

**Molly:** Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we want to thank our newest patron, Miriam. Welcome to the team. If you want to be awesome like Miriam and get access to exclusive content like our notes, our Discord community and our watch parties for the *Persuasion* adaptations, check out our Patreon at [patreon.com/podandprejudice](https://patreon.com/podandprejudice).

You all have been waiting so patiently for us to start our coverage of the *Persuasion* adaptations. So, we are so excited to share, at long last, the first of three episodes covering the 1995 adaptation of *Persuasion* with our guests, the hosts of Fetch the Smelling Salts, Alice and Kim.

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

**Becca:** This is Becca.

**Molly:** This is Molly.

**Becca:** We're here to talk about Jane Austen.

**Molly:** We are here specifically to talk about--

**Becca and Molly:** *Persuasion*.

**Becca:** Adaptations.

**Molly:** Adaptations. We finally made it to *Persuasion* adaptations.

**Becca:** Yay. I love that you say finally as if it's been so long. I feel like this book flew by.

**Molly:** It did, but it felt like a really long [00:01:00] time, because we took two months off in between to share our live show audios and other things.

**Becca:** Yes. So, you could be out of the country comfortably. [chuckles]

**Molly:** Exactly. So, we're back recording new material. It's very exciting.

**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* or *Emma* for the first time, you can listen to Seasons 1 through 3 of this podcast. But that is not what we're doing here today.

**Molly:** No. Today, we are talking about the 1995 adaptation of *Persuasion* from the BBC. Is that correct?

**Becca:** Yeah, it's a BBC movie, I believe, starring Ciarán Hinds.

**Molly:** Famously. We are joined to discuss it today by Alice and Kim from Fetch the Smelling Salts. Hello.

**Alice:** Hello.

**Kim:** Hello.

**Molly:** So, Alice and Kim, do you want to tell our listeners a little bit about what [00:02:00] you do and what your podcast is about?

**Alice:** Yes, we do.

**Kim:** Go on, Alice.

**Alice:** Right.

[laughter]

**Alice:** On *Fetch the Smelling Salts*, we talk about period dramas. We love watching period dramas. We watch way too many movies and TV shows. Sometimes we also read books that have been turned into period dramas. But mostly, it's TV, it's movies. They're from every genre, everywhere around the world, every culture, every era. We don't care as long as it's set in a real time, a real place in the past. We want to see it and we want to talk about it.

And so, we watch a lot of non-English language stuff, but we also watch a lot of British people visiting each other and maybe kissing at the end. We love a Bollywood drama. We love a Korean drama. And we love just like period drama butts.

**Molly:** Mm. [00:03:00]

**Kim:** Yes.

**Alice:** We love seeing a butt on the screen.

**Becca:** Shouts to *Emma* [laughs] 2021? 2020?

**Molly:** 2020.

**Alice:** Oh, yeah. Right at the start. Boom.

**Kim:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[laughter]

**Alice:** Boom, bam, butt. That's what [Molly laughs] we want.

**Becca:** That's a pretty good summary of-

[laughter]

**Becca:** -your podcast.

[laughter]

**Alice:** You can find us on all fine podcast platforms, etc. And I, Alice, am also doing another podcast that's coming out later this year, which is all about Jane Austen, Jane Austen books and specifically, Jane Austen characters and what kind of sex they get up to. It is called *Austen After Dark*. It is a historical, literary comedy sex podcast.

**Molly:** Love it. And Becca and I got to record an episode of that with you yesterday, and we had a blast. So, I can't wait for our listeners to get to hear that.

**Becca:** The word blast is not a double [00:04:00] entendre, right?

[laughter]

**Alice:** Ooh, I can't wait to listen to this episode then.

**Becca:** So, before we get into the adaptation of *Persuasion* that came out in 1995, we will start by asking our guests a couple questions about their relationship to Jane Austen, starting with the quintessential, what is your relationship to Jane Austen?

**Kim:** Wow. Okay. So, as a literary scholar, I was more of a late 19th century person. So, I didn't read that many Jane Austen books. I will confess, at the start, I've only read three. I've read *Emma*, I've read *Pride and Prejudice* and *Northanger Abbey*.

**Alice:** Did you just call it *Northanger Abbey*?

**Kim:** *Northanger Abbey*, every bloody time. *Northanger--*

[laughter]

**Kim:** You see? This is why.

**Molly:** Incredible.

**Kim:** Yeah, I know. [laughs] So, yeah, that's all I've read. I do love it, and I was just telling my housemate. She's never [00:05:00] read Jane Austen. I was telling her like, "It's like a warm hug. It feels good. It makes you happy. Nothing really bad happens. Yeah. Her language is wonderful. And Jane Austen to me is something-- you need to read to refresh yourself. It's like have a cup of tea, have a Jane Austen book." Yeah.

**Alice:** Feel a little cozy.

**Kim:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Totally. So, that's my relationship with Janie girl.

**Molly:** Lovely.

**Kim:** I think Alice is a more intense one.

**Alice:** Yeah. I call myself a lifelong Jane Austen fan. And that's a little bit of a lie, because we first-- I remember being assigned to read *Pride and Prejudice* in high school, and I famously just refused to finish reading any book in high school. And so, [00:06:00] I never finished reading it. I blanked my way through it. But then, shortly after, I couldn't help myself, I went back to it and I ended up getting a giant omnibus Jane Austen book, because I didn't realize just how big and thick it would be. And so, I carried that around with me for a really long time. [chuckles] I think I left it in a hostel in Uganda or something.

**Molly:** Oh, my God.

**Alice:** But then I just became obsessed. That was really one of my entrees into-- I already really love period dramas, but I just had to consume every single Jane Austen adaptation even before I made sure I read every single book, because an adaptation is always going to mean more to me than the book. This is just the truth. This adaptation in particular has really just stood out as one of my lifelong favorites. [00:07:00]

**Becca:** That might lead us well into our next question, which is, what's your favorite Austen content? And as Alice alluded to, it can be an adaptation, it can be a movie, a TV series, a modern-day retelling, a Spotify playlist, whatever really, really grabs your attention. [chuckles]

**Kim:** Well, for me is definitely, Colin Firth, BBC,-

**Molly:** Yes.

**Kim:** -*Pride and Prejudice*. I know it's so basic, but it means a lot to me to the point where— So, what happened was, so I was in Leeds, and then-- That was when I was doing my masters. And then, I had the DVD set of *Pride and Prejudice*. And then, when my parents, at the end of my degree, they came for my graduation, and then we had a little holiday. I remember we were in Paris and there was nothing else to do at night, because we don't understand French. We can't watch French TV. [Becca chuckles] So, I was like, "Guys, I have my [00:08:00] laptop. Let's us all watch *Pride and Prejudice*." It was really cute.

So, it was like me, and my mom and my dad in a little hotel room rewatched. I was watching it for like bazillionth time. And then, yeah, so that's my little happy memory. So, that will always be my favorite.

**Molly:** I love that so much.

**Becca:** It's super beautiful. And the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice* is basic for a reason. It's because it's so good that it's the centerpiece around which all other Jane Austen adaptations rotate, for sure. [chuckles]

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Alice:** It's so good.

**Molly:** We started this podcast in 2019 right before the pandemic hit, and I moved home to be in Syracuse with my mom. And so, I watched the 1995 with her the first time. I remember like I watched each episode three times, because we covered each episode in a different--

**Becca:** She wanted to keep going. [chuckles]

**Molly:** Yeah, I wanted to keep going, so I had to just keep watching them over and over again. [00:09:00] And my mom would actually sit and watch them with me, which was really cute. So, I have a similar, like, this sweet memory of that.

