

Molly: Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we want to thank our newest patrons, Emily and Henrika. Welcome to the team. Plus, a huge shoutout to our patron, Spring, who upgraded their pledge.

As always, if you're interested in hearing Becca's first thoughts on *Persuasion*, hanging out with us on Discord or submitting your very own study questions, check out our Patreon at patreon.com/podandprejudice. And now, enjoy this week's episode covering Volume II, Chapter 8 of *Persuasion*.

[Pod 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--

Becca and Molly: *Persuasion*.

Becca: Is that a little longer for the extra spices chapter?

Molly: Yeah, I'm just so excited to talk about it.

Becca: Listeners, if you're new here, I, Becca, have read many Jane Austen novels through 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* [00:01:00] 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, Chapter 8. Or, if your book is not volumned, Chapter 20.

Becca: Molly was not ready for any level of spice in this category.

Molly: I was not. I texted Becca and I was like, "Why am I obsessed with Mr. Elliot?" He's so hot. I can't.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: I feel like I'm not supposed to like him as much as I do. I don't know, I feel like I'm not necessarily rooting for Wentworth in the same way that I'm rooting for Mr. Elliot at this point, and I feel like that's wrong.

Becca: Well, the thing about Wentworth right now is that Wentworth has some ground to make up, because he did spend the first half of the book ignoring Anne.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And clearly, there has been a shift in Wentworth in this chapter and the chapter before that we are clocking, but it doesn't mean that we've forgotten how he treated Anne before.

Molly: [00:02:00] Right. I don't know, it's great that he's changing his tune a little bit. And it

does make me think that there were reasons for how-- obviously, there were reasons for how he was treating her before. But I'm rooting for him, because I know that Anne's excited about it. And so, that's exciting to have him talking to her again. However, I can't disregard the fact that there's a very handsome man being very flirtatious and clearly interested in her. There are some moments where I'm like, "Well, he has no idea."

Becca: Blatantly making a confession of love, I think is really more how it goes in this chapter.

Molly: Yeah. Yeah.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I lost it. I lost my shit. So, I guess we should talk about it.

Becca: Yeah, we probably should. We got to get to that concert.

Molly: Yeah. So, let's tell the listeners where we left off.

Becca: Of course. So, last few chapters, we were essentially dealing with a twist, an M. Night Shyamalan, Jane Austen twist. [00:03:00] And Louisa and Captain Benwick are now engaged, which means Wentworth is a free man, which is something that Anne did not see coming. Not only is Wentworth a free man, he is a free man in Bath, which is where Anne Elliott is.

We actually don't even have a good idea of why Wentworth is in Bath to begin with now. So, that continues to be a little bit of a mystery. And beyond that, he and Anne ran into each other, and we saw a shift in dynamic since the last time they saw each other, which was the day of the Cobb in Lyme. Is that a good sum of where we're at?

Molly: It is. It's a good point. I hadn't thought about, like, why is he there?

Becca: Why is Wentworth in Bath?

Molly: Mm.

Becca: Hmm.

Molly: Before we get into it, a couple comments from our episode two episodes ago, where we were talking about Wentworth's [00:04:00] proposal eight years ago and saying that Sir Walter said no. A couple people corrected us in that he didn't say no. It was more that--

Becca: He said yes, but I'll never speak to you again. It's like an, I guess.

Molly: Yeah. I think there is some disagreement on this point. But I got a pretty detailed message in our email about it that I'll just read, because I think it's pretty well explained. This is from Diana.

Becca: Okay.

Molly: "First things first, it's important to note that Anne did not, in fact, reject Wentworth's marriage proposal, and Sir Walter did not withhold his consent. There also seems to be a little confusion over the sequence of events, so I wanted to clarify.

Wentworth did not ask permission before proposing marriage. He proposed and Anne accepted. And then, Sir Walter was asked for consent, which was, in fact, required. Hence, why couples eloping went to Gretna Green in Scotland where paternal consent wasn't required.

We are explicitly told that Sir Walter did not refuse consent. And then a quote, [00:05:00] “Sir Walter, on being applied to without actually withholding his consent or saying it should never be, gave all the negative of great astonishment, great coldness, great silence and a professed resolution of doing nothing for his daughter, i.e., he wouldn't help with any income for them to live on.”

Furthermore, Anne did not, and I cannot emphasize this enough, did not end their engagement because of the disapproval of her father or her sister, or even because of the disapproval approval of Lady Russell. Anne ended their engagement, because she had been pushed into believing that being shackled to her would have been bad for Wentworth, “had she not imagined herself consulting his good even more than her own, she could hardly have given him up.”

This belief of being prudent and self-denying principle for his advantage was her chief consolation. The cruelty and disapproval of Sir Walter and Elizabeth was painful, but not the reason for breaking off the engagement.” So, I thought that was interesting, because it was like, she said yes, but then was convinced that this would be bad for him. I think it's a combination.

Becca: Yeah. I think it's not as [00:06:00] black and white is that obviously the title of the book is *Persuasion*. I'm not disagreeing with the email. I think the email is correct. But the reason it would be bad for him is because of the reactions of her family and Lady Russell.

Molly: Right. Because if they're not going to give her anything.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: First of all, financially, it would be bad.

Becca: Societally, it would be bad.

Molly: Societally, they would be shunned.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: And to go back to something I talked about last episode, she is living within the constraints of the society that she was born into. And so, to be shunned socially and financially from her family, like all for love, to be fair to Anne would fucking suck.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: So, that's all to say, listeners, that we totally hear you and thank you for correcting us, because a couple people clarified that it wasn't that her father said no or that like he asked permission and was denied it. It was that he asked approval and was like, [00:07:00] “Nah.” And Anne was like, “Actually, hmm, I don't think we can do this,” for a multitude of reasons.

Becca: Yeah. The sequence of events is like the details where I was a little fuzzy-

Molly: Totally.

Becca: -I think, but the crux of it is the same, which is Anne said no, ultimately, because she was persuaded, hmm,-

Molly: Mm.

Becca: -by her family and Lady Russell, particularly Lady Russell, but mostly because there would have been economic consequences to this match for both of them.

Molly: And also, thank you all for being gracious with us and helping us along with our conversation of this book, because this is the first book that we're both reading for the first time. For me, I think it's fun, because we're getting to dissect it together, and it's just like a different dynamic, which I think is really fun and interesting.

Becca: Yes. I'm definitely stupid around this one. [laughs]

Molly: You're not stupid.

Becca: No, no, no. I'm-

Molly: It's just like you're bring in a different dynamic **[00:08:00]** than normally.

Becca: -kidding.

