, "Oh, my God, it's you, my buddy from Lyme."

Molly: He's so hot. I'm flustered.

Becca: Oh, my God. Molly is flustered by Mr. Elliot, everyone.

Molly: I really am into him and I'm into this.

Becca: Okay. Wentworth has some competishione.

Molly: Fuck Wentworth right now, I don't know. [giggles] Okay, so he talks to her about Lyme, and he's like, "Oh, I was in the room next to you guys at the Inn, and I heard how delightful your party sounded. You guys all sounded like you having a great time. I really wanted to come introduce myself, but that would have been weird. I didn't know that I had a right to, because I'm literally related to all of you." So, he's kicking himself.

Becca: Which is fine, because it all worked out okay. But then they go on to talk about what happened to [01:03:00] Louisa. This is a great moment, because Jane Austen basically says like, Elizabeth and Sir Walter hadn't given a shit about what happened to Louisa until Mr. Elliot brought it up, and now they're like, "Oh, my God, what happened? That poor girl."

Molly: Yes, exactly. [Becca laughs] I was wondering, "Did they not know it all? Did she not write to them?"

Becca: No, she did. And also, remember, they just asked her how she's doing, and she was like, "Well, actually." And they were like, "Great. Let me tell you about Bath." They just don't listen to anything Anne says ever.

Molly: They suck.

Becca: They suck.

Molly: Yeah. So, they talk about that. Oh, he mentions also-- I wanted to draw attention to this line, because he talks about the fact that him not saying hi to them or introducing himself at the Inn is the remnants of an old practice of his that he determined when he was young that it was improper to introduce yourself to people you don't know at an Inn. He decided that that's dumb. And "the notions of a young man of 1 or 2 and 20 [01:04:00] as to what is necessary in manners to make him quite the thing are more absurd, I believe, than those of any other set of beings in the world." Something about that feels important to me-

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: -as like decisions we make when we're young aren't always the right ones. I don't know what it says in this context of this book.

Becca: Well, you could take it from what we know right now in the book, there are people who've made decisions young.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: Anne made some decisions when she was young.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: Mr. Elliot made decisions when he was young as well.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: And if you are questioning the decisions you made when you were young as appropriate for you in this time period, both of those characters have been formed by decisions they made in that time period.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Interesting.

Molly: Interesting Anyway, he stays for an hour and the clock strikes 11:00. So, I guess it's-- Is it 11:00 AM or PM? It's got to be 11:00 AM.

Becca: I think it might be PM.

Molly: Because the watchman is out.

Becca: Yeah. Anne describes it as her first evening.

Molly: [01:05:00] Oh, yeah. Yeah. So, it's late, and Anne feels that her first evening at Camden Place passed much better than she could have hoped. And that's the end of those chapters.

Becca: Which brings us to some study questions. Let's start with the patron study questions. Once again, patrons and listeners, if you would like to ask us questions and then have us answer those questions on the podcast, you can join our Patreon at the \$15 tier, in which case, Molly will post a Google Doc before each episode recording, and we will take your questions and ask them.

We had a lot today, so I don't know if we're going to get through all of them. But if we don't get to your question on today's record, we will try to get to those questions on a later record.

Molly: Yeah, we'll always just do as many of them as we can and keep asking them.

Becca: Fabulous. Okay. So, question number one comes from Emily. "What do you make of Mr. Elliot's return to the good graces of Sir Walter, and what does it tell you about each man?"

Molly: Yeah. So, it shows a lack of conviction, I think. This is more thinking about Lady Russell on the way being like, "Oh, I want to meet [01:06:00] him. We're going to forgive him," like a lack of conviction. At the same time, it's not a bad thing to forgive someone, but for Sir Walter, I think it's just like he loves to be flattered. And so, this man came and he was like, "Oh, my God, I would never talk shit about you. I don't know where you heard that, but you can ask anyone I know, they all think that I love being an Elliot." So, he likes that, Sir Walter.

And in terms of Mr. Elliot, I still don't know what to make of him. Like, am I attracted to him? Yes. Do I think that he is doing this purely out of good intentions? I don't know.

Becca: Who's to say?

Molly: Whomst, even.

Becca: Whomst, if you will. Yeah, I think that's all right. I think what we're led to believe, is that Sir Walter is a man of pure self-obsession and shallowness. So, it doesn't take much to change his opinion of someone. It is purely based on how flattering [01:07:00] they are to him.