**Alice:** Right? Yeah.

**Molly:** Yeah. And Alice, is this yours?

**Becca:** Yes. Yes.

[chuckles]

**Alice:** Yeah. So, this might be my favorite adaptation, although I also really love the 2007 *Northanger Abbey* adaptation. I, of course, love the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice* as well. And Kim, you talking about Colin Firth and holidays made me think, I'm actually going to say, if we're being broad with content, like the definition thereof, in Bath at the Jane Austen center, there is a statue, like a mannequin of Colin Firth as Mr. Darcy. And you can dress up yourself, so you can get yourself in a period outfit with a bonnet.

**Kim:** And you can hug him?

**Alice:** They do not stop you from touching the mannequin. [00:10:00]

**Kim:** Woo-hoo.

**Alice:** [laughs] I can't say it's encouraged, but no one's going to tell you off. You can just rub his butt as much as you want to.

**Becca:** Are people like kissing the statue?

**Alice:** I didn't see it, I didn't do it, but I'm going to say yes.

**Molly:** But you rubbed his butt a lot.

**Alice:** I did rub his butt. [Molly laughs]

**Kim:** [unintelligible [00:10:24]]

**Alice:** Yeah. I think I'm not the only one out there listening who has done that or aspires to do that. But that's not the only thing. His portrait is also in the tea rooms that are upstairs where you can get-- Jane Austen like a Bath bun and a whole Regency style tea. And they have a portrait of Mr. Darcy, but it's Colin Firth.

**Becca:** Wow.

**Kim:** Oh, yes.

**Alice:** And so, these [chuckles] recreations of Colin Firth, Darcy, I think are my favorite material culture.

**Kim:** Yeah. I have a magnet from there with a "drawing" [00:11:00] of Colin Firth as Darcy with one of his famous quotes, and I was like, "Oh, I love it."

**Molly:** Wow. Becca, I think that we need to plan a post-wedding trip to Bath.

**Becca:** I love the way you said that as if it's our wedding.

[laughter]

**Molly:** Well, I just know that you're not going to be able to do a trip before you get married.

**Becca:** No, definitely not. But listeners, spoilers for another time, I'm sure Molly and I will one day find a way to do some creative, cool travel content related to Bath, England.

**Molly:** Okay. So, our next question for both of you is, which Austen character do you most relate to? This can be from any book. But if it's from one that I haven't read, be vague with why.

**Alice:** No spoilers. But Catherine Morland, the protagonist in *Northanger Abbey*.

**Becca:** I haven't read *Northanger Abbey*. It's my one book I have not read by Jane Austen. And so, we're excited to cover it on the podcast, because we've figured out a system for that, and it worked quite well. But the only thing I know [00:12:00] about *Northanger Abbey*, is that Catherine Moreland is kind of the precursor to the Tumblr girly. [laughs]

**Alice:** No, that's offensive. What do you mean? What do you mean? What do you mean?

**Molly:** Well, hey, listen, we were all Tumblr girlies here.

**Becca:** Yeah. No, this is a compliment.

**Kim:** Wait, what's a Tumblr girly?

**Alice:** Oh, okay. Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. Okay, I Tumblr, B-L-R, not-- I thought you were talking about the big sippy cup girl.

**Molly:** Oh, my God. [laughs]

**Becca:** No, no, no, no, no, no, no. Not the Stanley cup girly. The on the internet in her fan community.

**Alice:** No. Yes, absolutely. [Becca laughs] She's a Tumblr girly.

**Molly:** Funny.

**Alice:** She's a Tumblr girly. She's discovered porn through Tumblr. [Kim chuckles]

**Becca:** Yup, yup. She's a fanfic writer. That's the energy I get from *Northanger Abbey*. [laughs]

**Molly:** That's so funny.

**Becca:** You were like, "How dare you? She doesn't have a Stanley cup--" [laughs]

**Alice:** No, that's exactly what I was. [Kim chuckles] And so, that only strengthens my point a little bit, because she's a bit—[laughs] **[00:13:00]** She's no Elizabeth Bennet. Let's put it that way.

[laughter]

**Becca:** Oh, that gets me so excited to read *Northanger Abbey*. All right. Kim, how about you?

**Kim:** Okay. Well, I, too, am no Elizabeth Bennet sadly. [Alice laughs] Okay, I'm no Emma either. I would say, probably Anne. Like, Anne Elliot. Okay, I'm going to say this because I don't think my sister will listen to this podcast episode. She never listens to anything until I actually explicitly send her a link and serve it to her on a silver platter.

Oh, my God, every bloody time, I watch *Persuasion*, and I see Mary, her sister and her whole, "Oh, I'm so sick. Nobody loves me." I'm like, "Oh, girl, I feel you, Anne. How are you so patient?" So, yeah. So, [Becca laughs] I totally-- Yup. So, **[00:14:00]** Anne. Anne, I feel you. She's my girl.

**Molly:** Incredible.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah. 100%.

**Molly:** I have to say, I feel a special kinship with Mary, [Alice laughs] because I'm--

**Becca:** Hypochondriacs unite.

**Molly:** Yeah, famously I'm a hypochondriac.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** So, I relate a lot to Mr. Woodhouse and Isabella Woodhouse. Woodhouse, yes. Isabella Woodhouse. Isabella Knightley. I also find that Mary I relate to, because she's always like-- As soon as I feel this slightest [Kim laughs] tickle in my throat or my nose, I become insufferable, I'm like, "I need my medicine."

**Becca:** [laughs] The amount of times Molly will be like, "Hi." She'll text me when we're doing an in-person podcast record and be like, "Hi." Being so respectful here like, "I had a tickle in my throat three days ago. It hasn't cropped up again, but just in case you're uncomfortable recording in person with me, I wanted to make you aware."

**Kim:** [laughs]

**Molly:** I [00:15:00] always like to text, because I worry that you'll come and I'll go [coughs] and then you'll be like, "Argh." But that's not you, that's me.

**Becca:** To be clear, I am now equally attuned to Molly's boundaries with illness and do equally put Molly on notice of any tickle I have had in my throat, but that is because I know Molly is paranoid and I want to be transparent with her.

**Kim:** That's fair. That's fair.

**Molly:** And that's love.

**Becca:** Yes. So, our final question before we get into the movie is, what is your hottest Austen take? For us, some examples of this might be, Lydia Bennet is a tragic character and not a nuisance. Or, for example, in this book, that Mary is an icon, and a legend and, no-notes, perfect invention of Jane Austen. [laughs]

**Alice:** This is again a *Northanger Abbey* take, but I have always said that *Northanger Abbey* is the horniest book.

**Molly:** Mmm.

**Becca:** Okay. Yeah.

**Kim:** Oh, I have a hot Jane Austen pick. [00:16:00] I don't know why everybody be drinking that water if it really tastes like crap.

**Becca:** Oh, the Bath water. I know exactly what you're talking about. It tastes terrible.

**Kim:** It does. I've been a Bath. I've tasted it. It's not nice.

**Alice:** That water is foul. It tastes like a sewer-- No, not a sewer.

**Molly:** It smells like rotten eggs, right?

**Alice:** Yeah, it is. It's like a fountain took a fart.

**Becca:** A 100%. So, I haven't been to Bath, but I have been places that have the springs in the United States, and it's the same concept. And I was like, "Oh, this is like refreshing and healthful." I tasted it and I was like, "Oh, I didn't know refreshing and healthful tastes like I just swallowed somebody else's fart."