Molly: I know you're kidding, but I think that it's definitely a different thing to get to figure it out together. I don't know, I like it. So, shall we dive in?

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Okay. So, we are headed to this concert. Sir Walter, Anne, and Elizabeth and Mrs. Clay, of course, arrive first in their party. They sit down in The Octagon Room, which is like the waiting room of the concert, to wait for the Dalrymples.

Becca: The Dowager Viscountess Lady Dalrymple and Baby Dalrymple?

Molly: Yes, exactly. This is like so off the rails, but I'm picturing the Opera in *Star Wars* Episode 3 for no reason.

Becca: Oh, yeah. You and I have a very different picture of what's happening here.

Molly: [laughs] Well, I can't tell from the description how large an event this is.

Becca: I'm thinking of this as like a small concert venue/large ballroom turned into a concert venue.

Molly: Cool, cool, cool. [giggles]

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Got it. All right. So, great. Not **[00:09:00]** what I was picturing, but I'm going to continue to think about it.

Becca: Like, the Regency Era coffeehouse vibes.

Molly: Sure. Yeah. The other thing that I picture is a miniature version of the Bolshoi or something like that, where it's like-- If the Bolshoi wasn't seven tiers high, but was rather three tiers high. I'm picturing like a ballet, but it doesn't really matter. I'm sure it will matter, because she needs to be able to find him in a crowd, so I think you're probably more correct than I am.

Becca: It's difficult to say, but I don't think it's a huge crowd of people.

Molly: Yeah, it's probably like-- The town is gathering for concert.

Becca: The High Society of Bath.

Molly: Yeah. So, as soon as they settle themselves in The Octagon Room, Wentworth walks in by himself. Weird. Anne immediately blurts out, "How do you do?" [giggles] He had been planning on just walking past her with a nod, but he can't ignore her when being directly applied to, so he goes to talk to her.

Becca: I think the [00:10:00] book says that they're both early.

Molly: Yeah. They're the first people there.

Becca: So, it's very conspicuous in a couple ways. One, if he didn't talk to her, it'd be a little conspicuous, but also, them talking would be conspicuous in front of Elizabeth and Sir Walter.

Molly: Well, it would be conspicuous either way. Yeah.

Becca: Yeah. That's the awkwardness of the situation.

Molly: And he's walking just close enough to her that she's like "Meh," and he's like, "Ah." Was that accurate?

Becca: Yup.

Molly: Yeah. So, they start talking. Mr. Elliot and Elizabeth are behind her, so she can't see them, but she can hear them whispering. And she's like, "What are they doing?" And then, Wentworth does this little bow, which makes her think that her father acknowledged him in some way, and she sees out of the corner of her eye Elizabeth giving a little curtsy and she's like, "Oh, they're showing their respect," which she's impressed by, even though it's a little too late.

And then, their conversation, they talk about the basic stuff like the [00:11:00] concert, and Bath, and the weather and blah, blah, blah. And it starts to lag a little bit. She's expecting him to leave at any minute, but he seems in no hurry to leave her.

Becca: Hmm.

Molly: Hmm. He says with a little smile and a little glow that he hasn't seen her since Lyme, and he hopes that she didn't suffer too much from the shock of what happened there, especially since she held it together at the time. And she's like, "No, I'm fine." He comments on how terrible the whole thing was. But that it had some consequences that weren't so terrible.

Becca: And what would those consequences be?

Molly: Louisa and Benwick.

Becca: Oh, that's a good result to Captain Wentworth?

Molly: Mm.

Becca: Hmm.

Molly: Hmm. And Anne says, "Yeah, I hope that they'll be happy. They both have good principles and good tempers." And he says, "There ends the resemblance. They're total opposites." But he does wish them happy, and he thinks they will be, since they [00:12:00] face no opposition at home and the Musgroves just want their daughter to be happy. And then, he cuts himself off, because perhaps, he realizes he's describing the absolute opposite of what happened between him and Anne.

Becca: Yeah, pretty much.

Molly: And Anne's blushing and he's like [clears throat]

Becca: Yup. Whoops. And we're also right in the vicinity of that family that didn't want you to be happy.

Molly: Yeah. And it's not like they can't hear him.

Becca: Oh, no.

Molly: No.

Becca: This is early to the party.

Molly: Yes. He says then that he thinks there is a great disparity between Louisa and Benwick. She is a sweet and amiable girl, but he is a clever reading man. And Wentworth is surprised that he's going for her. I wasn't sure if this was like unfair to Louisa at all, like is he saying that she's not as smart as him?

Becca: Kind of. Yeah. It's not ideal, but it might have some-- There's like a kernel of truth to the opposites attract thing of this whole thing, which is that they are very different people.
[00:13:00]

Molly: They are very different people. Also, on Anne's side, for her hearing him say that Louisa is not on his level, she's like, "So, did you never like her?"

Becca: It's a good question, isn't it?

Molly: It is. And I'm still very lost on what happened there.

Becca: Yeah. I think we all are.

Molly: Yeah. He says he would feel differently if Benwick had fallen for Louisa, because he thought she preferred him. But Wentworth has no reason to think that's what happened. In fact, it seems like kind of random that all of a sudden Benwick is into her. I remembered what my thought was and I wrote it down this time.

Becca: Okay. Good.

Molly: Wentworth previously had invited Benwick to go away with him for a couple weeks when they were in Lyme. This was mentioned in passing. We [00:14:00] didn't find out whether it happened or not, but he had invited him to go away. And Wentworth had gone, we learned, from Lyme to Plymouth and then to visit his brother.

Did Benwick go with him, and did Wentworth reveal that he wasn't with Louisa or wasn't courting her and did something happen there? I have to ask. But part of me is like, "Well, he wouldn't lie to Anne's face and say, 'But I have no reason to think that he thought that Louisa preferred him.'" One, because Louisa didn't seem to prefer him, but two, is he saying he didn't interfere. I don't know if he interfered.

Becca: Yeah. What he's saying to Anne here would evince surprise at the match.

Molly: Right.

Becca: Pleasant surprise, but surprise nonetheless. But we don't know what happened.

Molly: Yeah. So, we don't know if Benwick went away [00:15:00] with Wentworth, but

there's a gap in our knowledge of what happened since Anne leaving Lyme.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I will say that, again, I may have been spoiled by the footnotes, because there was a footnote around this section and I had flipped to it and it said something about Wentworth believe-- It was like something-- I don't know, because I saw it and I slammed the book shut and I wrote, "I fucking hate these fucking footnotes," because I thought it said something about Wentworth trying to steer this match, but I closed it before I could like really to read it and read into it. But I was already suspecting that Wentworth might have tried to steer this match.

