

Molly: Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we want to thank our newest patron, AM. Welcome to the team. And a huge shoutout to our patrons, Judy, Heather, Inka and Lauren, who upgraded their pledges.

As always, if you're interested in hearing Becca's first thoughts on *Persuasion*, hanging out with us on Discord and submitting your own study questions, check out our Patreon at patreon.com/podandprejudice. And now, enjoy this week's episode covering Volume II, Chapter 9, or Chapter 21 of *Persuasion*.

Becca: Is there anything to talk about in this episode really?

Molly: Nothing. You, guys, this is going to be a quick and dirty episode.

Becca: I am really, really excited to talk about this one with you, especially in light of our last episode. Have you edited it yet?

Molly: Becca's making fun of me, because I was stanning Mr. Elliot.

Becca: I got it. So, I thought I was even laying it on a little too thick where I was like, "So, you're Team Mr. Elliot."

Molly: Listen, it was on the record.

Becca: Yes, it's on the record.

Molly: And I have [00:01:00] no shame. The thing is, I knew that I wasn't necessarily supposed to be rooting for him, but he's pretty sexy.

[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--

Molly and Becca: *Persuasion*.

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, 2 or 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 9, or if your book is not broken up into volumes, Chapter 21.

Becca: Oh, yes. And it's another one of those one chapter wonders, because nothing happens in it, whatsoever.

Molly: Yeah. No new information is divulged.

Becca: Yeah. No big reveals or twists come through in this chapter.

Molly: Nobody was wrong about anything.

Becca: Yeah. No, I [00:02:00] am so thrilled, listeners, because it has been so long since Molly, our dear, sweet Molly, has been wrong about anything like catastrophically on this podcast.

Molly: Because I've gotten really smart.

Becca: You have gotten so in tune with Jane Austen's novels. It was so beautiful to watch you swan dive into this take on Mr. Elliot, so hard.

Molly: I really went all in.

Becca: Yeah. And you know what? I was thrilled. It was great.

Molly: And again, I have no regrets.

Becca: No, you shouldn't. It was really, really quite good. I will say this. If you're listening along on Patreon to me going through these chapters myself for the first time, you will note that I called rake early.

Molly: Mm.

Becca: I was like, "I'm sorry, I'm calling rake." But even I did not see the extent to which Mr. Elliot was a rake. But we'll get into it. But all that to be said, Jane Austen really throws some curveballs in this chapter. But before we get into it, I should probably refresh everyone's [00:03:00] recollection as to where we were last time.

Molly: Exactly.

Becca: So, in our last chapter, we did another one-chapter wonder. And this time, it was Anne goes to the orchestra and has love drama. She has big conversations with Wentworth about Louisa, Benwick, Wentworth's feelings on the matter. And they flirt hard. And then, Mr. Elliot comes in and tries to flirt hard, and makes Anne super uncomfortable, because she's like, "No, no, no, no, I don't want Wentworth to see this, because then he's going to like, think I'm into Mr. Elliot." And then, Wentworth is like, "I think you're into Mr. Elliot and I'm going to leave." And Mr. Elliot's like, "Who? I hope you get to keep your last name. He-he-he." And Molly was salivating over it, the entire time.

Molly: Because to be fair, he is smooth.

Becca: He was very smooth.

Molly: And it's easy to forget about all the shit that we heard about him in the beginning of the book when he's being that hot.

Becca: Yeah. And I also think like, you're not the only one who fell for his act here. We'll get into it, but tough L for Lady Russell again. [laughs]

Molly: Yeah. [00:04:00] Well, we'll get into it. So, let's talk about the chapter.

Becca: Yes. Or, what we'll call the expose of Mrs. Smith and complete gossip dominance of Nurse Rooke.

Molly: Yes. So, the morning after the concert, Anne is glad that she made plans with Mrs. Smith, because she doesn't want to be around if Mr. Elliot calls on her.

Becca: This is actually, really a great moment, because it's really relatable-

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: -where you're like, "Oh, I know this person has a thing for me and I'm just going to not deal with it."

Molly: Yeah. It's like, "Oh, sorry, I didn't see your text. I was at a show."

Becca: Oh, my God. "Sorry, I'm just seeing this now." We're all on our phones all the time.

Molly: Like a month later, "Sorry, I'm just seeing this now."

Becca: Yeah. And to be clear, if I'm not texting you back, it is because I'm a bad texter, but it's not because I didn't see your text. It's because I was dissociating or in the middle of something and I saw the text and I was like, "Oh, God, I cannot respond to this right now."

Molly: Usually, for me, what happens is I open the text and then I close the text thinking, I'll read that later, and then I forget that it exists.

Becca: Yes. I do that [00:05:00] all the time. But also like I'll be in a meeting, or I will not know the answer right away and I'll be like, "I'll deal with that later," and then I let it pile up, and then I'm like, "It's too late to respond." But if it's someone who is into you, you're really, really, really, unlikely to respond and you're going to say something like, "Hey, just seeing it now." But none of us are just seeing it now.

Molly: No. Anne feels flattered by Mr. Elliot's attentions, but she knows that it-- in her heart of hearts, she knows that she will only ever love Captain Wentworth, even if they don't end up together. So, she's walking to go see Mrs. Smith. There was a line about how she's so in love that she's spreading like perfume and flowers everywhere she goes. The love is just pouring off of her in waves.