**Alice:** It's gross.

**Becca:** It's so gross.

**Alice:** Sorry. I could have gotten this on my grandma's farm in Wisconsin, because they also use well water you, guys. [Becca laughs]

**Molly:** Question. In this movie when they are in indoor courtyard room, is that she's--

**Becca:** Yes.

**Kim:** Yup. Yup.

**Molly:** That's what they're chugging?

**Becca:** They're chugging the fart water. Yeah.

**Molly:** That explains why [00:17:00] Lady Russell downs it all in one gulp.

**Alice:** Just like [gasps]

**Molly:** Yeah. I was like, "What is she chugging?" But she probably was holding her breath and was like, "Let me get this down."

**Alice:** Yeah.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Alice:** Yeah.

**Becca:** It's like a Regency or a wheatgrass shot. It doesn't taste good. You do it for your health, right? That's the idea behind it?

**Molly:** That makes sense.

**Alice:** And then, you walk around the room, so that no one can tell exactly who farted.

[laughter]

**Alice:** Because it is coming back out the other end.

**Molly:** Oh, of course.

**Becca:** Oh. Because it's just like sulfuric water.

**Alice:** I don't know, man.

**Becca:** I am not a scientist. I am not a hydro engineer. One of my old roommates was a hydro engineer.

**Alice:** You're not a hydro engineer?

**Becca:** I know. I have a Jane Austen podcast instead. [laughs]

**Molly:** Disappointing.

**Becca:** But that is a hot take. I am 100% on board with. There is no question. That is maybe my favorite hot take.

[laughter]

**Molly:** So, let's dive into talking about this movie.

**Becca:** Yes. So, to [00:18:00] start for our listeners, it is a movie that is an adaptation of *Persuasion* done for BBC. The screenplay is by Nick Dear, directed by Roger Michell and starring Amanda Wood as Anne Elliot and Ciarán Hinds as Captain Wentworth. Before Molly starts her summary.

**Molly:** Amanda Root.

**Becca:** Sorry. I said Amanda--

**Molly:** Amanda Wood is famously the main character in the movie, *The Holiday*, played by Cameron Diaz.



**Becca:** I'm literally staring at her name, and it says Amanda Root. And I said, Amanda Wood. Amanda Root stars as Anne Elliott. Ciarán Hinds stars as Captain Wentworth. Before we get into the full summary, last question we will ask you is, your take on the movie generally.

**Kim:** Oh, I loved it. I loved it so much. I cried. This is my second time I'm watching it. Yeah, so, I cried. And then, I texted Alice and I was like, "I'm balling." And she was like, "It's so good." So, yeah, that's my take.

**Becca:** Oh.

**Kim:** Loved it. I also especially loved it, because I really did not [00:19:00] like the, what was it, 2020, 2022, yeah, not a fan.

**Becca:** We haven't watched that one yet, and we are so excited because of the way people talk about it.

**Molly:** Yeah. We've talked to one person who loved it. I have a feeling that I'm going to love it. I'm putting this on the record.

**Becca:** She told me. So, she hasn't watched it yet, but we finished watching this movie. She comes to me, "Becca, I think I'm going to like 2022 *Persuasion* adaptation." And I was like, "Molly, that is a dangerous thing to hope for [chuckles] because of everything we know." [laughs]

**Kim:** Well, that might be a hot take. [laughs]

**Molly:** It might be a hot take.

**Becca:** That might be her Austen hot take. [chuckles]

**Molly:** Yeah. We're going to see. I'm putting it on the record now, so people can either be like, "Oh, she was right. She loved it, or ha-ha-ha-ha-ha."

**Becca:** No. There's nothing our listeners love more than when Molly is just blindly wrong about [Kim laughs] something cheerfully for a long time, and then gets corrected by either us or Jane Austen herself.

**Alice:** Well, [00:20:00] we started our podcast in-- We started recording our podcast in 2022, and *Persuasion* was the first movie that we decided to talk about, because we were so moved by hatred.

**Kim:** Yes.

**Molly:** Incredible.

**Alice:** So, please have a listen to that.

**Molly:** Oh, we will.

**Becca:** The opposite of love is not hate. It's indifference.

**Kim:** That is true.

**Molly:** True.

**Kim:** Yeah, we were not indifferent to that.

**Alice:** We had feelings.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Becca:** I am really glad we have two absolute lovers of this movie on the podcast, because I enjoyed this movie quite a bit. It was not, I think, my favorite Jane Austen adaptation, because-- Well, we'll get into why. But I do think it had a lot of really good things to offer, a lot of critiques I would put out there and the ways the story was portrayed. But ultimately, I think my good thoughts about it definitely outweigh my bad thoughts about it.

But I'm really pleased, because there's nothing I like more than **[00:21:00]** when we talk about a movie and we have guests who to slightly disagree with us on the movie, so that A, we can convince each other of our views, and, B, we have just a diversity of opinions on the movie, just generally.

**Molly:** Yeah, I completely agree. My overall take on the movie is probably that by the end of this recording, I'll be a big fan.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** I'm easily swayed. I really liked it and I thought everyone's performance-- I didn't think anyone's performances were bad at all. All the actors were incredible. My only major critiques were with the cinematography and the way the scenes jumped from scene to scene and the lack of a score. It was just like, it was a little sleepy in that way.

**Becca:** We are big score people with Jane Austen movies. And score is very important. And the moments of score in here are beautiful. And then, the ones where they're missing, I'm like, "Oh, I want the big swell of the music, because I'm drama. I am a dramatic bitch."

**Molly:** Well, the big swell of the music is like, da-da- **[00:22:00]** da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da.

**Kim:** Yes.

[laughter]

**Kim:** Yes, it was. I know.

**Molly:** Which I loved.

**Alice:** Oh, come on. Italian opera erasure.

**Molly:** True. Okay. Fair, fair. True.

**Alice:** How much more dramatic do you need?

**Becca:** Well, we'll get into it. But I think it's a good time to start chatting about the movie.

**Molly:** Yes. So, we open up on Admiral Croft bringing his men over the seas in a rowboat to a big boat, because the war is over. And I have to say, Admiral Croft, Daddy.

**Kim:** Daddy.

**Becca:** Daddy.

**Molly:** Okay, thank you. I'm glad we all agree.

**Kim:** Yup.

**Becca:** Yeah. No, no, definitely, Daddy. I think what I liked about this as an opener, was that it's one of the big themes of *Persuasion* generally, is that there is a juxtaposition between these superficial petty gentry men and the Navy, which is fighting these big wars overseas. You get this juxtaposition between [00:23:00] the creditors of Sir Walter and Admiral Croft coming ashore having neutralized Napoleon. And that frames the story, and here are the concerns of these men who've just come back from war, and here are the concerns of the guys who stayed home and worried about nothing, except spending as much money as they possibly could.

**Alice:** What I love about this scene, and this is something that I cannot prove, but I hope that we can circle back to it at the end, I am convinced that the dudes in the rowboat are the same actors who are in the circus-

**Kim:** Oh.

**Alice:** -at the end.

**Kim:** Oh.

**Molly:** You know what? I think you're right. I think you can prove that, because I thought the circus dudes looked familiar. And I thought one of the circus dudes, I was like, "Is that Admiral Croft?"

**Alice:** No, there was one in particular where I noted him. I was like, "I see you, rowboat man." And then, there was the same man playing a circus drum and I was like, "All right."

**Kim:** This is why [00:24:00] we all need to watch the entire credits, because we need to look out for that line that says, "Rowboat man number one random-- [crosstalk]"

**Alice:** Slash.

**Kim and Alice:** Juggler.

**Becca:** Clown.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Molly:** Well, it makes you wonder like the war is over.