So, this is still my own individual thought, if that's what it said. I just want to like put that out there and say that I am no longer reading the footnotes. I'll google words that I don't know, because I don't want to be spoiled. Anyway, I [00:16:00] just had to be honest about that.

Becca: Thank you for your honesty. Thank you for your candor.

Molly: Thank you so much, and you're welcome.

Becca: And I will confirm and deny nothing. [chuckles]

Molly: Great. [giggles] Okay. So, then-- [giggles] Sorry, this next part like really got me. I'm just going to read it. So, Wentworth says, "A man like him, in his situation! with a heart pierced, wounded, almost broken! Fanny Harville was a very superior creature, and his attachment to her was indeed attachment. A man does not recover from such a devotion of the heart to such a woman. He ought not, he does not." We're not talking about Benwick here, are we?

Becca: Well, let's all take a deep breath in and a deep breath out,-

Molly: [breath in and breath out]

Becca: -because that is a level of candor coming through that may not be the most expected at this moment considering Wentworth's point up into this concert in the book. [00:17:00] Uh, God. Hang on, let me gather my thoughts on this.

Molly: It's flustering.

Becca: The light idea of recovery from a broken heart is so central to this book in so many different characters. And we, for the first time, are hearing from Wentworth what he thinks on this. Can someone recover from a broken heart? Can someone recover from a broken heart like this?

Molly: Are you asking me?

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I think so.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I think that Wentworth and Anne are both very dramatic people [giggles] that could not recover from a broken heart. But my personal philosophy on life is a little different than theirs.

Becca: I'd agree. I do think there is also something very that-- Jane Austen is picking up on here, which is that it is much more difficult to recover from a broken heart, if there is an

ounce of hope.

Molly: Yes. [00:18:00] And to be fair, I do not-- I've made this very clear, do not think that Wentworth and Benwick situations are anything alike. They're alike in some ways, but Fanny Harville once again died, and Anne is still alive.

Becca: Yeah. The book does compare the loss of love through death, with the loss of love through loss, just more generally, which is a very different thing. But Benwick gets the benefit of finality, which is hard to say in terms of being, brokenhearted because the love of his life died. I don't want to devalue the pain of that, the anguish of that. But Wentworth is haunted by his ex.

Molly: Wentworth has hope and that's something-- Wentworth and Anne both still have the hope of that person still being there. So, for Benwick, [00:19:00] he can still always carry the love that he has for Fanny Harville in his heart, and find ways to love another person and hold those things. Benwick has so much love in his heart. We've talked about this in the last episode, like he just needs a place to put it. It's okay to love Fanny Harville and to love a new person at the same time.

Becca: Louisa Musgrove.

Molly: Louisa Musgrove.

Becca: Yeah. Jane Austen might feel differently than we do about this. It's really interesting to discern how she feels about love after loss in this book. It's such a huge portion of the book.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: It makes for really interesting reading. We talked about this a little bit last week with the widowers, because up until this point, we've been comparing Benwick to Anne. And Anne's situation is quite different, because she's the one who made the choice to leave. And she's a woman. When you're a woman, you only have so [00:20:00] many opportunities past a certain age to find someone.

And now, we're comparing to Wentworth. Wentworth had a lot less control over his situation back then. We've seen so little from Wentworth, except contempt on this so far. So, it's really interesting to get a picture. He's opening a window into his vulnerability on this issue for the first time in the book.

Molly: Yeah. It is important, I think, to see this side of him, because it shows that he was affected by it beyond just being angry. Obviously, he was. He chose anger.

Becca: Yeah. That's a really important point and we're going to get into it in the study questions. But what changes about him that he's not leading with his anger anymore.

Molly: You think something happened? You know, if something happened? [giggles]

Becca: I've read this book. [chuckles]

Molly: Right. I wonder what happened that [00:21:00] caused him to change his tune talking to Anne.

Becca: Yeah, talking to Anne. But also, not even just change his tune, change his outlook on the situation.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: If not inwardly, then outwardly, for sure.

Molly: Something that we know is he went to go visit his brother. I'll leave it there for now, because we'll get into his brother later. So, he doesn't say anymore. He's talking about like not being able to recover from lost love, but he's, one, aware that his friend, Benwick, did recover, seemingly, and two, because of, "other reasons." [giggles]

Anne is panicking. She's like, "Oh, my God, oh, my God, oh, my God." She wants to keep talking, but she doesn't know how to go on. So, she says, "Okay. Well, how long were you at Lyme?" He says he was there about two weeks. He had to stay until he knew Louisa was going to be okay, because he fully blames himself for what happened. Guilt.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: He talks about enjoying walking around and riding around Lyme. And Anne says, "I would love to [00:22:00] see Lyme again." He's surprised, because he would think that she only had negative memories of the place, which is interesting, because he also had negative memories of the place, but still enjoyed the beauty of it, but he's like, "I'm surprised you--"

Becca: Well, I think Wentworth's been there a lot.

Molly: Yeah, you're right. He knows it well. I forgot.

Becca: Yeah. Anne was there for like a day--

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -[chuckles] and someone nearly died.

Molly: Yes. But Anne points out that it was really only the last two hours that were stressful and everything else about it. She was like, "This is a beautiful place and the negative doesn't always erase the positive. When pain is over, the remembrance of it often becomes a pleasure." Again, we're not only talking about Lyme, huh?

Becca: Yeah. It does not seem like we are just talking about Lyme here.

Molly: Yeah. There's a lot of-- Are you thinking what I'm thinking and being like, "Are you thinking what I'm thinking?"

Becca: They are having such a charged conversation here.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: They are dancing around what used to [00:23:00] be between them by talking about present circumstances that are analogous. But they're having for the first time in this book, kind of a real conversation.

Molly: Yes. I will say that I read the chapter twice. The first time I didn't catch on, and the second time, I was like, "Oh." Like, going through and it hit so much harder on a second read. Or, even after reading one paragraph, I'd be like, "Hang on, I need to go back and read that again, because I think something else is going on here."

Becca: Yeah. I think it's really important to remember this. We are 20 chapters into this book, and Anne and Wentworth have basically not conversed--

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -the entire book.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And the whole book has been about the love between these two people and they've barely talked.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: What we have is this ghost of their former love affairs, and here they are finally opening up together about it.

Molly: [00:24:00] Yeah.

Becca: Hmm.

Molly: Hmm. Anne says, "Well, I travel so little that any new place would be of interest to me, but Lyme is so beautiful. And altogether," and she blushes here, "Her memories of it are pleasant." We have to remember that when she was in Lyme, she was like, "Wentworth is here, and we're okay."