Molly: Exactly.

Becca: Okay. So, Hannah asks, "How would you describe Anne's personality so far? Is she shy or just quiet? Is she funny or reserved? Is she confident or insecure, etc.?"

Molly: This is such a good question, because we've really gotten to know Anne in various settings now. So, I don't think Anne is shy, because at one point, she boldly says she's flattered by Benwick's attentions. So, I don't think she's shy. I think she is a bold person. I think she's quiet for all the reasons we've talked about before, like mostly being silenced by her family, and her having to mentally prepare herself to go into her father's house now and she's like, "I am about to start months and months of being ignored, talked over, not listened to."

So, I think she's quiet because of that. I think she's funny quietly. I think funny and reserved, I would say, aren't [01:08:00] necessarily opposites. I think she can be funny and reserved. She understands humor.

Becca: She's the Michael Bluth, we talked about this. She is the straight man-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -of the situation, which means she is funny in her own right, because she's the bouncing board off of everybody else's personality.

Molly: Yeah. I like that when people are talking shit about someone that she also likes to talk shit about, she quietly is like [scoffs] but she won't outright agree.

Confident or insecure is an interesting one, because she hears that she's hot and she's like, "Oh, I'm hot," but she wouldn't have realized it if someone didn't tell her. I just went to a Lawrence concert. Everyone should listen to Lawrence. I really love them. They have a song called *Insecure*, and he goes, *i'm confident that i'm insecure*. So, she's confident that she's insecure.

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: For me, three things jumped in my mind when we started talking about this. One is we've talked about it a lot. Anne is an emotionally perceptive person. [01:09:00] She's very empathic. She cares deeply about the emotional state of others around her, and so she's constantly doing emotional labor. She's taking care of people around her. She's an empath.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: She cares and she takes care. That's who she is at her core. That is one of her defining traits is taking care of others, which is exhausting to her, but she does it anyway and

you can tell it's like, who she is.

I would call her stoic, because she can withstand a lot. I wouldn't call her bold necessarily, but sturdy. Like, very sturdy.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I think the third thing that jumped to my mind, is that it is obvious to me that she is Jane Austen's eldest heroine, because there is a self-awareness to Anne and a settling into life from Anne that is not apparent from her other heroines in the same way. I think it speaks to the fact that she wrote this a little later in life, there is a surety of self. I wouldn't call it confidence, necessarily, or insecurity, but it [01:10:00] is she knows who she is, she knows what she is, she knows who the people around her are and she can deal with the world on those terms.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: So, to me, she smarts of maturity in that way.

Molly: Yeah, definitely.

Becca: Yeah. Let's see next study question. Lee. "Up until now, Anne has been presented as being unattractive to other characters, having "lost her bloom." Now, suddenly in Lyme, she catches the notice of Mr. Elliot and Captain Benwick. What, if anything, has changed about Anne?" We touched on this, but let's talk about the fact that Anne is hot again.

Molly: Anne is hot. We will continue to say that Anne is hot.

Becca: So hot.

Molly: Yeah, I think we've pretty much discussed the various things that have changed, primarily, like, she's come out of her shell a bit more, being around people that look to her for advice and look to her to lead them. Almost like what we were just talking about with her father and sister being big fish in a small town, but hers is being around people that care about her. [01:11:00]

Becca: Yeah, I think the confidence boost, the joy she found for a little while, and also just the rekindling of something between her and Wentworth, no matter how removed and weird and panicky it is, has brought life back into her body, and face and everything. So, I feel like if you take the eight years that have drawn Anne back, most of that seems to have been based in her emotional state.

Obviously, we've talked about some of the physical attributes that have changed, but it tells you like, Anne is not getting ugly as she gets older. Anne was sad, and withdrawn and now that she's really immersed in life again. Now that she's come back into herself a little bit, she is suddenly the hottest commodity in Bath, or Uppercross or wherever she is, because now that elegance and a grace of person that she used to have has returned. And in some ways, she just took her glasses off and she was [01:12:00] hot all along now, you know.

Molly: Yeah, she's Clark Kent.

Becca: No, I was thinking Laney Boggs from *She's All That*.

Molly: Oh, sure.

Becca: But Clark Kent works too. The idea that she just changed a little bit about herself, but mostly just changed her confidence levels, her personality, like, her level of depression, and now everyone's like, "Wait, she has been beautiful. She is beautiful." I think it has some

to do with her filling out, getting some fresh air, smiling more as much as I hate to say it, but some of it's just internal. She has become herself.