Becca: The pheromones are pouring off of her in waves.

Molly: Yes. When she gets to Mrs. Smith's house, Mrs. Smith seemed to have hardly expected her to show, which even though they had an appointment. It was sad, because it reminded me of the end of the last chapter or the one before the concert, where Mrs. Smith was like, "I fear that I'm about to lose you."

Becca: Which [00:06:00] in context, makes a lot more sense.

Molly: Yes. We're going to find out why she feared to lose her.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Anne tells her all about the concert, but she's really heard it all already through the gossip mill, and she has specific questions about who was there. She's asking her like, "Is this person there? Was this person there?" And Anne can't really say, because she was focused one person in particular and wasn't paying attention to the rest of the people in the concert hall. And Mrs. Smith is like, "Well, you must have been seated in the seats of grandeur by the orchestra, because you were with the Dowager Viscountess Lady--

Becca: The Dowager Viscountess Lady Dalrymple and Baby Dalrymple.

Molly: Yes. The number of times I almost say Lady Catherine de Bourgh, which is--

Becca: Same energy, but Lady Catherine de Bourgh is like-- Well, first of all, Catherine de Bourgh is just heinous in a lot of ways, whereas I think the Dowager Viscountess Lady

Dalrymple is just meh.

Molly: Yeah, she's just boring.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: And Anne says, "No. The Dowager Viscountess lady Dalrymple prefers to be seated farther back. We were very well placed for hearing, not for seeing, because obviously [00:07:00] I didn't see anybody." And Mrs. Smith is like, "Well, I'm sure you saw enough for your own enjoyment. You hung out within your own party. I can see it in your eyes that when you weren't listening to the music, you had agreeable conversation to listen to."

Becca: One of my favorite things about Anne Elliot, is that she spends most of her time panicking that people know that she has a crush on Captain Wentworth when nobody knows.

Molly: Yeah. It's like the farthest thing from anybody's mind.

Becca: Yeah. There's so many instances in this book where someone will be like, "Ha-ha-ha." Or, "Oh yeah, Captain Wentworth." And she's like, "How do you know?"

Molly: [laughs] That's exactly what happens here. She's like, "You can see it in my eyes?" And Mrs. Smith is like, "Yeah, your countenance perfectly informs me that you were in the company last night with the person whom you think the most agreeable in the world." And Anne is like, "Oh, my God, what the fuck." But I, in my notes, wrote, I think she's talking about Mr. Elliot, which is, I guess, not that smart, because everyone thinks that she and Mr. [00:08:00] Elliot are a thing at this point.

Becca: No, no, no, it was correct, because you were outside of Anne's head.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: So, anyway. Mrs. Smith thanks Anne for spending time with her when she could be hanging out with her lover. And Anne is sitting there overthinking, wondering how she could possibly know. And then, Mrs. Smith asks if Mr. Elliot is aware of Anne's acquaintance with her, and if he knows Mrs. Smith is in Bath. I wrote in my notes, I knew it. I want to say I don't--

If you think back to a couple episodes ago, I was like, I had a thought and I couldn't remember what it was, because I didn't write it down when I was reading. I had a thought that perhaps-- I don't think anyone's going to believe me, but I'm putting it on the record that I had a thought that Mr. Elliot and Mrs. Smith had a love connection.

Becca: I believe you.

Molly: You believe me that I thought that?

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Thank you.

Becca: Of course.

Molly: It's Wrong.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I wanted to put it on the record that I had the thought, but it is, in fact, incorrect.

Becca: [00:09:00] Yeah. Also, you have never been shy to be wrong about things.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: And that is what makes this podcast work so spectacularly.

Molly: Thank you.

Becca: And so, I firmly believe that you would not say that you had a thought beforehand, unless you actually had that thought beforehand.

Molly: Yeah. When I originally wrote-- was typing out my notes or writing my notes in the margins, I was like, "I knew it. This was my thought." And I was like, "But I'm right, so no one's going to think that I actually had this thought before, because I would just be trying to say, 'Oh, I knew it.'" But then, I was wrong, and I was like, "Okay, I'm safe to say it now."

Becca: [chuckles]

Molly: Okay. So, anyway, she asks if Mr. Elliot knows she's there. And Anne is like, "Oh, my God, phew. She thinks I love Mr. Elliot. I'm safe." And then, she asks if Mrs. Smith knows Mr. Elliot. And Mrs. Smith says she knew him a long time ago, but the acquaintance has since worn out. And Anne says, "Oh, well, if I had known, I would have mentioned you to him before."

Mrs. Smith says, "That's exactly what I [00:10:00] want. He could be of essential service to her if Anne would talk to him for her." And I'm like, "What is going on?" She just really takes a long time to get there. So, this entire chapter, I'm like, "What's happening?"

Becca: Yeah. This is one of those circumstances-- So, we'll get into a lot of the different things that Mrs. Smith says in this chapter, which take twists and turns,-

Molly: Oh, yes.

Becca: -shall we say. But it does have the energy of someone trying to testing the waters on something-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -right now. And Anne has no idea what she's getting at all.