**Kim:** Yeah, what are they are going to do?

**Molly:** What are they going to do? Maybe they're chasing their passions at long last.

**Alice:** He probably learned drumming in the Navy.

**Kim:** That's true.

**Molly:** So true.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Molly:** Oh, my God, you're so right. I love that for them. So, yeah, as Becca said, it toggles back and forth with the creditors, and they're chasing Mr. Shepard and Mrs. Clay, being like, "Sir Walter owes me money. Sir Walter owes me money." They're acting like they're celebrities and the paparazzi is after them and they're ducking out of the way. We cut to Sir William in a room with--

**Alice:** Sir Walter.

**Becca:** Sir Walter.

**Molly:** I'm going to be honest, every single part of my notes say, Sir William.

**Kim:** That's right. [Molly laughs] William. Control.

**Alice:** F that shit.

**Kim:** Ctrl F. Yeah.

**Molly:** [00:25:00] Sir W, we're going to say. Sir Walter, he's in a room with Lady Russell and Mrs. Clay and Mr. Shepherd and Elizabeth, and he's like, "I do not want a sailor as a tenant in my house." But we have to focus on Elizabeth for a second, because we're introduced to a character who, in my mind, was going to be this upright, very focused on societal norms character. And instead, we have Stockard Channing in a Regency Era gown slouched over a chair, and popping grapes in her mouth and snorting in the corner at everything like, "No decorum." And I love it. What are our thoughts?

**Alice:** Yeah. She's at home. She is too rich to sit up straight.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Alice:** This is something that I see in other adaptations, and I'm all for it. Yeah, she decided to play this pure psychopath. [00:26:00]

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Alice:** She has such intense rage issues.

**Kim:** Oh, my God.

**Alice:** There's murder in her heart.

**Becca:** Yeah. That's someone like you're glad she was born to this specific position in society where she can't inflict harm on a huge number of people, because if she had a little bit more [unintelligible [00:26:18]].

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Alice:** If she had less power and accessed more people, just imagine if she were like a school mom or worked at a pub, havoc.

**Becca:** Yeah. The very particular position she is in society means the only person she's really making truly miserable is Anne, which sucks for Anne. But for everybody else, thank goodness, it's contained. I also, I think with Elizabeth, it's one of the things that's defined about her in the books, is that she's so hot that she figures she can get away with a lot more than she can. What I think is really interesting about this performance is the actress is very pretty, but the way she plays up Elizabeth makes her so unappealing [00:27:00] that you almost don't notice.

**Alice:** No. And this is 1995. This is famously on the cusp. But before Britain figured out that you could put hot people on TV.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm. Colin Firth did that.

**Alice:** So, it was that same year. So, this is right on the edge.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Alice:** And so, no one in this movie is conventionally attractive in the way that you would maybe expect from a period drama now.

**Kim:** These days. Yeah.

**Alice:** Yeah. These days.

**Kim:** These days.

**Alice:** You just couldn't cast this way and have famously-

Kim: Yeah. It's not-- [crosstalk]

**Alice:** -hot Elizabeth be-- Yeah. No, exactly.

**Molly:** Yeah. I should clarify that it's not actually Stockard Channing. I just think that she looks like her. I realize I said it really just part of the same.

**Kim:** I know. No, because-- [crosstalk]

**Alice:** I just believed you, because I don't know anybody's name.

**Molly:** Stockard Channing is in *Grease*.

**Kim:** Yeah. I love Stockard Channing.

**Becca:** Oh. I think of her two big roles. *Grease*, *Practical magic* and now I have to add the [00:28:00]1995 *Persuasion* in spirit.

**Molly:** [giggles] Yeah.

**Alice:** Which one is she in *Grease*?

**Molly:** She's Rizzo.

**Alice:** Oh, yeah.

**Becca:** [unintelligible 00:28:07]

**Molly:** Yeah. But anyway, I do love though thinking about the fact that she is-- The reason she's acting like such a slob is because she's playing up the I'm so rich stereotype, or not stereotype, but she's acting richer than she is in the same way that Sir Walter is, but different, like same, same, but different, so I do love that. While Sir Walter is talking about how ugly Naval men are, Mrs. Clay says, "Have some pity on them. Not everyone is born to be handsome," and then shows her tits.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** They really up play her flirting with him.

**Becca:** She's out to get that bag. You got to respect the hustle.

**Alice:** I do. It's a delusional hustle as well. I can't remember if she's meant to be hot in the book. I think they even talk about her having a [00:29:00] snaggle-tooth-

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Alice:** -in the book. But maybe as though that's a beauty mark, like she flashed her snaggle-tooth at him.

**Becca:** I actually think that she's perfectly cast in terms of the level of attraction she's supposed to have. Because when Anne confronts Elizabeth about the possibility of Mrs. Clay taking over as their new stepmother, Elizabeth said, "Oh, not, possible she's not hot enough." And Anne is like, "Okay. So, she's not a perfect face, but she does have nice hair and nice eyes and a good figure. And dad would overlook the snaggle-tooth eventually if she's charming enough."

**Molly:** Mm-hmm.

**Alice:** He won't look up that much.

**Kim:** Yeah, it's all about the boobs.

**Becca:** Exactly. And this actress, not to be-- I don't want to be disrespectful to this actress, but she fills a beautiful Regency gown quite nice.

**Molly:** She does.

**Alice:** I've already called everybody ugly on this show.

[laughter]

**Becca:** Which is, we'll get to it. Henry Hater erasure, but--

[laughter]

**Molly:** Yeah. [00:30:00] Well, also Mr. Shepherd is another daddy in my mind.

**Becca:** Molly, it's so funny to me.

**Molly:** I like an older man.

**Becca:** She does. It's specifically in these Jane Austen adaptations. In real life, you are partnered with your age-appropriate girlfriend who looks nothing like any of these gentlemen. But in all of the Jane Austen adaptations, the person Molly is most drawn to is the older, slightly, stately father who owns the estate. [chuckles]

**Molly:** Can you imagine if you were like, "Yeah, Mel looks like Mr. Shepard, a little bit."

**Becca:** No, no. Melanie just simply gives off stately energy.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** She's lovely looking human being. [chuckles]

**Molly:** I think I wanted to say that Mrs. Clay looks like Caroline in *New Girl*. That was something that both Mel and I, when we were watching were like, "Wait, is that Caroline in *New girl*? Absolutely not, it's 1995. But anyway--

**Alice:** You, guys, reference [00:31:00] so many non-period dramas. It is confusing to me, and I feel attacked.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Kim:** Yeah. I've seen *New Girl*. And which one's Caroline?

**Molly:** She's Nick's evil ex.

**Kim:** Ah, okay.

**Molly:** But she's not evil. She's actually just-- Yeah.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** Anyway, Lady Russell is wearing this hat with these massive feathers coming out the back. Her hat's in general-- Becca's giving chef's kisses. I was like, "Her hats and her bangs are an offense on society."

**Kim:** Alice has lots to say about bangs.

**Molly:** Oh, let's hear it. [Kim laughs]

**Alice:** No, I do hate a bang, a period drama bang, because nobody's maintaining that like you're all just trying to not get cholera. But Lady Russell has done it in a Regency way that I'm buying, but I also didn't really notice, because the hats are so scrumptious. It's this like, it's a cross between a turban and a hair [00:32:00] bonnet for when you're sleeping, but also sometimes a top hat without a brim made of satin.

**Becca:** I've never seen anything like it. It's like a cushion on her head, [Alice chuckles] and it's perfect in every scenario. I could not disagree with Molly more. I love the hats. [laughs]

**Alice:** All of the hats in this film, I feel like this is part of the historical accuracy overall in this film that I really, really like. I'm attributing it to historical accuracy, because it feels like they are hitting on a very specific fashion moment that lasted a very short period of time that was really ugly, and then everyone was like, "Oh, it's fashion, fashion" for six months and then they were like, [gagging sound] for the rest of time. I love that we get to see that depicted instead of bonnet.