Molly: She's got light in her eyes.

Becca: Exactly.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: It's always really important to remember that Anne is hot.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Okay. A listener asks, "What do you think Jane Austen is telling us about Bath? And from that, what do you think Anne's Bath experience will be like?"

Molly: Well, we all know that Jane Austen doesn't love Bath, and Anne does not love Bath. But I'm curious, because we started by like, Anne driving in the [01:13:00] rain, and there was a dim vision of the smoking chimneys of the buildings, and she was like, "I don't want to get a better look at them. This is terrible. It's very gloomy and industrial sounding."

But then, she's greeted with almost affection by her family in their small way. And then, Mr. Elliot is there, and so there's some spice and some drama. Her first night is not bad. I know that we're not supposed to like Bath, but I do think that it might be an interesting time.

Becca: Oh, certainly. I think for a reader, Bath is the best thing that could possibly happen, because it throws people together. It's a much more populated area. There is a society in Bath, and therefore there are people to meet and goings on to have-- Like, people are going to keep getting thrown together into circumstances in town, as opposed to where we were, which was quite rural, where you interacted with the same characters, over and over again.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, that's good for Bath. [01:14:00] I think you do get the impression, and I've said this before, I'll say it again, Anne strikes me as the closest Jane Austen came to a self-insert,-

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -because she's an older woman who has lost love, and she hates Bath and is stuck there with her sister and her father. Obviously, I don't think that Anne has the same relationship with her sister and her father that Jane Austen did, but there is-- I see some similarities there, [chuckles] but we don't know much about Anne's prior experiences in Bath. Molly and I, frankly, have not done enough research to know exactly Jane Austen's experience, although I do know that's where she wrote a lot of her later books. My sense of Bath, Bath is a tourist town, because it's where the Bath's are. That's why it's called Bath.

Molly: Right. I've been there.

Becca: Yeah. I've not been there.

Molly: It's cool. It's fun to see the Bath's. But the last time I was there was well before we started this podcast.

Becca: Yeah. Listeners, at some point in time, Molly and I are just going to have to go to [01:15:00] Bath.

Molly: Well, right now, there's the Jane Austen conference thing where everyone's in

Regency garb, and everyone's there right now and I am so jealous and it's in Bath, I think. And maybe in two years, we'll go after you're well and married.

Becca: It sounds like a fucking great time. [laughs] So, Bath, it just strikes me as something that Anne is not interested in, because it doesn't strike me that Anne is interested in the gossip and society of the ton to use the *Bridgerton* turn for it.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: It is like a pettier, clickier place than the rolling countryside of England in Somersetshire. Jane Austen, in her books, evinces love affair with this English southern countryside, and Bath is a dreary city. So, just the fact that Anne and Jane Austen are both in their own rights, I guess, country mouses.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: Country mice.

Molly: Mice. [giggles]

Becca: Country mice, not country mouses. This is like **[01:16:00]** this is city time.

Molly: Yeah. It's a ripe setup for us to meet some new characters, maybe.

Becca: All right. We're going to do one more question from Katrine. "What are your thoughts on Lady Russell wanting to meet Captain Benwick and also Mr. Elliot? And Mr. Elliot himself, what do we think of him and his behavior among the Elliots?"

Molly: Mr. Elliot is everything I want, and more.

Becca: Okay. Yeah.

Molly: I think that in terms of Lady Russell wanting to meet these men, I think you're right, is that she's thinking of whether they could be matches for Anne, though what's interesting with Mr. Elliot. I don't think her first thought was, is this a match for Anne, when they were on their way and she was like-- Because Anne didn't say, "Oh, I met him and he was hot and he uppy-downied me," when she was talking to Lady Russell.

Becca: No mention of the uppy-downey to lady Russell. Yeah.

Molly: Right. So, with Captain Benwick, she definitely wanted to meet him, because she thought that he was a good match for Anne. With Mr. Elliot, **[01:17:00]** it also speaks to her vanity, I think, and like, "Oh, is he's apologizing to the family? Ooh." But I don't know why she suddenly changed her tune.