Molly: And neither do I, as the audience.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Yeah. Anne is like, "Of course, I would love to talk to him for you." But she thinks that maybe Mrs. Smith thinks that she has more pull with him than she actually does. She says, "Think of me only as his cousin, and if whatever you want to have me tell him would be proper for his cousin to tell him, I'll do it." And Mrs. Smith gives her a look, and she's like, "Maybe I should have waited for the official information, [00:11:00] but maybe you can just give me a hint as to when it will all be settled." And she says, "To be sure by next week, I might be allowed to think it all settled and build my own selfish schemes on Mr. Elliot's good fortune."

Becca: So, she thinks that Anne is being coy.

Molly: She thinks Anne is being coy about their relationship, and not telling her that her and Mr. Elliot are going to end up together.

Becca: Which, by the way, very presumptuous and just shows you how much Mr. Elliot was confident in his pursuit of Anne Elliot.

Molly: Right. Because she's presumably getting all of her information from the horse's mouth, a little bit. Like, it's going through a winding.

Becca: It's a little game of telephone. But clearly, we are led to believe that the information she is getting is accurate.

Molly: Yeah. Also, at this point, I'm like, "What schemes?" Because she's being very vague. And Anne is like, "Hold up. No. Stop, I'm not going to marry Mr. Elliot." And Mrs. Smith is like, "Well, we, women, never mean to have anybody till he proposes." I was like, "Is [00:12:00] that a Mr. Collins type?" Are you saying like women always act like they're not going to marry someone until he actually proposes?

Becca: Yes, that's a yes, but she's not rejecting a man to his face, and he's not being like, "No, you're not possibly rejecting me."

Molly: Sure.

Becca: Her being like, "She needs this?"

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: And she's like, "Oh, no, no, no, I have good information. You're going to marry Mr. Elliot." And also, as far as Anne Elliot goes, we've talked about this on paper, Mr. Elliot is a very-

Molly: Great match.

Becca: -good match.

Molly: Yeah. Great match.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: And Mrs. Smith says, "Why should you be cruel," aka turn him down? She wants to plead for her former friend, not her current friend. She says, "I can't call him my current friend, but I want to plead for my former friend. He's a very suitable match. And again, haven't you heard good things about him from Colonel Wallis? Anne is like, "His wife has only been dead six months. Give him some time. Let him cook-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Mrs. Smith is like, "If that's your only objection, don't forget me when you're married." And I'm [00:13:00] so lost at this point, because I had thought that-- I was really on my one-track mind, I was like, "Oh, Mrs. Smith and Mr. Elliot were a thing."

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: But that's not at all what's happening.

Becca: No, no, no, no. What she's doing right now-- We have a lot to discuss about Ms. Smith's plan here, and her intentions and the morality of it, but also the desperation of it. But in this moment, she's like, "No, no, no, no, no, no, my one shot. My only shot at getting out of

this novel.”

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Like, “Let’s make this happen.”

Molly: She’s grabbing at straws here.

Becca: Exactly.

Molly: But this really took me on a rollercoaster. The peak of the rollercoaster is coming up in bullet points. She says, “When you’re married, make sure he knows that I’m your friend. And then, he will think very little of the trouble required, which it is natural for him now to avoid and get rid of as he can with many affairs and engagements of his own.”

I’m like, “What is she talking about?” I understand later what she’s talking about, but she’s **[00:14:00]** being very vague. And she says, “Of course, he cannot be aware of the importance to me.” And I wrote in all caps, “IS SHE HIS DEAD WIFE?”

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: I had completely forgotten, at this point, what Mrs. Smith’s story was. I knew that she had a husband, but I was like, “Her husband’s dead. His wife is dead. Were they each other’s dead spouses?” [giggles] It seemed to make sense in my mind. Becca’s just staring at me with the widest eyes.

Becca: No, no, I love it. It’s novel. And you know what? In another universe, maybe it’s true. Maybe there’s fan fiction out there.

Molly: Yeah, [giggles] where they faked each other’s deaths. Anyway.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: So, that was the peak of my rollercoaster. Now, we’re going to start putting some pieces together. She says that she trusts Anne will be happy in marriage and her peace will not be shipwrecked as her own has been. “He will not be led astray, he will not be misled by others to his **[00:15:00]** ruin,” which is when I remember what happened to her, which is like that she was left with nothing when her husband died, because presumably, he threw away everything in life and didn’t live within his means. And I remember thinking, what a douche canoe.

Becca: Not the case.

Molly: Not the case. Anne says, “While that might be true, that he would not do that.” She wants to convince Mrs. Smith that he is nothing to her. How can she do this? She says, “If he were to propose,” which she has no reason to suspect he might, which I was like, “Ah, yes, you do,” she would refuse him. She says, “It’s not Mr. Elliot, that-- and then, cuts herself off.

Becca: And then, Mrs. Smith suddenly gets her ears perked?

Molly: Yes. And so, Anne immediately pivots and she’s like, “Well, why do you think that me and Elliot are a thing?” Mrs. Smith thinks it’s been obvious for a while, but she didn’t hear it spoken of until two days ago. Mrs. Rooke, if we remember, her nurse, heard from Mrs. Wallis, **[00:16:00]** Colonel Wallis’ wife, and she gave her the whole history on Monday. And Anne’s like, “I can’t imagine what history she could have for such unfounded news, but in any event, what message can I bring to Mr. Elliot for you?” So, she’s really trying to just get away from the subject.