Becca: Yes. And remember, this is when we realized Anne was hot again.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: And she got uppy-downied.

Molly: She got uppy-downied by one Mr. Elliot. Speaking of whom, the Dalrymples enter at this point.

Becca: The Dowager Viscountess Lady Dalrymple--

Molly: La-la-la.

Becca: Yeah. We could do it together. One, two, three.

Becca and Molly: The Dowager Viscountess Lady Dalrymple and Baby Dalrymple.

Molly: [giggles] The delay makes it, so that we were going to say it fast, and then we ended up saying it slow.

Becca: Yeah. [laughs]

Molly: So, they enter, escorted by Mr. Elliot and Colonel Wallis, and Anne is then forced to greet them. [00:25:00] She's got this new lightness in her heart.

Becca: Oh. Do you know that feeling when you have a really good conversation with your crush that moves the plot forward like in life?

Molly: [laughs] I love the idea of just like moving the plot forward in your life.

Becca: So, Anne had a conversation with Wentworth that moved the plot forward.

Molly: It's incredible.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: She's in such a good mood. She's learned more of his feelings about Louisa, more of all his feelings in the last 10 minutes than she dared to think of, because she's just falling

apart. She's in such a good mood that she is able to be courteous and kind to all and to pity everyone as being less happy than herself. And in my head, I just have, "I feel pity. Oh, so pity," in my head.

Becca: Yeah. Anne's just feeling herself in this moment. She's like, "Wentworth showed me attention. Wentworth implied he remembers about our love affair."

Molly: Yeah. She's just singing to herself and she's glowing. And then, she turns back to try to talk to him again, and he's gone. But she feels certain that [00:26:00] he will look for her again in the course of the evening. She needs a minute to pull herself together anyway, because she is, again, falling apart. [giggles]

Becca: I love when Anne-- All she needs is just like one really charged conversation with Captain Wentworth. And she's like, "Hang on, I need to redo."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Like, "I need to reset."

Molly: Yes.

Becca: "I can't handle it."

Molly: She's a mess, and I love her.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Then, Lady Russell arrives. And now, their whole party is assembled. So, they head into the concert rooms. They are trying to draw, not Anne, but everyone else, trying to draw as many eyes and excite as many whispers as possible. They want to be popular.

Anne and Elizabeth are both as happy as they could possibly be as they enter Elizabeth, because she is arm in arm with Baby Dalrymple, walking behind the Viscountess. Dowager Viscountess Lady Dalrymple, and she has everything she could ever want within her reach. But it would be an insult to the nature of Anne's felicity to draw any comparison to her sister's. Her sister's reasons for happiness are selfish in vain, while Anne's [00:27:00] is due to generous attachment.

Becca: So, basically, Elizabeth is like, "I love me." And Anne is like, "I love Wentworth."

Molly: Exactly. She doesn't care about the gorgeousness of the room. Her happiness comes from within. She starts thinking over her conversation with Wentworth. She is convinced from the way he spoke of Louisa Musgrove's inferiority, his surprise at Benwick's moving on from a first strong attachment. The way he was looking at her all shy like that his heart was returning to her at last, and she is certain that he loves her.

Becca: Atta girl, Anne.

Molly: Yeah. But to me, it all seems too good to be true-

Becca: Okay.

Molly: -at this point, and we'll see why. She is too caught up in her thoughts to look for him as she goes to her seat. When she does sit, she can't pick him out of the crowd. Her party is split between two contiguous benches, which means next to or together in sequence. And Anne is sitting next [00:28:00] to Mr. Elliot. Anne is in a great mood, and she is just ready to be entertained. She's very agreeable to every kind of person at this point. She's just happy.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: And she's never liked a concert better, at least in the first half.

Becca: And then, what happens?

Molly: Well, towards the end of the first act, she's explaining to Mr. Elliot what is happening in the song, because it's in Italian. And she says, "But I don't pretend to be an Italian expert." And he says, "Oh, yeah, like you're no expert. You just know how to translate it into perfect English." And she says, "Yeah, but I wouldn't want a real proficient to hear me." And he says, "You're too modest. You don't boast enough of your accomplishments to the world, but you're too accomplished to be modest." And she starts getting uncomfortable now. She's like, "Oh, for shame, for shame. This is too much flattery. Let's go back."

Becca: It's like "Oh, stop. No, that's fine."

Molly: She's like, "Come on, let's look at this concert though." And he, out of nowhere, but to him, not out of nowhere, says, "Well, I've had a longer acquaintance with your character than you're aware of." And she says, "You've only known about me since coming to Bath."

[00:29:00] And he says, "I've known you long before you came to Bath." He says, "He's heard her described by those who knew her intimately." In fact, he's known of her for many years. Now, my first thought is Wentworth, but how? I don't know why. I just figure that would be the thing that makes the most sense for the plot.

Anne is intrigued, obviously, and she starts questioning him, but he won't tell her. He says, "Maybe another time, but not now." All he'll say is, he had many years ago received such a description of Ms. Anne Elliot as had inspired him with the highest idea of her merit and excited the warmest curiosity to know her. And I'm like, "Does he know something?" Like, who does he know?"

Becca: Who does he know? Whomst?

Molly: Whomst? Anne's first thought is Mr. Wentworth, Captain Wentworth's brother. But my question is, why and how? Like, how would he know him? When would he know him and why? But that does make more sense than **[00:30:00]** Captain Wentworth, because Captain Wentworth saw him and didn't know him in Lyme.

Becca: And he was at sea.

Molly: Oh, and he was at sea. Yeah. But how and why? Oh, well, I guess Mr. Elliot was at Kellynch at some point when Anne was at school, and Mr. Wentworth might have been there too?

Becca: Well, we'll trace some of this in a minute, but for now, let's continue to flirt Mr. Elliot as we were doing. [chuckles]

Molly: Yes. So, okay. He says, "The name of Anne Elliott has long had an interesting sound to me. Very long has it possessed a charm over my fancy, and, if I dared, I would breathe my wishes that the name might never change." I absolutely lost my shit at this point, because I'm picturing him in a hushed tone. It's like, "And if I dared, I would breathe my wishes that the name might never change." And Anne-- Oh, my **[00:31:00]** God. Oh, he is smooth.

Becca: Yes. Very, very smooth. This is borderline a proposal.

Molly: This is a proposal.

Becca: Like, not exactly.

Molly: No. He's saying if I dared, and he's daring, he would breathe his wishes that her name could stay Anne Elliot forever, as in marry him.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: That's about as close to a proposal as you can get without getting down on one knee.

Becca: Exactly. It's very suggestive that this man has chosen this night to make his intentions clear to Anne Elliot.