**Molly:** Right. Because she's wearing one and then later, Mrs. Croft wears one. But I think, in my opinion, wears it much better. I think that the thing that really threw me off about Lady Russell's hat [00:33:00] is the perpetual feathers, because first, it's in the back. And then, when she wears a different one later, it's in the front in such a way that it looks like her hair is feathered, like she's in the 1990s. So, that's what really threw me off.

Listen, I didn't hate it. I just thought it was bonkers. So, she says that she has consulted with Anne and drawn up some plans for retrenching. And Elizabeth has this excellent moment where she goes, "Anne? Why?"

**Becca:** "Why Anne?"

**Molly:** Cracked me up. And of course, Anne enters at that very same moment and sits in the only chair available, which is in the corner and not near where anyone else is sitting.

**Kim:** She's probably thankful of that though. She's like, "Oh, great. I don't have to sit with anybody. I'm just going to sit here. Leave me alone. Let me do my thing."

**Molly:** So true.

**Becca:** Amanda Root's performance in this is so dominated by her doe eyes. She looks like immediately like a deer in headlights dealing with everybody around her.

**Molly:** Yeah. I wouldn't call them [00:34:00] doe eyes though, because I feel like that implies like a sweet, almost puppy dog sad face. But hers, if you--

**Becca:** Haunted.

**Molly:** It's haunted. She's haunted by the memory of this man, if this were a horror movie. Anyway, Elizabeth, when she is handed the plans for retrenching, yeets them. She just throws them on the ground, which I think is incredible. She's like, "Ugh." And then, we jump to dinner where we're talking about moving to Bath. Mrs. Clay is like, "Oh, Bath sounds so lovely in the summer." And then, she sips her soup really seductively at Sir Walter. I was like, "Oh, my God, you need tone it back girl."

And then, Sir Walter asks who the Admiral is, because we're talking about letting the Admiral come and rent. When nobody answers, Anne does. This is the first thing we hear her say. When they ask who Mrs. Croft's [00:35:00] brother is, because they're like, "Oh, yeah, doesn't she have a brother?" They say, "Anne, you recall. Don't you?" And she goes,-

**Becca:** "Wentworth."

**Molly:** -"Wentworth." She chokes on the name, and it's so hot.

**Kim:** I have a random fact that--

**Molly:** Yes.

**Kim:** I think this is when it appears. So, I can't remember whether it was over dinner or was it over breakfast. Anyway, you see all these pineapples on the table, right? Did you know-- Well, you probably guys, of course, you notice. So, yeah, so basically, pineapples were a symbol of richness, because they were extremely expensive. You know you could rent a pineapple? They had this thing-- [chuckles]

**Molly:** All of our jaws just fell to the floor.

**Kim:** I know. [laughs] So, if you're really, really, really, really rich, you would buy a pineapple. But if you're not so rich and you want to show off that you have a pineapple or multiple--

**Becca:** You could rent a pineapple.

**Kim:** You could rent a pineapple. [00:36:00]

**Becca:** Does anybody eat the pineapple?

**Kim:** No, no, no.

**Alice:** No. You just wait for it to rot, basically. I don't know, they should be dipping them in lacquer or something.

**Kim:** Right. Because I was like, "How long does it last? How cost effective is that?" They had multiple pineapples, because it was like, showing, "Look at us, we're so rich." Or, like, "You want to show off how rich we are. We have 10 pineapples."

**Molly:** And that's why they're in debt.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Alice:** And the fucking ice swan.

**Molly:** Yes, the ice swan.



**Becca:** With the sorbet.

**Kim:** Yes.

**Molly:** Yeah, the pineapples did ring a bell for me because of Cabaret. So, a pineapple for you, for me. Yeah.

**Kim:** And then, later on-- Sorry, just fast forward to when they are in Bath. We'll rewind. Yeah, even then I noticed that when they were in Bath, they still had two tiny little pineapples. I was like, "People,-"

**Becca:** Oh, that's detail.

**Kim:** -you have no money. Where you been getting these pineapples from?"

**Molly:** They're in debt. [00:37:00]

**Kim:** Exactly.

**Alice:** So, they're travel pineapples.

**Becca:** It's like a great manifestation of what Bath is, which is, we want to portray luxury on a smaller scale.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Becca:** So, the smaller pineapples make it look like they're still wealthy, like how their Bath house makes it look like they're still wealthy, because they're in Bath in a townhome.

**Molly and Kim:** Yeah.

**Becca:** That's a wonderful little detail. I've noticed the whole thing is set up to make the Elliot's look like insanely ostentatious in their wealth, and then immediately compared to every other character we meet in the story, their level of wealth. For example, we would get there, but the Musgroves are quite wealthy and they're not living in the same level of splendor that the Elliots are living in clearly.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm. Because well, it's all for show. I think that it shows that it's all for show, because instead of having real nice things, they have mini-pineapples.

**Kim:** Mm-hmm.

**Molly:** So, it's like, "Oh, what are you actually spending your money [00:38:00] on?"

**Becca:** "Oh, you have mini-pineapples? That's cute. We over here have happiness and lots of children."

**Molly:** Right.

**Alice:** And a harp.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Molly:** Yes. And a harp.

**Becca:** A really nice harp.

**Molly:** So, Sir Walter, when he is reminded of the name Wentworth, says that, "Oh, Wentworth, the curate is nothing." And Anne gets up and walks away. And he's like, "Did I say something?" And Elizabeth goes, "Oh, father, you must remember the curate's brother is the sailor." And Lady Russell goes, "Let's not pursue it." We're talking about it, like, they don't talk about it in the book, right?

**Alice:** I suppose they have to show something. They have to set him up.

**Becca:** You either need to show or tell. And here, it's a bit of a tell what happened. This gets to another critique like, what I want out of a Jane of *Persuasion* adaptation, is that I want to be shown what happened between Anne and Wentworth rather than told what happened.

**Alice:** You want [00:39:00] some flash-o-backos?

**Becca:** Oh, yeah some flash-o-backos are much needed in a *Persuasion* adaptation, just to establish like, why we care that Wentworth's coming back? Why Anne cares that he's coming back, what he meant to her? We get that as we see them panic as they look at each other in this adaptation. But I would love to have some backing in what it was like when she was convinced away from him, persuaded if you will, and what that meant for her eight years later.

I think that obviously the book gives that narration, but it would be-- The benefit of film is being able to portray the story in a different manner, and so using what Jane Austen has written on the page already to tell the story in a more compelling manner. Here, it's a bit more just like, "Oh, she was in love with a curate's brother, the sailor. We all hate him." And then, it flashes to Anne eventually saying to Lady Russell, I'm skipping ahead, "Oh, I know you meant well. And I don't [00:40:00] blame myself for you for the decision to refuse him, but all these years later," blah, blah, blah. And I'm like, "Okay, but then I don't get to see what happened in the moment that made you now so regretful."

**Alice:** I like that we don't have that made explicit for us. I like that it's left a bit to our imagination, because I really love the scene when she's clearing out her stuff, and she finds tucked away in a little notebook, the letter that you know is from him, because it's folded in the shape of a sailboat, and just how tenderly she picks it up, and the way it looks aged and there's so much spoken in that little scene to me of pain. So, I don't necessarily need to see exactly how everything went down and the words they said to each other, "It's the longing in the little boat."

**Becca:** The little boat scene is beautiful. I agree.

**Molly:** I agree too. I also don't mind that we don't see the flashbacks, but I do mind that we're talking about it and that everyone's talking about it like that the family knows that this is why she's been suffering for eight years, and that she and Lady Russell are talking about it just because so much of what I imagine has been wearing on her for eight years is the fact that she doesn't have an outlet for all of this pent up emotion.