Becca: Well, I think it was quite embarrassing for the Elliots to hear those rumors about what Mr. Elliot was saying about them. There is something very improper about the idea of abandoning your family when you are the heir apparent. So, I think for Lady Russell, this is a return to form for the Elliots, generally. Like, "Oh, this is how it should be. He's paying credence to his predecessor as the head of Kellynch Hall."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: The Lord of Kellynch Hall. So, you're right. There is an element in all of this too, could this be a match for Anne. But there is also with particularly Mr. Elliot, less for Captain Benwick, who I think she's purely interested in for his relationship with Anne. But for Mr. Elliot, there is, "Oh, are we resetting this relationship with this family to a proper one?"-

Molly: Right.

Becca: -which is good.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: All right. Becca's study questions. **[01:18:00]** Listeners, thank you so much for your questions. Patrons, specifically, thank you for your questions. If you want to ask questions, again, that's the \$15 tier. Molly will post the Google Doc. You can do so before each recording.

Molly: You guys are so smart. Your questions are always so good.

Becca: You guys are awesome. You're doing half my job for me. I love it.

[laughter]

Becca: All right. So, I'm going to backtrack us a little bit and say we had a massive shift in the book from Uppercross back to Kellynch and then to Bath. "What does it do to the story to put Anne back to where she came from and then to put her in an entirely new setting?"

Molly: It's, well, whiplash, first of all, because each chapter took place in a different setting.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: It does really help us to figure out who Anne is, I think going back to Hannah's question. We've gotten to see her in so many different settings. We've gotten to see her at Uppercross with all of these people at Uppercross alone for a minute. We've gotten to see her at Kellynch Lodge. We've gotten to see her at Kellynch Hall with the Crofts. **[01:19:00]** Now, we've got to see her at Bath with her family again. What does it do to put her back where she was before? It's like, she's grown and she's changed.

Becca: Yeah. I think it's really obvious. I think when you read the first 12 chapters of this book, it's subtle, because mostly you focus on the ex-panic with her and Wentworth-

Molly: Right.

Becca: -and everything happening there, the drama. But then, when you put her in a new circumstance where she's away from Uppercross and back where she was at the beginning of the book, it becomes very obviously that Anne has gone through character development in that time. I think it really drives it home, particularly, around things like how much she's processed the loss of Kellynch Hall, how little she cares about the goings on of her father and her sister, who she hates, and the disconnect she has with Lady Russell now on certain topics.

Molly: Yeah. It's interesting, because presumably, Lady Russell has also been out living life, but apparently, nothing has been happening for her.

Becca: Well, Lady Russell has been living the life, she and Anne usually live,-

Molly: Right.

Becca: **[01:20:00]** -which led her to believe she would come back to Anne that she left behind. Anne was doing something that she doesn't usually do. She was staying with her sister for an extended period of time and interacting with Captain Wentworth.

Molly: Right.

Becca: The combo has made Anne a little different than she was when she last saw Lady Russell, which is not a bad thing. I don't think Lady Russell resents it or anything.

Molly: No.

Becca: It does mean that the relationships that Anne has with the people from her life that she's had fairly consistent through the last eight years of her life-

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: -are a little different than they used to be in a good way, I think.

Molly: I agree.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: So, I think it drives home how different Anne is now than she was in Chapter 1 of this book in a great way. I think when we find Anne, we were crying for her. We were so sad for her. Now, she has regained a little bit of her power, a little bit of her confidence, a little bit of self-assuredness.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: It works for her.

Molly: Totally.

Becca: Yeah. And then, the trip to Bath, it's been [01:21:00] dreaded from the beginning of the book, and now it's here.

Molly: Now it's here.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Exciting.

Becca: All right. "What do we make of Wentworth's movements?" We have barely talked about him in these chapters, because he's barely in these chapters.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: All we know is that he was in Lyme, but letting Louisa be with her family that he dropped by Kellynch did not see Anne, but commented on Anne to his sister and left a note with Anne, then went back to Lyme, but then very shortly thereafter, removed to go visit his brother and his new wife, which he intended to do weeks before, but extended his trip at Uppercross to court.

"What do you make of these rumored movements of Captain Wentworth in these chapters?" They're baffling, right?

Molly: Yeah, I have no idea what to think. I'm glad he's finally visiting his brother, because that has been put off for long enough. What was most baffling to me was why he stayed in Lyme, if he wasn't seeing Louisa. [01:22:00] I guess it's good to be nearby, so he can get updates and stuff, but he was there and then he was bopping around.