Becca: Well, she's curious now. Like, her ears are perked, our ears are perked.

Molly: Everyone's ears are perked.

Becca: Yeah. This has been very vague and very cryptic. All we know so far, is that she's like, "I mean, you want me to do something for you related to Mr. Elliot? He is my cousin, so I do know him."

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: "You want me to take out a message? I am not marrying him."

Molly: Yes.

Becca: "But what message do you want me to take to him?"

Molly: Right.

Becca: And now, Mrs. Smith relays.

Molly: Mrs. Smith, well, almost.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: She says, "No, I was mistaken, knowing you're not together. I'm not going to trouble you with it." So, she's having second thoughts about her message. And Anne is like, "Well, okay, you spoke of knowing him many years." Anne's still trying to get to the bottom of how does she know him. She's [00:17:00] like, "Did you know him before he was married?" Yes, she knew him before he was married. How well did they know each other? Intimately.

Becca: Very well.

Molly: Anne is like, "When you knew him at a time in his life, that is of great interest to me." And she asks if he was anything like he is now. And Mrs. Smith says, "I wouldn't know. I haven't seen him in three years."

Becca: Dun-dun-dun.

Molly: Then there's an awkward silence. And then, Mrs. Smith bursts out saying, "She's sorry for being so vague," finally, but she didn't know what to tell her or how much to tell her. She doesn't want to be officious, which I looked up and it means intrusively enthusiastic and offering help or advice/interfering. She doesn't want to interfere with their family ties, but she must make Anne acquainted with Mr. Elliot's true character.

Becca: And here it is.

Molly: Whew. She rips him a new one here, and I just wrote, read this.

Becca: Yes, and it is quite a new one to be ripped.

Molly: "Mr. Elliot is a man without heart or conscience. [00:18:00] A designing, wary, cold-blooded being who thinks only of himself, who, for his own interest or ease, would be guilty of any cruelty or any treachery that could be perpetrated without risk of his general character. He has no feeling for others. Those whom he has been the chief cause of leading into ruin, he can neglect and desert without the smallest compunction. He is totally beyond the reach of any sentiment of justice or compassion. Oh, he is black at heart. Hollow and black."

Becca: Listeners, we have a villain.

Molly: Insanity.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: I think I did not think he was going to be the villain of this story.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I don't know, we all heard me last episode.

Becca: Oh, yeah, yeah, you were in. You were all in. But boy, oh, boy, do we learn some stuff about the character of Sir William Elliot in this.

Molly: Sir William Walter Elliot. Mr. William Walter Elliot.

Becca: Yeah. He's not a sir.

Molly: He's not a sir.

Becca: He's not a sir. I said that more in like a sassy [00:19:00] way, but then I realized afterwards I was like, "That actually means something in this book, so it should be Mr. Elliot."

Molly: Yes. So, let's get into why. Anne is stunned into silence, and so am I. And then, Mrs. Smith says, "Okay, I've been carried away by my emotions. Let the facts speak for themselves," and she tells the facts. "He was an intimate friend of her husband," whose name is none other than Charles.

Becca: Yes, it is. It is. And let's take a step back. So, we are now years prior.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: We are well back in years at this point to when Mrs. Smith and Charles first wed. And when she first weds him, she meets his buddy, Mr. Elliot.

Molly: Good friends.

Becca: Yes. Who is his bestie and is poor.

Molly: Yes. Her husband trusted and loved him. When she got to know him, she also trusted and loved him. But she notes that she was 19 and didn't have the best judgment. Now, as you said, he's [00:20:00] poor, he can barely afford to look like a gentleman, like, keep up appearances. But he's treated like a brother by her husband, and he often comes to stay with them. Charles often gives him money, because he was, "the most generous spirit in the world." So, she really loves Charles.

Becca: Yes. You get a picture of Charles here, which is coming from a biased source from a woman who loves him, but you are led to believe that Charles, Mrs. Smith's late husband, was stupid and very bad with money, but kind hearted and loves his friend.

Molly: He reminds me of Bingley.

Becca: A little bit, but I don't think Bingley would be this dumb.

Molly: No. Well, Bingley is more influenced by Darcy who is very smart and prudent, but if Darcy was a different man.

Becca: If Bingley met Wickham instead of Darcy. I gotcha. I gotcha.

Molly: Yeah. Anne notes that this is the same time of Mr. Elliot's life when he met and spurned her father and sister. She had always had a hard time reconciling that man with the man that she now thinks him to be. And [00:21:00] she also questioned the circumstances of his marriage, which is-- I think I understand everything that's happening in this chapter, except for what went on with him and his wife. So, I'm sure that we'll get into that and you'll have answers for me.

Becca: Yeah, I think we can just say like, at a base level, I think it's actually much more simple than you think it is. She's of low birth, but she's wealthy.

Molly: Okay.

Becca: Super wealthy. Incredibly wealthy, like bottomless pit wealthy.

Molly: But not high status.

Becca: No.

Molly: New money?

Becca: New money.

Molly: But her father was a cow herder or cow seller.