Lady Russell does perpetually say like, "Let's not talk about it. Let's not talk about it." But it's being brought up enough that I feel like it comes up in this movie world. Whereas I think that something I liked about the book, is that she really needs someone to talk to about all of this, but she can't. So, there's pros and cons. I also fucking love the sailboat moment.

**Becca:** Beautiful. Beautiful moment.

**Kim:** Isn't that? Yeah.

**Molly:** Okay. [00:42:00] We won't talk about this when it comes up, but the sailboat, she's left it folded up like a boat this whole time, so she hasn't read it in eight years.

**Alice:** No. I don't know that she's touched it in that time or if this is something that she-- Because she's going through a trunk. And so, this might have just been from her shit from year six.

**Molly:** Right.

**Alice:** Then she's pulling it all out and having to tangibly confront these memories again.

**Molly:** Do we think she's ever read that letter? You think he folded it up and handed it to her?

**Alice:** No. Yeah, she's read it.

**Molly:** Okay.

**Kim:** Yeah. I'm sure he even taught her. In my mind, when they were courting and they were just sitting in the field, he was showing her how to fold little mini-sailboats, and that was what they were doing. So, I think she got the letter, she read it and she knew exactly how to fold it back.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Kim:** Oh.

**Molly:** So, Sir Walter [00:43:00] invites Mrs. Clay to come to Bath with them, and Lady Russell is like, "What about Anne?" And Elizabeth's like, "Oh, well, Anne's not coming. She has to take care of Mary." This whole conversation is happening right in front of Anne, who just has to sit there. I think that's a very good encapsulation of Anne's character in this story. Then we meet the Crofts. And of course, we have Lady Fiona Shaw.

**Alice:** She's so incredible. I love that she really can't conquer her Irish accent throughout this film. I love that for her and us. But she is conquering the hell out of that hat, as you mentioned.

**Becca:** Yeah. I love the way Mrs. Croft and Admiral Croft are depicted in this. They exude so much warmth. And the way that they're styled makes it obvious that they are coming off of a life of adventure to settle down. It makes them feel so aspirational as a couple, which I think in Anne's brain, [00:44:00] they are aspirational. That's what she wants, is she wants to be Mrs. Croft to Admiral Croft, but for Wentworth.

**Kim:** I know. It must have been so painful, she'd be like, "Yeah, you know that could have been me."

**Becca:** Exactly.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, the Elliots go, and they each give a goodbye to Anne that is so indicative of their relationship over the last lifetime. Elizabeth is giving Anne a list of instructions on what to do while staring dreamily into the distance and then walks away. And then, Sir Walter just gives Anne this dismissive wave like, "Ugh," like she's something under his shoe, which is, it made me mad, but also was funny. As he walks out, all the servants are looking at him with this just look of utter disdain on their faces, which I also loved.

Then we get the first hint of a score in this movie, as the servants are covering up their nice furniture with [00:45:00] sheets. We finally get some music coming in the background. We get this little montage of Anne helping the servants pack up all of their things. We get the paper boat scene, we get Anne and Lady Russell sitting amongst a sea of cloth covered

furniture talking about the fact that Anne is like, "I know that you didn't mean any harm by it, but I think I might have been happy if I had married Wentworth."

She didn't say married Wentworth, but she says it, she's like, "No, no, no, you were 19. He didn't have any money. He didn't have any prospects. You made a reasonable choice." We've already talked about my feelings and all of our feelings about them talking about this, but it is a little moment of expose and leading us into the rest of the story.

**Alice:** I'm glad that we get to see her speak a little bit when she has a bit of freedom to be open, so that we can see her body language, we can see the misery on her face when she doesn't have to buck up to be there for Mary yet. [00:46:00]

**Molly:** Yes.

**Alice:** And so, we get a sense of exactly where she is in herself, and so then we can see how she carries through for the rest of the film.

**Molly:** Yeah, totally. I love this little moment where Lady Russell asks her if she's going directly to Uppercross. And Anne says, "Yeah, I prefer to be gone when Admiral and Mrs. Croft arrive." She has to swallow down. She doesn't want to admit how much she's feeling this.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Molly:** So, as Anne drives away, she passes farmers on their fields burning crops, what I think is happening is them preparing for the next season and burning that season's crops, and I thought that was a nice symbolization of passing from one era of life into another and/or the changing of the seasons. I think that's what's happening. I'm sure that some historian [00:47:00] listeners will be able to correct me if that's incorrect. But I thought it was symbolic.

**Alice:** I have no idea what they're burning. At some point, I thought they were burning just piles of poop. Because it's so quick, you're just like, "What is that steaming pile or smoky pile?"

**Becca:** A steaming pile of shit? [chuckles]

**Kim:** Yeah, literally. Oh, I was more concerned with the pig and the goose or duck or whatever and she was bringing. I was like, "Is that what she's bringing to Mary? Here you go. Here's a pig."

**Molly:** You know, that's a good point.

**Becca:** I didn't want to bring it up when we were watching, because Molly is vegan, and my Fiancé', Mike, is a vegetarian, and that pig was in the back and I was like, "I bet she's bringing dinner."

**Alice:** No, she's not. Okay. So, the pig and the goose are also going to see their sisters,-

**Kim:** Okay. Okay. They're just going to hang out.

**Alice:** -who live on the grounds of Uppercross. And so, she's giving them a ride.

**Becca:** Ah, yes. And that pig is a huge hypochondriac Uppercross. And so, the Kellynch pig has to go [00:48:00] comfort and do a bunch of emotional labor [chuckles] for the Uppercross pig.

**Alice:** But the goose has a much better relationship with the sister goose, actually.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Oh, thank goodness. Yes. Although, they do so wish their brother had married the other kings.

**Kim:** Okay. Right. We've cleared it up. Thank you.

**Molly:** You know, how there's a spinoff of *Pride and Prejudice*, which is just like the servants of Longbourn? We also need one for the--

**Molly and Kim:** Animals.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Alice:** On our podcast, we famously do not like and sometimes just will refuse to cover a movie or TV show if anything bad happens to animal. But if it's a small part of it, we're pretty good at retrofitting that into our worldview of no animals actually getting hurt.

**Kim:** We're like, "The dog is fine."

**Becca:** To this day, one of my favorite moments from our podcast, is that we were halfway through reading *Pride and Prejudice*, the first book we covered, and Molly turns to me and goes, "Becca, [00:49:00] where are the dogs?" And I said to Molly, "Molly, there are always dogs. There are dogs everywhere around. And this is canon. They just hang out. There are the lounging dogs, there are the herding dogs, there are the hunting dogs, and they all hang out all the time in the background as part of the scenery and part of the joy in the lives of these Jane Austen characters."

**Kim:** Oh, yeah, yeah. They're living the best lives. All the dogs are good. They're good.

**Becca:** There are always dogs. [chuckles]

**Molly:** Yeah. When Charles comes in later in this movie and he's like, "I've come for the dogs."

**Kim:** I was like, "Of course, you have."

**Molly:** Yeah. "Me too, dude."

**Becca:** Again, we're getting so tangential, but one of the great moments of *Persuasion* is when they have to come back early from hunting, because they brought a puppy out to do it and he wasn't doing a very good job. [laughs]

**Alice:** He couldn't find it.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Alice:** He couldn't find it.

**Molly:** He couldn't find it.

**Kim:** I felt it. I was like, "If that--" So, my dog comes from a line of hunting dogs, and I'd be like, "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. You put birdie out there?" He'll just be like, [00:50:00] "Woo-hoo."