I don't know, I wouldn't have expected him to call on Anne when he came back to Kellynch,

that would have been too much, I think. And also, he's probably avoiding Lady Russell, because he hates her. So, there's that.

And then going to visit his brother for 7 to 10 days, like where is he going to end up? Not back at Lyme, because presumably, Louisa will be coming home soon. So, is he going to come to Kellynch?

Becca: Or, is he going to go to Uppercross?

Molly: Or, is he going to go to Uppercross, or is he going to go to London or what is he going to do? I don't know. I really don't know what to make of any of it. It's just so weird.

Becca: It is a very weird series of events, particularly given where he was when we last saw him. It is unreadable.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: So, just [01:23:00] let's keep in mind. We'll call it a Wentworth watch.

Molly: Yes, we're on Wentworth watch. I feel like what's happening, and I don't think there's anything for him to be doing right now, but it feels like when Darcy disappears in *Pride and Prejudice* and you're like, "Where is he?" and he's paying off Wickham to marry Lydia, and you just like, "You don't know where he is," and then you find out about it later, I feel like something's going on.

Becca: Something is afoot.

Molly: Something is afoot.

Becca: All right. "How does it feel to reacquaint ourselves with Sir Walter and Elizabeth in this later part of the book?" Because I don't know about you, but when they first were introduced in the book, I was assuming they'd be there the entire time, but they're not there for the first half, basically. They're here now.

Molly: Yes. It is a little satisfying to see them so unchanged and to see them being like, "Look at our adorable little house that we've got. We're big fish in a small town and everyone loves us in this tiny place." To see them trying so hard to stay [01:24:00] high status when they've lost so much status, it's satisfying because then Anne comes back and she's like, "You guys have not changed at all, and I have had growth." So, I like that. It's fun.

Becca: It's fabulous. I also think that it is interesting that they have no character development, but they're just in a completely different environment, so they're the same people interacting off of different things.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Makes for an interesting change, but lack of change.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: We left part one on a bunch of deeply unanswered questions and a lot of cliffhangers, none of which have been resolved. How do you think that's going to resolve in part two? Do you think it'll resolve in part two? We are in a new setting, clearly, starting some new part of the story.

Molly: Right. I think that we're only going to hear about Louisa, for a while. I don't think that we're going to end up back at Uppercross anytime soon. So, I don't know how we will find out how she's faring or what's going [01:25:00] on with her in Wentworth. I don't know if we'll

get it through letters or if we'll find out later on if something's happening, but that feels like something that we're going to just hear about through the grapevine.

What else was left unresolved? We had Louisa and Wentworth. We had Louisa's health. Henrietta and-

Becca: Charles Hayter, the hater.

Molly: Charles Hayter. Yeah. They seem to be doing great. I love them.

Becca: Shipping.

Molly: Yeah. But the main question marks were surrounding Wentworth and Louisa, I think.

Becca: I would also say Wentworth and Anne.

Molly: And Anne.

Becca: [laughs] Potentially.

Molly: Potentially. Yeah. Is he going to end up in Bath? Like, why would he go to Bath? I don't know. Will Anne have to travel somewhere?

Becca: Yeah. Will Anne be in Bath for the rest of the story?

Molly: I don't think so. She said many months. But is their plan ever to go back to Kellynch Hall? Are they renting indefinitely?

Becca: They are renting indefinitely, but doesn't mean that Anne will not return to that portion of the world. [01:26:00] She is, in fact, always welcome with Lady Russell.

Molly: Right. And always welcome with the Crofts.

Becca: Yes. And always welcome with Mary.

Molly: Yes. So, I don't know. It's a good question. I honestly like any prediction that I make will just be out of my butt. [giggles]

Becca: Well, barring anything coming out of Molly's butt, let's go to our last question. I didn't write it down fully in our study questions, but I'm just going to say it like this. Mr. Elliot.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: "Who the fuck is he courting, and why? Who does he like?"

Molly: Who does he like? Okay, here's the thing.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I think that his intention with coming back to Bath after finding out that they're there is that he wanted to court Elizabeth. Why? I don't know. But I think that's his intention. The minute Anne shows up and he's like, "Oh, wait." I think he's shifting gears, because he liked Anne immediately as we know-

Becca: Uppy-downey

Molly: -from the uppy-downey. He had no idea that she was an [01:27:00] Elliot. The fact

that she's an Elliot and he wants to marry into the Elliott family to keep whatever the bloodline or whatever is like--

Becca: Whatever cousin marry is for.