Molly: And I'm here for it.

Becca: Is Anne here for it though?

Molly: Well, Anne immediately gets distracted after he says this. She hears him, but-- Honestly, at first, I'm not sure she even registers what he's saying, because she hears her father and Lady Dalrymple talking about Wentworth. And so, then, she looks and she sees him. He looks like he was just looking at her, but has looked away and he [00:32:00] doesn't look back at her. He specifically avoids looking at her. So, he was watching her. And then, as soon as she notices him, he looks away and she's distracted.

Becca: Well, Wentworth's feeling some way about Anne Elliot talking to such a handsome, uppy-downy man. And Anne Elliot is feeling some way about Captain Wentworth feeling some way about Anne Elliot flirting with some uppy-downy man. It's a lot of jealousy.

Molly: Jealousy. Yes. It is very clear what's happening here. So, the performance recommences, and she has to look forward again. By the time she looks back in Wentworth's direction, he is gone. So, now, she's stressed, because Elliot's profession of love has stressed her out and she wants him to go away. And I feel bad for him.

Becca: Oh, I know. But to be fair, dropping that during a concert when someone can't escape is a little bit of a [00:33:00] tough moment, because like what do you do-- You're about to go back into a concert. Like, what do you do if you're Anne? You have no capacity to talk this through at this moment.

Molly: No, but I think that he thought that she would be happy. Like, I think that he thought there was something going on here.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: So, I think that his thought was like that she might be like [gasps] And then, they could sit there holding hands or something.

Becca: And instead--

Molly: Instead, she's like [makes squirming noises] It's like wanting him to go away and wanting him to stop talking to her. And it's sad. Also, to her, who hadn't clocked him showing interest before, because she's an idiot.

Becca: She knew he had interest, but she didn't know he had intentions.

Molly: Yeah. Of course, he had intentions.

Becca: To be fair to Anne here, this is a bit of a plot twist for a couple reasons. One, if you're Anne and you're stupid, you think he's [00:34:00] courting Elizabeth.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Two, you think you're past your prime, and that no one's proposing to you.

Molly: But you're hot.

Becca: I know she's hot. But three, and this is really important, she thinks he's still in mourning. She thought she had time.

Molly: That is fair, but Benwick--

Becca: Yeah. Because Benwick has an open heart and had to love.

Molly: Yes. But Elliot, for all she knows, didn't even love his wife.

Becca: Yeah, but she doesn't know that.

Molly: But she thinks that.

Becca: But Elliot is more bound by like-

Molly: Society?

Becca: -trying to be proper than Benwick.

Molly: I guess. I guess. I can see why she would be surprised. But for me, mm, I love it. I eat it up.

Becca: Yeah. You're here. You're like, Team William Elliot.

Molly: I am. Honestly like--

Becca: Molly Burdick, Team William Elliot.

Molly: He's so cute. [Becca laughs] I love him. So, intermission happens. Everyone, but Anne gets up. **[00:35:00]** And Anne stays seated. She has the pleasure of getting rid of Mr. Elliott at this point. I do feel bad for him. I just want to say like, I understand that it was not an opportune time to profess your love, and it is a little bit like you trapped her.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: However, imagine professing your love, and then having her not say anything, and then having to through the rest of the concert until intermission and then-- Poor guy. Like, he's got to run away.

Becca: Well, he doesn't run away. He gets pulled away.

Molly: Yes. Well, he goes to get some tea.

Becca: Yeah. What you're forgetting is that Anne Elliot is queen of tact-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -and queen of politeness on the outside. So, a lot of this panic that's happening with her is happening internally.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: And the way I read this is that Elliot says something very confidently that's basically

a confession of love and an intent to marry. And then, Elizabeth's like, "Mr. Elliot, come sit by me."

Molly: Oh, right. [00:36:00] She and Baby Dalrymple pull him in to sit between them.

Becca: Yes, exactly. So, he's now sitting by The Dowager Viscountess Lady Dalrymple and Baby Dalrymple, and Elizabeth.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, he gets pulled away by politeness to go talk to somebody else.

Molly: Who thinks that he's courting her.

Becca: Exactly. And that gives Anne an out.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: And we'll get to it at the end of the chapter. But when he approaches Anne again, she does respond. So, for him, he said something risky and crazy, but he's smooth.

Molly: He's so smooth. Oh, my God.

Becca: He's confident, and he's a great match for her-

Molly: He is.

Becca: -for every reason. So, there's no reason to think at this moment in time he knows that he's being slighted.

Molly: That's true. All right. But in my mind, I still feel bad for him, because I know what Anne's thinking about him, and it makes me sad because he's so cute.

Becca: And to be clear, Molly is now Team Anne and Elliot.

Molly: Yes. [giggles]

Becca: [chuckles]

Molly: Anne thinks to herself that if Wentworth would give her the opportunity, she would talk to him, even though Lady Russell is right there. She can tell from [00:37:00] Lady Russell's face that she has spotted Captain Wentworth. But he doesn't come, and the intermission ends, and Anne's anxious and she's like, "I'm going to be thinking this whole time. I refuse to leave here without speaking to him just one more time and getting one more friendly look from him, because I'm going to ride that high for the rest of the night." But she doesn't get the opportunity at this point.

So, everyone sits back down. Anne moves to sit closer to the end of the bench, within reach of a passerby. And as the concert goes on and people shift or move or get up to leave, she scoots all the way to the end of the bench.

Becca: Which, by the way, what a move.

Molly: Iconic.

Becca: Just going to put myself in his line of vision.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Like, "Just going to be so conveniently placed that he'll have to say something to me."

Molly: And picturing this is so funny, because they're all on a bench, and she sits herself at the end of the party, and then every time someone gets up, she just wiggles her way down the line-

Becca: Yup.

Molly: -until finally she's at the end of the bench and there's an empty seat next to her,-
[00:38:00]

Becca: Yes.

Molly: -which obviously is very strategically placed. Finally, she spots him, and he sees her, and he looks very grave and she thinks something must be the matter.

Becca: I wonder what.

Molly: She's worried that maybe her father or Lady Russell gave him a look or something, because she still hasn't caught on. But he finds himself next to her and starts talking to her about the concert. He sounds more like he had an Uppercross, like a very reserved, grumpy. He talks about how he had expected better singing, and he won't be sorry when this concert is over.

And Anne is like, "Well, your feelings are valid, but I'm quite enjoying the concert. I think it's nice." His countenance starts to improve a little. He almost gives a smile. They keep talking, he keeps improving and he almost looks like he might take the seat next to her when Mr. Elliot slides into it and taps her on the shoulder and asks her to translate some more Italian.