Becca: Butcher.

Molly: Her grandfather was a butcher. Her father was a grazier, which is a cow seller. Her grandfather had been a butcher. But that was all nothing. She was a fine woman and had a decent education, was brought forward by some cousins. Does that mean that her cousins are the rich ones?

Becca: I think it's not clear, but you are led to believe that either her father was a very successful grazier, [00:22:00] or her cousins got her wealth from other means, like she inherited elsewhere.

Molly: But in any event, she was very, very rich.

Becca: Very, very rich. No title. And so, what Mr. Elliot does in the circumstances, he's faced with two options. You have, on one hand, Elizabeth Elliot, who is, to be fair, awful, like a terrible person, and is the daughter of a baronet whose title he will inherit and it will be tied to this beautiful estate. So, it's very proper match in a lot of ways, but she's awful.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: And they don't have that much money, and he has no money. I mean, the Elliots have money, but they don't have the same amount of money.

Molly: Oh, right. Because Mr. Elliot is bad with money.

Becca: Exactly.

Molly: Okay.

Becca: And this girl has a ton of money. So, Elliot basically says, "Fuck title, fuck stature in society. I just want money."

Molly: Got it. Yes. Okay, I understand. Mrs. Smith says, "Well, I often heard him talk of the Elliots." She knew at the time that [00:23:00] he was invited all the time and always chose not to go. He confided everything in her. So, she has every detail of information from that period of his life.

At this point, she says she can answer questions about his wife or marriage. And Anne says she doesn't have questions at this time. She knows they weren't happy. She just wants to know why he slighted her family. This is where she says, "Well, he only had one goal."

Molly and Becca: "Money."

Molly: "He didn't care about status. He wanted to gain a fortune by marriage and he thought marrying Elizabeth would have not been grand enough," because as we now remembered, Mr. Elliot or Sir Walter is not good with money and spends too much similarly to what is going to end up happening-

Becca: Yup.

Molly: -to Charles.

Becca: What we're seeing here is a lot of the overindulgences of the gentry class.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: To keep up appearances of being gentry and ending up with [giggles] nothing.

Becca: Yup.

Molly: She mentions that it was weird at the time, because she had just-- [00:24:00] This is Mrs. Smith. She had just left Anne from school, and he was constantly describing one Ms. Elliot while she was affectionately thinking on the other Ms. Elliot. And Anne's like, "Perhaps, you mentioned me to him." And I was like, "Oh, the friend."

Becca: That's how he knew her.

Molly: Yup. If you don't remember, listeners, he said that he's known of Anne Elliot for many years.

Becca: And that's how.

Molly: Yes. She says, "Yes, she did used to talk about how much better Anne was then," and then cuts herself off.

Becca: Good save.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Good save, Mrs. Smith.

Molly: But also, Anne agrees.

Becca: Yeah, but like--

Molly: But she would never say it.

Becca: You get the sense from this chapter, and I think this chapter drives it home more than anything else, although this comes up constantly in this book. We hear in Anne's internal monologue how atrocious her family is. We hear from Jane Austen how atrocious her family is. They are unbearable to everybody. You can't say it to her.

Molly: That's only okay when I say it.

Becca: It's only okay when she says it. It's also like there are cultural norms around insulting someone's family, [00:25:00] which we learned about all with Mr. Darcy.

Molly: [giggles] Yes.

Becca: So, what she's doing here is catching herself before she says something improper. And that's part of the reason why Anne is horrified by the letter that's shown to her.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Which, speaking of--

Molly: Speaking of the letter, Anne starts to put puzzle pieces together and she's like, "Okay, Mr. Elliot married for money. Is that what opened your eyes to his character?" And Mrs. Smith says, "No, that's pretty common in this world. He was only doing what he thought was best for himself." And Anne says, "But wasn't she socially inferior?" Yes, as you've said, she has money though. She met him, she fell in love with him and once he found out the amount of her fortune, he proposed.

She says, "Whatever esteem for his situation in life now that he has, he did not have as young men. So, he might have cared about the Kellynch estate, but he couldn't care less about the status of the family or the title." He said, "If baronetcies were saleable, anybody should have his for £50. But here's the [00:26:00] proof." Anne's like, "I don't need proof. I believe you. It's in line with everything I know about him. Why is he so changed?" Mrs. Smith says, "For my own satisfaction, go get the small inlaid box that's in the top shelf in my closet."

Becca: Mrs. Smith has the receipts.

Molly: She has the receipts. She also has shelves in the closet.

Becca: You have shelves in the closet right here.

Molly: I know. We all do. I'm just saying, what a novel idea. Anyway, my little Mr. Collins-

Becca: Call back.

Molly: -call back.

Becca: Call back.

Molly: Anne goes and gets the box, and Mrs. Smith opens it up and says, "These are papers that belong to my husband." She's looking for a letter that Elliot sent to her husband before they were married. She mentions that she doesn't know why he kept it. He kept a lot of random shit, but destroyed important letters and memorandums, which I thought is very dude.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Dude, bro.

Becca: Yeah. [chuckles]

Molly: Which I like. She kept this after he died, because she was determined to preserve every document of former intimacy. [00:27:00] And she now has another motive for being glad that she can produce it. I think her two motives are proof that she can hold up to him when she needs something from him, and also to incite Anne to anger at him. So, the letter. Now, we get into it.