Molly: Yes. Prime real estate for him. He's like, "Oh, my God, how lucky am I that I can shift gears from Elizabeth, who also is 29?" No offense to 29-year-olds, myself included.

Becca: [chuckles] At this point, it would be splitting hairs, because they're both older.

Molly: They're both old.

Becca: But I think it is clear from both of them. They're both hot, but one of them clearly has the manners.

Molly: Yeah, Elizabeth's personality sucks.

Becca: Exactly. And Anne's is awesome.

Molly: He would learn that soon enough. Like, he doesn't know Anne or anything, but he's been calling on Elizabeth for two weeks now, and has probably started to get a sense of the fact that she's not the best person. I just like, "I don't think that he likes her." He might have liked her at one time when he didn't know her very well. **[01:28:00]** Like Anne said, if he's going to court her, he better not get to know her.

When he sees Anne who literally has stopped him in his tracks multiple times, once by running headlong into him by mistake, he's like, "This is the best day of my life." So, I'm into it.

Becca: Oh, my God. Guys, I wish you could see the look on her face. I know it's an audio medium, but there's a gleam in her eyes right now.

Molly: I love it.

Becca: Funniest quote?

Molly: Okay. "It was the same, the very same man, with no difference but of dress." Anne drew a little back, while the others received his compliments, and her sister his apologies for calling at so unusual an hour." Oh, my God, also, it's 10:00 PM. I just realized, why is he calling on them at 10:00 PM?

Becca: Because he's passing through the neighborhood.

Molly: What a weirdo. I love him. Okay. Sorry. Back to the funniest quote. "But he could not be so near without wishing-- Oh, wait, sorry, I started way too early.

Becca: I know what you're going for it, and you can go a little farther down.

Molly: All right. I'm going a little farther down, **[01:29:00]** but still, the fact stands that he called on them at 10:00 PM.

Becca: Unhinged.

Molly: Unhinged. We're going back forward. Okay. "Which was all as politely done, and as politely taken, as possible, but her part must follow then. Sir Walter talked of his youngest daughter; "Mr. Elliot must give him leave to present him to his youngest daughter," there was no occasion for remembering Mary."

Becca: [chuckles] Poor Mary. RIP.

Molly: Excellent.

Becca: Oh. All right. Questions moving forward.

Molly: I feel like I've had nothing but questions as we've been wrapping up this chapter like, Will we be in Bath for the foreseeable future? Will we see Wentworth again? Why will we see Wentworth again? Will Wentworth and Louisa be together? Will Wentworth continue to court-- Will he start to court Anne again? Will he realize that Mr. Elliot likes Anne and feel certain that Mr. Elliot likes Anne? Is Benwick going to ever come visit? Will there be a love quadrangle?

Becca: At this point in time, it's everyone wants to bang Anne.

Molly: Everyone [01:30:00] does. Anne's so hot.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Yeah. So, what's going on there? And then, also still questions about Mrs. Clay and Sir Walter, and also Elizabeth and Mr. Elliot. All of the questions.

Becca: Who wins the chapters?

Molly: Mr. Elliot.

Becca: Yeah. Coming back in for the win.

Molly: [giggles]

Becca: All right. Listeners, that concludes this episode of Pod and Prejudice. For next time, you're going to read the next two chapters, Charters 16 and 17. Or, if you're in a volumed book, Chapters 4 and 5 of Volume II. Molly, anything else to say?

Molly: I'm just really excited to keep reading.

Becca: Yeah, you look excited. You're ready for everyone who wants to bang Anne.

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: So, until next time, listeners, stay properly.

Molly: And don't forget about one of your daughters.

Becca: Try to keep track of all three daughters.

Molly: Yeah, just keep track of them.

[music]

Molly: Pod and Prejudice is edited by Molly Burdick and audio produced by Graham Cook. Our show art is designed by Torrance Browne. Our show is transcribed by SpeechDocs [01:31:00] Podcast Transcription. For transcripts and to learn more about our team, check out our website at podandprejudice.com. To keep up with the show, you can follow us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, [@podandprejudice](https://www.instagram.com/podandprejudice). If you love what you hear, check out our Patreon at [patreon.com/podandprejudice](https://www.patreon.com/podandprejudice) to see how you can support us or just drop us a rating and a review wherever you listen to podcasts. Thanks for listening.

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