Becca: And then, the *Curb Your Enthusiasm* music plays for Anne.

Molly: [giggles] [00:39:00] Yes. It says that she had never sacrificed to politeness with a more suffering spirit.

Becca: You know that feeling where you have to go do something and you're just like [makes squirming noises]?

Molly: Yeah. She's like, "At this moment, Mr. Elliot, really?" I don't know if he's aware of what is happening and what he's doing, but in my mind, he's just completely oblivious, and he's like, "Excuse me."

Becca: That's a good question though, because Anne is talking to a very handsome, distinguished captain.

Molly: Elliot doesn't know, to my knowledge, the history.

Becca: No.

Molly: Unless, of course, his friend, Mr. Wentworth, told him. But I don't think so.

Becca: We have no reason to believe at this point-

Molly: Right.

Becca: -that Mr. Elliot knows there is a history between Anne and Wentworth. What we do know is that Elliot sees Anne as pretty eligible.

Molly: Yes. And he's like, [chuckles] He says, "Wait, talk to me. Talk to me" [00:40:00]

Becca: Yeah. And we know Wentworth is hot.

Molly: So hot.

Becca: We know Wentworth is successful, and advantageous and wealthy.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, if he is showing interest in Anne, that is threatening to Mr. Elliot, who is rich and hot and distinguished. But Wentworth is legit competition for him.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, it's possible he doesn't know, because you could read this one of two ways. I don't think that Mr. Elliot lacks for confidence, and he knows he's a good match for Anne. So, you can read this either as he thinks Anne's really on his page and he's going to go up to her and be like, "All right, let's pick up where we left off." And Anne, out of politeness, will continue where she left off with him and he will read that the wrong way. Or, he sees her talking to Wentworth and says, "Ooh, I got to get back in there or my love is going to be stolen away by this dashing sailor." Competition.

Molly: The drama.

Becca: Boys competing, because Anne is. And [00:41:00] it cannot be stressed enough, very hot. [chuckles]

Molly: Hot. Yes. Oh, man, I love it. It's really getting spicy.

Becca: It's spicy.

Molly: When she turns back to Wentworth, she finds herself, and I "accosted by him." So, he's giving her this hurried farewell. He's like, "I got to get out of here right now." This is where I realized he was jealous, because I didn't realize the first time.

Becca: That was where you realized he was jealous?

Molly: Yes, I will admit that.

Becca: Molly.

Molly: Well, it's the first time I read it. Listen-- [giggles]

Becca: I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I apologize that. Like, he is so jealous.

Molly: Well, actually, let me see where I first wrote jealousy in my book, okay?

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Because I did write it down. No, it wasn't, in fact, at this moment. It says-- Yeah, I wrote. Okay. [giggles] "She finds herself accosted by Captain Wentworth, in a reserved yet hurried sort of farewell. "He must wish her good night, he was going, he should get home as fast as he could." "Is not this [00:42:00] song worth staying for?" said Anne, suddenly struck by an idea which made her yet more anxious to be encouraging." And I was like, "Oh, she's struck by the idea that he's jealous of Elliot tapping her on the shoulder and talking to him."

I didn't realize what he was staring at her before until going back and reading it a second time. So, I didn't know that he had witnessed that yet, and then I saw it the second time. So, this is where I realized the first time that he is jealous. And I also love that when she says, "If this song isn't worth staying for-- It's like, "Is this not worth staying for the music?" But also, "Am I not worth staying for?" Because we got this multi-layer conversation going on.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: And he says, "No, there is nothing worth my staying for."

Becca: And then, he runs out in tears.

Molly: Yes. Oh.

Becca: Drama.

Molly: Jealousy. But how can she get the truth to him? How can she make him know her true sentiments? It is misery to think of Mr. Elliot's attentions. Their evil is incalculable. But here's my question. One, I feel bad for him, because [00:43:00] she's thinking of his intent. I've said this already. His intentions make her so mad. But two, my big question is how can she get her real feelings to Mr. Wentworth, Captain Wentworth. Would she marry him now, all things considered?

Becca: What do you think?

Molly: I mean, yes, I do think. But when did that shift for her?

Becca: Is there a point in this book where you do not think Anne Elliot would have married Captain Wentworth?

Molly: Eight years ago.

Becca: Eight years ago.

Molly: I know a lot can change in eight years, but I'm just wondering, like, her family hasn't changed their tune on him.

Becca: Well, let's actually talk about that at the end of the chapter, because we don't know that that's true, but the economic problem is gone, because Wentworth is rich now.

Molly: Right. That's true. That's true.

Becca: It's like, if [00:44:00] you fell in love with a philosophy major in college and said, I don't know.

Molly: You need a real job.

Becca: He's not going to make a lot of money, and I need stability and security in my life. And then, eight years later he was a CEO of a massive corporation putting aside whether or not you want a date CEO of massive corporation. If you're just focused on the money aspect, then that security and stability you're looking for is certainly there.

Part of the problem with Anne is that she's been following Captain Wentworth's incredibly successful career over the course of eight years. Everything he said he was going to do that she believed he might be able to do, he did it. He has gotten to the top, being in the navy.

Molly: But would he propose again?

Becca: That's the question. Anne regrets everything she did eight years ago, because in hindsight, you can see how successful he's been. When he was confidently talking about being able to provide for her, he was correct. But that was a [00:45:00] gamble. It's not a gamble anymore.

Molly: I know.

Becca: Anne had to watch, and look and see for eight years this guy just thrive. So, now, he's thrived and he's even more handsome than he was when they first fell in love, and he's rich and he's distinguished and as Mary has said, "He's an incredible match." If you want to see the difference between him as a match eight years ago and him as a match now, think about Mary as it comes to Charles Hayter versus Captain Wentworth as matches for her sisters in law.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Like, he's an incredibly secure match now.

Molly: Yeah. But it's frustrating, because I know that, and I know that Anne knows that and I know that he knows that. But if I were him, to be honest, I would out of pettiness alone, not want to marry Anne Elliot.

Becca: Doesn't that tell you a little bit about how Captain Wentworth entered this book?

Molly: Yes. So, what changed?

Becca: That's the question.

Molly: If anything.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: [00:46:00] Yeah.

Becca: Because the contempt you're talking about is contempt that came through for most of this book. Now, there's a shift. We don't know what caused it, but there's never been a question of whether or not Anne would be in. Like, that's where she lives, that we've been with her internal life, this entire time.

Molly: Right. But she still said no eight years ago.

Becca: Yes, she did.