He says to Mr. Charles Smith, he's never met a kinder soul in his 23 years on this earth. He doesn't need any more money at the moment. He has gotten rid of Sir Walter and Elizabeth, who have made him promise to visit, but he swears the only visit he'll be making to Kellynch is to bring it to auction.

He thinks Sir Walter is unlikely to remarry, but if he does, at least they will then leave him alone, which will be an equivalent for the reversion, which is the right-- this, I looked up, the right especially of the original owner or their heirs to possess or succeed to property on the death of the present possessor or at the end of the lease. So, his inheritance, basically. And he wishes he were [00:28:00] not an Elliot. He's glad he can at least drop the name of Walter. Why can he drop the name of Walter?

Becca: It's not his given name.

Molly: So, he can just like not go by it?

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Okay.

Becca: It's like plenty of people choose the name they go by, but he can't change his last name is what he's saying.

Molly: Right. Anne is shocked and mortified at the way he talks about her father in this letter. But she does remind herself that he shouldn't necessarily be judged, or rather he ought not to be judged for what he wrote in confidence, he didn't think anyone else was going to see this letter. But she agrees that this is proof, and again asks why he wanted to be acquainted with them now. Mrs. Smith can explain that too.

She says he wants to marry Anne. She knows that this is the case because of Colonel Wallis. And Anne is like, "Well, are you acquainted with the Wallis'?" And she says, "No, she's not acquainted with him, but Elliot talks unreservedly to Wallis, who talks unreservedly to his wife, who talks unreservedly to her nurse, who then repeats it all to Mrs. Smith."

[00:29:00] Anne is like, "Okay, this is not a sufficient explanation since Mr. Elliot came to Bath before she did." They were already on friendly terms, like him and her family, when she arrived. She says, "The information passed through too many hands and was misconceived by folly in one and ignorance in the other, and has no truth left." Essentially, they played a game of telephone and the truth was lost.

Mrs. Smith thinks that nobody thinks Anne is the first reason he came to Bath and reconciled with her family, but she's like, "If I can give you proof that my information is good, I know that he saw you before coming to Bath without knowing it was you, is it true?" And Anne is like, "Oh, it is." And Mrs. Smith is like, "See, my sources are credible. So, he came and he was glad to see you here, and that made it a double motive for him." I was like, "I bet his first moment motive was Mrs. Clay," which reminded me that I had also a theory that he and Mrs. Clay were going to end up together.

Becca: Yes, you did.

Molly: Again, wrong. [giggles] Or, wrong at [00:30:00] this point, anyway. Who knows? She says, "Everyone thinks that Mrs. Clay means to become Lady Elliot, and are surprised that Elizabeth doesn't seem more worried about the danger." Anne cannot deny this. So, she says nothing. Mrs. Smith goes on to say that everyone in town had an idea of it, and Colonel Wallis is included in that, and he was paying special attention because of his friendship with Mr. Elliot.

When Elliot came for a day or two, which is right after he saw Anne in Lyme, well, remember, he was on his way to Bath, Wallis told him what was happening. Now, time has changed Mr. Elliot's opinion on the baronetcy.

Becca: I think this is like a great quote to read aloud. "Upon all points of blood and connexion he is a completely altered man. Having long had as much money as he could spend, nothing to wish for on the side of avarice or indulgence, he has been gradually learning to pin his happiness upon the consequence he is heir to. I thought it coming on before our acquaintance ceased, but it is now a confirmed feeling. He cannot bear the [00:31:00] idea of not being Sir William." I love that quote.

Molly: Why do you love that quote?

Becca: Because I think it tells you everything you need to know about who Mr. Elliot is as a person. Because it paints a picture, Jane Austen's so good at this, of a hunger in the man.

Molly: He wants it all.

Becca: "Having long had as much money as he could spend, nothing to wish for on the side of avarice or indulgence, he has been gradually learning to pin his happiness upon the consequence he is heir to." His happiness. So, you get this picture of a man who was chasing happiness, a chasing consequence for himself and he thinks money's going to solve that issue for him. And he gets it and then it's not enough. And then, you get a new obsession with maintaining his right to the baronetcy. I think that tells you this is a [00:32:00] man that cannot be satisfied.

Molly: He will never be satisfied.

Becca: Nope. I think that makes him-- Like, he's clearly cunning, he's ambitious, he's sly, he's careful, he's charming, but I like this idea of this man who like, he starts from more humble beginnings and he's desperate. He thinks what I need is to get money and he gets money in a loveless marriage, treats his wife badly, gets more money than he will ever be able to spend, and then what does he go after something that he never thought would make him happy before and something that we know in our world doesn't really make a big difference in happiness as we can see from the characters of the Elliots.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: But he's said he pins all of his happiness on it.

Molly: I have to sing one more musical theater line.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: [singing] *Because happy is what happens When all your dreams come true!* Well, isn't it?

Becca: It is, I admit, the tiniest bit unlike I [00:33:00] anticipated.

Molly: Anticipated.

Becca: Yeah. [chuckles]

Molly: Everyone go see *Wicked*, I guess.

Becca: We'll all have to. They're bussing all the musical theater kids to the theaters.