**Molly:** Having a great time.

**Kim:** "I don't know what I'm doing. I'm running around."

**Becca:** Scare all the birds away before you can shoot them. Yeah.

[laughter]

**Molly:** So, we are coming up on Mary's house. When Anne arrives, she sees Mary peeping through the window. As soon as they make eye contact, Mary ducks out of sight. When Anne comes in, she's lying under the window on her sick bed.

**Alice:** "I'm dying."

**Molly:** Yeah. She's like, "I've been so ill."

**Becca:** I'm going to like, at this moment, just take a beat and say, "This is my favorite performance in the movie." Mary is, to me, one of Jane Austen's creatures of comedic genius. Every line she has in the book is pure gold. You want someone to deliver on that in an adaptation, Sophie Thompson, Emma Thompson's sister, is delivering an 800% performance at all times in this movie, and every line delivery of hers is pure gold.

**Alice:** You, guys, have covered the *Emma* adaptations?

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Alice:** So, you know [00:51:00] what a phenomenal Miss Bates she was as well.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** Absolutely.

**Molly:** So good.

**Alice:** Yeah. It's not giving the same energy, but it is giving the same high, very niche level of performance.

**Becca:** The way she is able to acutely play a lack of self-awareness is so perfect in every moment. Every moment she's on the screen, I am just thriving. Like, I loved this performance.

**Molly:** Yeah. One line that she said that really tickled me was, "I do believe if Charles were to see me dying. He wouldn't believe there was anything wrong with me."

**Kim:** Oh, I was so-- Oh, again, as I've already explained at the start.

**Molly:** Yes.

[laughter]

**Kim:** Yup.

**Becca:** It's triggering for you.

**Kim:** So triggering, I tell you. Oh, my God. No, no, no. I will agree. Her performance is amazing. Because it was so bloody good, I was like, "Oh, no."

[laughter]

**Alice:** I loved this as well, especially on this watching maybe more so than other watches, not because I am Mary [00:52:00] wise inclined, but I do have an ulcer right now and I am being very brave about it.

**Molly:** You are.

**Alice:** And telling everyone I know about this ulcer and how brave I am in suffering through my ulcer. [Becca laughs] Because I already have a whole thing with my back and now, I have a whole thing with my front as well.

**Kim:** You have to just to balance it out.

**Alice:** So, it's a double-sided bravery. And so, somehow, I was trying to be more generous to Mary. I was like, "You know what? Maybe you have an ulcer and no one cares."

**Molly:** She probably does. She's stressed herself out.

**Becca:** This is actually a very ongoing conversation within our fandom whether or not Mary is just so starved for attention that she has learned to imagine symptoms for herself constantly, or whether or not she actually has symptoms of some ailment that everyone's ignoring, because she is ignored constantly. And one could read her either way. [00:53:00]

**Alice:** Yeah. Probably not an ulcer because of the quantity of ham she's eating.

**Kim:** Oh, my God, look at how much she's eating, okay? She's fine.

**Alice:** But maybe she has endometriosis. I don't know.

**Becca:** Maybe she's just depressed. You never know. Anxiety can cause a lot of really weird physical symptoms in a person.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Alice:** She probably needs magnesium. She definitely needs vitamin D.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** Yeah, they didn't have any of that shit.

**Alice:** No.

**Molly:** She is complaining and complaining. She complains that Anne hasn't asked her about her dinner at the pools the night before. [Becca laughs] And Anne is like, "I assumed you didn't go." And she's like, "No, no, no."

**Becca:** "Oh, no, no, no, I was perfectly fine last night."

**Molly:** "It is just today."

**Becca:** "Just today."

**Molly:** And then, when Anne does ask her about her dinner at the pools, she's like, "Oh, well, it was nothing remarkable," [giggles] and she starts complaining about how on the carriage ride home, she was smushed between the two other girls and she's like, "That's probably why I'm ill." It's iconic.

Then they go to the great house where the Musgroves live. Henrietta and Louisa have

gotten a harp. And [00:54:00] Henrietta also is Mrs. Forster in the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice*. I love her.

**Becca:** And without spoiling anything, she will pop up in other adaptations of Jane Austen's work as well. [chuckles]

**Molly:** Oh, good. They want to induce Anne to play the piano, not the harp. And Mary is like, "Well, I play quite as well as Anne. Don't you want me to play too?"

**Becca:** The silence that follows that [Kim laughs] is like 10 seconds long.

**Molly:** It's really good.

**Becca:** Of course, yes.

**Molly:** Thank you, Mary.

**Kim:** "But you know what? You dance so much better, [Molly giggles] so we just love to see you dance."

**Molly:** Yeah, exactly. And also, that's the first time we're introduced to the notion that Anne has quite given up dancing. They're like, "Well, Anne doesn't like to dance, anyway. And you dance so well, so let Anne play while you dance." Then we get the famous montage of everyone gossiping at Anne while they sip tea.

**Alice:** [onomatopoeia]

**Kim:** You know I love a [00:55:00] montage, Alice. You know I love montages.

**Alice:** She's obsessed with them. This is my favorite scene in the movie. It's incredible. Anne acts it so well, even though she doesn't say anything it.

**Becca:** It tells you everything you need to know about Anne's debacle, which is, this is her best-case scenario in her life, which is hanging out with her better sister, with people who genuinely like her as a person.

**Alice:** Who are nice. They are nice people.

**Becca:** Good, nice people. Wealthy, good connections and still her life is sitting there with a cup of tea while they all talk about each other. Which, if it were me, I'd be having a great time, I would be living, because I enjoy a good gab. But Anne--

**Alice:** Give me some of that cake.

**Kim:** No. But the thing is, they're not just talking shit though. They're asking her to try to solve things. Again, triggering for me, because when I go back, whenever I see my family, it's always like, "Oh, you know, blah, blah, blah, blah. Can you do something about it?" I'm just like, "You don't see me for six years. I come back and I'm supposed to solve everybody's problems?" [00:56:00]

**Becca:** The amount of emotional labor Anne Elliot takes on is honestly remarkable in her life. It's crazy. And even from these people who are actually helping her out quite a lot right now by letting her stay with them, but at the same time, the amount she has to do at any given moment. And the way that Amanda Root plays this across her face, it's like she doesn't have a line in the scene and you know exactly what Anne is thinking.

**Alice:** Imagine having to manage the emotions of your brother-in-law who also asked you to marry him at one point.



**Kim:** Yeah.

**Alice:** And like you have to help him navigate his marriage to your little sister.

**Molly:** Yeah. I think that their relationship is so interesting, because I have to imagine that he wasn't necessarily in love with Anne. She was just the most appealing of the three sisters, and her saying, "No," I don't imagine that it broke his heart, but I do imagine [00:57:00] that there is some awkwardness between them now." But the moment that he walks in and she says, "You were missed at luncheon, Charles." And he gives this long-suffering eye roll.

**Alice:** He's like, "Fuck."

**Molly:** I'm like, "Actually, I feel like you two are friends."

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Alice:** No. Yeah. And I think they would-- So, one thing I know to add some historical context to this, is that once your sister, in this case, has gotten married-- Let's say, if Mary were to die, there is absolutely no way socially or legally that Charles would be able to marry Anne, because in the eyes of the law, in the eyes of society, that they are siblings now. And so, they do, I feel, fall into that sibling relationship and have that kind of understanding between themselves, which I find quite sweet.

**Becca:** And the way that moment plays is really interesting, because it gives context to what that [00:58:00] relationship looks like, which in what we've seen so far is very obviously, these two spend a lot of time negotiating how to take care of Mary. And that Charles, for his faults, does try to take care of his wife, often fails and corrects. You can see her being like, "Hey, you got to take care of Mary this way." And him being like, "Oh, God, again," Like, "Oh, can't you come take care of Mary?" That negotiation between the two of them feels like it has history behind it, when she says, "You were missed at lunch."