Molly: I know she regrets it. I know. But for him, she said no eight years ago.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: So, in getting the truth to him now, that has to be the whole truth. It has to be, "I've been in love with you for eight years, and I always have regretted my decision and I always wanted to--" It has to be the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Becca: Yup. We'll have to see.

Molly: Yes. Yes. Anyway, that's the end of the chapter.

Becca: Which brings us to Patreon study questions. Listeners, if you want to ask us questions on the air, what you can do is become a member of our Patreon at the [00:47:00] \$15 tier, and then Molly will post a Google Doc, and you can submit questions in that Google

Doc and we will answer them in the episode recording.

So, the first question is from Avi. I think it was meant to address last week's episode, but we'll address it here anyway. "In this chapter, Wentworth offers Anne his umbrella. Do you think this is something he would have done earlier in the book? What does that signify about Wentworth and his own journey?"

Molly: This is a very good segue from what we were just talking about, because the offering of the umbrella in the last episode was very exciting from our perspective, and was a sign that he was feeling more positively toward Anne and caring about her more than he had been.

Becca: I think that Wentworth would have always offered Anne, the umbrella.

Molly: [giggles] Becca just got so dreamy eyed, and she's smiling so big into the camera.

Becca: We have Wentworth's [00:48:00] behavior and dissected it along with Anne in her little obsessive moments. There are several moments when they're at Uppercross together, where even though he's basically ignoring her and even though he's courting her two sisters in law, Louisa and Henrietta, the care comes through in these slight moments to protect her from discomfort, the time he pulls the toddler off of her.

Molly: Yeah, that's what I was going to say.

Becca: The time he insists that she get in the Croft's carriage as they're walking home, because she's fatigued. You do see, even though he is attempting to ignore Anne Elliot or be mad at Anne Elliot, he does have these moments where the little care comes through for her. So, he may have given her his umbrella at Uppercross when he first entered the book. I do think there's clearly a shift in his behavior towards her, [00:49:00] but this is an aspect where he has never been able to fully suppress his desire to make sure she's comfortable.

Molly: Yes. What's interesting about the examples you just gave, is that for most of those, he was silent while doing it. The thing that's different this time is, he's like, "Here's my umbrella. I wish I could get you a chair like to have two men carry you home." And he says all of that very earnestly and warmly to her.

Becca: Yes. In a different version of the story, it's like-- Well, if we're at a different point in the story and it's raining outside, Wentworth is sending his servant over with an umbrella and saying, "Ma'am, Captain Wentworth wishes that you get home safely," or something like that.

Molly: Exactly. So, there is a shift. I think you're right that it follows a pattern for him.

Becca: Yeah, that's my take. All right. Next, we have Janae. "What do you think about Anne and Wentworth's conversation about Lyme, about Benwick and Louisa, etc.? And what does it tell [00:50:00] us about how he's feeling? Not just what Anne thinks he's feeling. Is she a reliable narrator in this moment?"

Molly: Anne is never a reliable narrator. She hasn't been a reliable narrator. She ignores very obvious things. Yeah. So, let me just think it through. I feel like half of me answering questions is me thinking through out loud. What she thinks he's feeling is very much in favor of him being in love with her and him being happily surprised by Benwick and Louisa's relationship, and her being like, "Oh, he never loved Louisa, and he is single and ready to mingle."

What he's actually feeling is definitely more on the side of, "How could he, Benwick, move on so easily from his one true love? I could never move on from my one true love," I think. [00:51:00] But I also think that I'm reading it through Anne's perspective, a lot. So, what does it actually tell us about what he's feeling? I mean, do you think that's on the right track?

Like, do we think that Anne is correct about what he's feeling?

Becca: I will neither confirm nor deny.

Molly: Yeah. I think that what we're not sure of after leaving this conversation is what happened to make him willing to talk to Anne about these things.

Becca: Yeah. Unquestionably, we have a shift in Wentworth. We see him more willing to talk to Anne, more willing to open up about things that touch close to their past together.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I'm going to leave off there-

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -so as to not give anything away.

Molly: Yeah. But I guess in this moment, maybe it's not fair of me to say that Anne's not a reliable narrator, because I do think she's tuned in, but at the same time, she keeps blacking out, [giggles] like literally **[00:52:00]** becoming unaware of her surroundings. So, I feel like we can't fully trust what she's noticing.

Becca: For sure. For sure. Okay. That was our last Patreon study question. I'm going to skip my first Becca study question, because it was, "What does the conversation tell us about how Wentworth feels about Louisa?"

Molly: So, Janae's just on it.

Becca: Yeah, Janae just totally on the same wavelength as me on this point. So, [chuckles] we can move on. The next question I have is, "What changes if Wentworth loves Anne again, and what doesn't change if Wentworth loves Anne again?"

Molly: Wentworth has always loved Anne. First of all, let me just say, I don't doubt that he loves her. I also think he hates her. Like, those are both together at the same time. [giggles] What changes if he's willing to set aside his anger, and his resentment, and his hurt and open himself up to Anne again? I don't see at this point how he can. I don't **[00:53:00]** see that he has forgiven her. But if he were to forgive her and propose, it goes back to the question of, would she say yes? Would she forsake her family? Would she have to? Would they be like, "Okay, well, he's rich now, so we don't care anymore"? Because it seems like they still hate him, or at least, it seems like Mrs. Russell still hates him.

Becca: Lady Russell.

Molly: Lady Russell. So sorry. [giggles] It seems like Lady Russell still hates him, at least. And her other family did acknowledge him and her father actually called him handsome.

Becca: We're going to get to that.

Molly: Oh, yeah. Okay. Great. So, I suppose there is a world in which he could propose and Anne could say yes and they would be happy. But what does not change is the eight years of history between them. I mean, that doesn't just go away. And what does not change is, again, Lady Russell's opinion on him, it seems. Like, she saw him **[00:54:00]** on the street when she claimed to be looking for the well-hung curtains and she ignored him. So, clearly, that doesn't change, and I don't know how that'll play out.

Becca: Interesting. How will that fudge?

Molly: How will it?

Becca: Next question is about Sir Walter.

Molly: Can I read it?

Becca: Yes, let's read that passage. I think it's important.

Molly: "Her father and Lady Dalrymple were speaking. "A well-looking man," said Sir Walter, "a very well-looking man." "A very fine young man indeed!" said Lady Dalrymple. "More air than one often sees in Bath. Irish, I dare say." "No, I just know his name. A bowing acquaintance. Wentworth, Captain Wentworth of the navy. His sister married my tenant in Somersetshire, the Croft, who rents Kellynch."

Becca: Yes.

Molly: He called him a well looking man, which,-

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: -to him is like a high compliment.