Molly: I already have tickets.

Becca: I'm not surprised. [Molly giggles] I have not bought my tickets yet. I will probably soon. It's required viewing if you were a millennial who was into musical theater.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: But I get this idea. He's a careless man, he's a selfish man, but he's also an empty void of a man.

Molly: Yeah. Yeah. It's sad, but I don't really feel bad for him.

Becca: I wouldn't feel bad for him. We're going to get into how little I feel bad for him as we go through this chapter.

Molly: Yes. So, because of all of this, the news about Mrs. Clay alarmed, him and he made a plan to come back to Bath to reestablish his connection with the family, engage the danger of Mrs. Clay circumventing the lady if necessary. I'm confused about what threat she poses, and I think this is just like a hierarchy of--

Becca: He's [00:34:00] not worried about the marriage.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: He's worried about the procreation. He's worried Sir Walter will have an heir.

Molly: A son.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Oh, because he only has daughters right now. That's why it's entailed on him.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: If he had a son, it would go to the son.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Got it. Thank you, I understand. [giggles]

Becca: It's a much cleaner reason than Anne's reasonings behind it. We've dealt a lot with the complexity of Anne's feelings about class and rising through class, and we're going to talk about that more in this chapter as well. But her precise condition is not as placed in opposition to Mrs. Clay as William Elliot's interest. Because William Elliot has all the money, but if he wants that title, if he wants Kellynch, he needs to be the one to inherit it. And if there is a son that can inherit over him, he will not get it and he will just be a [00:35:00] rich man.

Molly: I understand. I totally didn't catch that.

Becca: No.

Molly: Okay. His only object upon returning to Bath was to watch Sir Walter and Mrs. Clay to

figure out if there was danger there until Anne arrived, in which case, he also wanted to marry Anne.

Becca: He got them heart, eyes emojis.

Molly: Yes. Anne says, "Okay, selfishness and duplicity must be revolting." But none of this is surprising to her. She's always thought he had a motive beyond what it appeared to everyone. She's curious what his opinion on Mrs. Clay is now, whether he deems the danger to be lessening. She also hates Mrs. Clay, so they're on the same side here.

Becca: Yes. It is in her interest to have him be on her side of that issue. It's just a little bit gross that that's the reason why he's interacting with her family at all.

Molly: Yes. It's all gross. Mrs. Smith thinks that he thinks Mrs. Clay is afraid of him, because she knows that he is the one whom the estate is entailed upon. **[00:36:00]** And so, the danger is less at Least while he's around. Mrs. Wallis had the idea that when Elliot and Anne marry, they should put into the marriage articles that Sir Walter and Mrs. Clay shall not marry, which I don't know what marriage articles are. When I googled it, I just got articles about marriage in the Regency Era.

Becca: We're going to need an Economics of Dating in Jane Austen, the sound effect. Marriage used to be much more of an economic proposition than it was today, and there are certain affairs to be set in order when you are marrying a woman with her father in this time period. The dowry, if you will. It's essentially a contract between a man and a father of a daughter, which is why marriage used to be a very poor vehicle for women's liberation. [chuckles]

It's a little different nowadays. But back then, it was very, very bad on that front. So, I think what Mrs. Wallis is getting at here is basically when Elliot and Elliot converse about Anne Elliot and ask for her hand. This is how **[00:37:00]** remember when Robert Martin needed to figure out who Harriet's father was, and she had ended up having a dowry of her own, he needed to go find her father, so that they could have it out and figure out the details of it all. That's what we're talking about here.

Molly: Yeah, got it. Now, Mrs. Smith and Nurse Rooke both think this is a stupid idea, because putting in the marriage articles that he can't marry Mrs. Clay doesn't stop him from marrying anyone. Now, the nurse, Nurse Rooke, doesn't actually oppose Mr. Walter making a second match, because she has some ideas of tending to the next Mrs. Elliot through Mrs. Wallis' recommendation. I like to also think that she's a romantic at heart.

[laughter]

Becca: Well, I think she's just trying to get that bag for more pregnant ladies,-

Molly: Absolutely.

Becca: -which again, endangers William Elliot's inheritance.

Molly: Yes. So, Anne says she will let all of this new information guide her interactions with him. She sees now that he has never been guided by anything, but selfishness. But wait, there's more. **[00:38:00]** We forgot that at the beginning of this conversation, Mrs. Smith talked about his conduct towards her specifically.

Becca: Yeah. We've just been talking shit about normal Jane Austen villain stuff here.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Like, being selfish, and wanting your inheritance, and marrying for money and all the

stuff that you're not supposed to do in Jane Austen novels. But what else?

Molly: What else? After Elliot got married and got rich, he encouraged Charles to spend beyond his means. Anne gets the idea that the Smiths had never lived entirely within their means and that Mr. Smith was a man of easy temper, careless habits, weak understanding, more amiable than his friend, and unlike him, led by him and probably despised by him. Why despised by him?

Becca: I think what she's basically saying is that like, it's basically punishing his friend for being not as high up as him later in life and taking him out on all these things basically without a care in the world for his wellbeing.

Molly: Yeah. Because when he gets rich, he starts [00:39:00] encouraging expenses on his friend that could only end in his ruin.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: And the Smiths are accordingly--

Molly and Becca: Ruined.