**Alice:** Yeah.

**Molly:** "Go do it. Go talk to her." Not to harp on this too much, because we're not talking about this book. [giggles] But in that case, are Emma and Knightley not related?

**Alice:** No. So, that's a different story, because his brother has married her sister.

**Molly:** So, she's legally sisters with his brother. [00:59:00]

**Kim:** But not with him. Yeah.

**Becca:** But not with him. Yeah.

**Molly:** But that can't compute. It doesn't compute.

**Alice:** So, Isabella is like his sister, John is her brother, but there's-

**Kim:** And it just ends there.

**Alice:** -not that kind of connection with each other. It's a loophole.

**Molly:** It's a loophole.

**Becca:** The only thing you need to know, is that when they remade this story in the 1990s, they put more incest in there.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Kim:** Oh, yeah.

**Molly:** So, the Admiral and Mrs. Croft come to pay their respects to the Musgroves. And the kids love Admiral Croft, and it is adorable.

**Kim:** So cute. He's such a nice guy.

**Molly:** He is. He teaches them how to make the little boat.

**Kim:** That's why I know in the depths of my heart that Wentworth also taught Anne how to make a little boat.

**Molly:** Yeah, which is why she's staring at them wistfully.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah. Yeah, again, the immediate warmth coming off of those two characters. And also, the Admiral loving **[01:00:00]** children is an interesting thing, because they're an older couple. It's clear they're not going to have kids. It tells you a little bit about them as well that they have an adoration of children, but no children. Fiona Shaw's performance as Mrs. Croft is so perfect for how I pictured her in the book. It's one of my favorite things about this adaptation as well.

**Molly:** Fiona Shaw is my favorite part of anything.

**Alice:** Oh, God, yeah. It seems like the way that she's delivering it, you would think that maybe this is a point of sadness or longing for them. But really, they only seem to exude the joy that they have for each other, and the lives that they've shared together and just the fact that they don't have children is just that. It's just one of those things. And so, they love the children that they're around.

**Molly:** Totally. So, while this is happening, Mrs. Croft and Anne are having a little conversation and Mrs. Croft is like, "I think that it was you and not your sister that **[01:01:00]** knew my brother." And Anne's eyes go huge, like, you can see all the whites around her irises. Mrs. Croft tells Anne that he is married. And Anne panic. Like, she looks like she's going to throw up. The camera stays focused on her face when Mrs. Croft says, "Oh, and he has a new curacy too." You see her just like almost-

**Kim:** Melts. [onomatopoeia]

**Molly:** -burst into tears with relief.

**Kim:** Oh, thank God.

**Molly:** I was just watching this, I was like, "It's insane that this girl ever thought, at least in the book, that she was being subtle with her emotions." [giggles]

**Kim:** [laughs]

**Becca:** Yeah. There's so much internal panic and *Persuasion*. One of the deep challenges of adapting it, is that you want to be able to show that internal panic without making it obvious, because if Anne is one thing, she's subtle. Like, she's very good at masking her emotions and prioritizing other people's emotions to a fault. And in this moment, it's because we get that really deep cut to her face **[01:02:00]** like this close that we can see it all play out so big. But to others, like, is Mrs. Croft sitting there and watching her go [gasps] and being like, "Oh, weird. [chuckles] Why does she care that much?" [chuckles]

**Molly:** Right. It's like, maybe her eyes are just always that big.

**Alice:** Yeah.

**Molly:** And they kind of are.

**Becca:** Yeah, they are.

[laughter]

**Molly:** But they do mention that her other brother is coming, and they're like, "Oh, you wouldn't have met him. He's the sailor." And Mary's like, "No, no, no, Anne, you know him, right?" And Anne's like, "I met him-- I met him once."

**Becca:** "Once or twice."

**Molly:** "Once or twice." Later, they are releasing that little boat, the paper boat, onto the water, and Henrietta runs up to invite them to the great house for dinner to meet Captain Wentworth. And Anne is like, "Oh, my God, oh, my God, oh, my God." When she's getting ready, she's looking at herself in the mirror and she's adjusting her little tendrils and then she hears a scream [01:03:00] from outside.

We go out, we see outside and little Charles is limp and being carried, and Mary is screaming and sobbing, and they're running him back. [Alice laughs] He has, of course, dislocated his collarbone and also knocked up his face really bad. He fell out of a tree in this. In the book, it's off a horse, which he shouldn't have been riding a horse anyway, because he's four.

**Becca:** No, I think he falls off like a little wall or something.

**Alice:** Foreshadowing.

**Molly:** In the book or the movie?

**Becca:** In the book.

**Molly:** Oh, I don't know why in my mind, he fell off a horse. Yeah, foreshadowing. Yeah, okay, so maybe it's not a horse. I don't know where I came up with that.

**Becca:** No. Yeah, I think like long and the short of what you need to know, is that little Charles is playing roughhousing and falls of something he should not have been climbing-

**Molly:** You're so right.

**Becca:** -and dislocates his collarbone.

**Molly:** Yes. Of course, Charles, Big [01:04:00] C, decides to still go to dinner. And Mary is pissed and she's like, "If his father can, why shouldn't I?" And Anne is like, "Okay. Go. I'll stay with the kid." You see her just calmly swabbing his face, but you know that she's avoiding-- She's like, "Okay, one more day I can go without seeing Wentworth [unintelligible [01:04:17] It's going to be fine."

**Alice:** She's like, "Thanks, little Charlie. You really did auntie a solid on this one."

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah. This moment also translates so differently in the movie. I think it has to, because in the book, by the time they're going to dinner, it's known that little Charles is going to be fine. But in this moment, you're looking at the bludgeoned face of a little child and his

mom is in front of him being like, "Why can't I go to dinner?"

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Kim:** And the mom's like, "Oh, yeah. Well, that's okay, because you know you're the best person for this, because you don't have a mother's heart, so you're not going to be pained looking at him. Okay, bye."

**Molly:** It is a [01:05:00] little bit iconic though, because when Anne is like, "Okay, go then I'll stay with him." It's sharp. And Mary's like, "You would think that she would be like, 'No, no, you should go,'" but she's like, "Huh, that's not a bad idea." It's just hilarious.

**Becca:** It's like, "If his father doesn't care about him, why should I?"

[laughter]

**Molly:** Exactly. And then, we get a transition, like a slide wipe to dinner, and we see, just through a window, Henrietta looking at a man's body.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** Aren't we all? [laughs]

**Molly:** We are. Henrietta, and then the back of a man. Henrietta is giggling, and leaning in and a little bit flirting. We see, of course, this is the back of Wentworth's head, which is a great place to wrap up this first part of the 1995 *Persuasion*. Alice and Kim, thank you so much for joining us for this.

**Alice:** Thank you.

**Becca:** Do you want to tell the people where they can find you?

**Alice:** [01:06:00] Yeah. You know what? Just go to our Instagram. We've got an Instagram. You can find us, [@fetchsmellingsalts](#). You can find us on Apple iTunes, and Spotify and Pocket Cast and all those great places.

**Kim:** And that's the same for your podcast, right, Alice?

**Alice:** Oh, right.

**Kim:** Austen After Dark?

**Alice:** You can also find Austen After Dark on Instagram. It's [@austenafterdark](#).

**Molly:** Incredible. Well, thank you so much again, and we'll talk to you very soon for the rest of this movie.

**Becca:** And until next time, stay proper.

**Molly:** And learn how to make a little paper boat to impress your lover.

**Kim:** Yes.

**Becca:** Yay.

[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](http://podandprejudice.com). To keep up with the show, you can follow us on Twitter, **[01:07:00]** Instagram, and Facebook, [@podandprejudice](https://www.facebook.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](#)]*