Becca: Let's break this down.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Because this is a conversation with The Dowager Viscountess Lady [00:55:00] Dalrymple-

Molly: Mm-hm.

Becca: -in all of her glory, someone who Sir Walter respects too much. They are having a conversation complimenting this really hot Captain from the navy who's come to watch her concert.

Molly: A very fine young man indeed. More air than one often sees in Bath.

Becca: Yeah. And I want to pair this with what happened when Sir Walter and Elizabeth saw Wentworth.

Molly: Had they seen him yet?

Becca: So, they saw him when he entered and started talking to Anne, if you recall.

Molly: Yeah. But had they seen him in Bath until this point?

Becca: Elizabeth had and she ignored him.

Molly: Right.

Becca: Sir Walter had not.

Molly: But her father, her father acknowledged him when he walked in first.

Becca: They both did. They acknowledged Wentworth in the bare minimum way. He did a little bow and she did a little curtsy.

Molly: But I wonder, because she did hers second. He bowed first and then she gave a little

curtsy. So, I wonder if she was like, “Oh, shit, my father is not ignoring him, so I won't ignore him either.” [00:56:00]

Becca: Well, they absolutely have to not ignore him. It's not allowed to be like that rude at a party like this.

Molly: That's true. That's true. Okay.

Becca: But then, Lady Dalrymple, my queen, my everything, my Viscountess, [Molly laughs] she is clearly talking well of this fine young captain in her presence. And Sir Walter mirrors that instantly and he says, “He's handsome.”

Molly: What a weemie.

Becca: He says he's handsome, which for Sir Walter is a huge compliment. And then immediately ties him to his acquaintance and says, “Oh, yes, he's related to my tenant.”

Molly: Mm.

Becca: So, what I see here is that Sir Walter's capacity for disdain for this man can only extend so far, because the outside society that Sir Walter respects so much sees Captain Wentworth the who he is now, which is very successful.

Molly: Yeah, because they don't have that history. [00:57:00] They don't know where he came from, which is great.

Becca: Exactly. Wentworth has ascended class rank. Actually, done it.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And for those who didn't know him when he was presumptuous in courting Anne, he now just looks like a very eligible, fine, handsome captain of the navy.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: And Sir Walter has this memory of how he may have embarrassed him by asking his daughter to marry him in the past. Now, he has to be like, “Oh, no, he's great.”

Molly: Takesie-backsies.

Becca: He's handsome. Takesie-backsies. The dynamic has shifted now.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: Sir Walter's now bragging about a connection to Captain Wentworth-

Molly: Yeah. Hmm.

Becca: -which is something that has changed in the eight years-

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: -something extremely important.

Molly: True.

Becca: “How has Mr. Elliot heard about Anne before?” I want to hear what you think.

Molly: What? Okay. Literally, I have no idea. I have to figure out. Anne thinks it was Mr. Wentworth, Captain Wentworth's [00:58:00] brother. I don't know if Anne's right about that, but if it is him, one, how? And two, why? Mr. Wentworth is one of the only people that knew, if I'm correct in remembering this, about Captain Wentworth and Anne.

So, if that's true, Mr. Wentworth first thought of Anne as like the most beautiful, wonderful person on the planet, and then thought of her as the person who broke her brother's heart. Correct me if I'm wrong about him knowing all of this.

Becca: Mr. Wentworth knows most of the story. Yes.

Molly: Okay. So, if Mr. Wentworth had an acquaintance with Mr. Elliot that he would talk about, then Elliot thinks of Anne as one of the-- I don't know how much Elliot knows. Like, how much would Mr. Wentworth tell, because he wasn't supposed to tell anyone. [00:59:00] And also, how would he know him. So, these are my questions about that.

I can't think of anyone else who would have told him all of this, because who does he know from the family. Like, where has he been all this time? London?

Becca: I'm not telling you anything.

Molly: Okay. Great. I think he would have to best friends with Mr. Wentworth, I think for Mr. Wentworth to tell him the whole story. I suppose there's a world in which he met Mr. Wentworth and was like, "Oh, I'm Mr. Elliot." And he would be like, "Oh, I know of the Elliots." Like, "Anne is so beautiful," blah, blah, blah." I don't know if he would be like, "Oh, she broke my brother's heart," because that would be a lot. So, maybe he only told the good stuff or he knows that she's single. I don't know. I really don't know. He's known about Anne Elliot for a long time. And then, that also begs the question, like, did he really come back for Anne Elliot? [01:00:00]

Becca: That's what I was going to ask as a follow up, "What does the fact that he knew about Anne's existence tell you about why Mr. Elliot is reconnecting with the Elliot family?"

Molly: It does beg the question.

Becca: Does beg the question.

Molly: Maybe because he only showed up in Bath a couple weeks before she did. Did he know she was coming back?

Becca: Who was to say?

Molly: Whomst? I'll let you ask the next question, because--

Becca: Team Elliot or Wentworth?

Molly: Right now, I got to say I'm Team Elliot.

Becca: We're putting it on the record, folks. She's Team Elliot.

Molly: Not that I think that's what's going to happen, but I love him, and I'm rooting for him and I don't see a world in which Wentworth and Anne can get back together right now. So, I'm Team Elliot. I'm Team Elliot. As of today, this October 26th at 12:08 PM, I am Team Elliot. I am sure that I will change my mind before the end of this book, but [01:01:00] right now, I am Team Elliot.

Becca: Funniest quote?

Molly: It goes to Mr. Team Elliot. Anne has just said that she's no proficient in Italian. And he says "Yes, yes, I see you know nothing of the matter. You have only knowledge enough of the language to translate at sight these inverted, transposed, curtailed Italian lines, into clear, comprehensible, elegant English. You need not say anything more of your ignorance. Here is complete proof."

Becca: Questions moving forward.

Molly: Oh, my God. How does Elliot know about Anne's character? Who told him and what did they say? Did he come back for Anne? And the big question of like, that I asked earlier, would Wentworth ask Anne to marry him now and would Anne say yes now?

Becca: Who wins the chapters? Chapter?

Molly: I got to give it to Mr. Elliot for being so smooth.

Becca: All right. Well, listeners, that concludes this episode of Pod and Prejudice. For next time, we're just going to read Chapter 21 or **[01:02:00]** Chapter 9 of Volume II if you're in a volumed book. Molly, are you ready for it?

Molly: I'm so ready for it.

Becca: Well, until next time, stay proper.

Molly: And scoochy scooch to the end of a bench at a concert, so that you can talk to your crush.

Becca: Always do that.

[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 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.

[Transcript provided by [SpeechDocs Podcast Transcription](https://www.speechdocs.com)]