Molly: So, taking him out on town and shit, but in extremes.

Becca: Yeah. You get the sense that everyone here is living "in town." So, they're in London, I assume. Maybe Bath. But I don't think Bath. I think London, and partying hard. We all know people who live extravagantly in New York City, and those people spend shocking amounts of money,-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -and you're like, "How do you do that?" Like, "What are you doing with all that money?" That extravagance exists on a smaller scale in London in the Regency Era, and that's what they're doing. They're-

Molly: Right.

Becca: -never going to work and going to all the bakery openings or whatever club openings.

Molly: Yeah. Basically, he starts out poorer than Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith is constantly giving him money. When he gets richer than Mr. Smith, [00:40:00] he expects Mr. Smith to keep up with him essentially in the spending habits.

Becca: And it's noted that at this time, Mr. Elliot also becomes cheap when he becomes rich. So, he's not paying for Mr. Smith to do any of these things.

Molly: Right. Mr. Smith-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Even though Mr. Smith used to pay for him to do things.

Molly: Because he's a dick.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Mr. Smith unfortunately dies just in time though to be spared the full knowledge of what has happened, because the full state of their affairs wasn't realized or publicly known until after his death. So, he's in extreme debt. They've had embarrassments enough to try the friendship of their friends before, but this was beyond it. So, I think that their friends are

all ashamed of them now.

Becca: Yeah, they're not good society anymore.

Molly: Yeah. Mr. Elliot, unfortunately as well, was the executor of Mr. Smith's will-

Becca: Yes.

Molly: -and he would not act, he would not execute his will. Mrs. Smith shows Anne some letters which are responses to urgent applications from her [00:41:00] to him saying, "Please do something, I'm destitute," and him showing absolutely no care about it, being like, "Oh well."

There's one circumstance in particular that is really bad for her. It's that Mr. Smith had a property in the West Indies that could not be gained until its debts had been paid off. If she could get access to this property and sell it, she would be comparably rich, is what I'm understanding.

Becca: Yeah, that's basically right. So, the way this is played is there's two buckets of these things. But when you're an executor of a state, you're in charge of "putting the affairs in order."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Most people, when they die, especially in this time period, they don't just have a bank account full of cash that you just get or you don't. They probably do have that, but the Smiths clearly don't have that,-

Molly: Right.

Becca: -because they've spent all their cash.

Molly: Right.

Becca: But you do have our assets. When you don't have any money, you liquidate your assets, you sell them off, [00:42:00] you take what you can of them. So, for example, in the West Indies property, say it's worth \$100, it's worth way more than that, but say it's worth \$100, then there's \$40 of debt on it. You sell it for \$100, the \$40 go to the debt, and the \$60 are cash in your pocket.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: So, my understanding of what's happening with Mr. Elliot here, is that someone needs to actually do the work of liquidating these assets.

Molly: And he's just not doing it.

Becca: He's not doing it.

Molly: He's letting it all sit there.

Becca: Yeah. There is an element, I'm sure, where he would need to boot, like put in some of his own cash to make that happen.

Molly: Yeah. Because the footnote on this one said that, "They couldn't sell it until the debts had been paid off." So, they had to provide the money. He would have had to provide the money-

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: -to erase the debt in order to sell it and then she would have been good.

Becca: Yeah. And then, from that, you get annual salary that's enough to maybe live in a Barton Cottage situation.

Molly: Right.

Becca: Not rich, but [00:43:00] not in an apartment in Bath with nobody, and your leg's not working.

Molly: Right.

Becca: I find this to be one of the most-- We'll get into it. It's in the study questions. But I find this would be one of the most abhorrent actions-

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -of any character in a Jane Austen novel at all, because there's a lot to be made of the fact that women legally die when they get married in this time period. And so, you don't have a lot of options when you're a woman.

Molly: No agency.

Becca: No agency. You are at the whims and the mercy of the men in your life in a lot of ways, particularly your husband, in this case, the executor of your husband's will. So, he has the power, all the power, to make her live comfortably, and he is refusing to execute on that power. So, she lives in dire circumstances when she doesn't have to.

And she's right. She mentions at some point in the story that like, the longer she goes without that property, the more it degrades, [00:44:00] the more likely it's going to be seized by somebody else.

Molly: The more debt it probably accrues.

Becca: The more debt it probably accrues. So, the longer that he does nothing, the less she has to live on. I find this to be the one of the top-villain moments of any Jane Austen character.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Because when you live in a society like this and you have power over somebody like this, you have an obligation to fix that.

Molly: There's no reason for him not to, other than he doesn't want to put in the effort, it seems like. She's saying that, with the smallest amount of effort, she could be living in comparatively rich circumstances. Just the tiniest amount of effort on his side and he just refuses. It doesn't make any sense.

Becca: Yeah. It does mean some money on his part. Some effort.

Molly: Right. Oh, and he loves his money.

Becca: Exactly. So, he's cheap, and he's lazy and he doesn't care.

Molly: I feel swindled.

Becca: Yeah. [laughs] Give it to us. Give it to us.

Molly: I feel like I've been ill used.

Becca: Yes. Give us more. Give us--

Molly: [00:45:00] I don't know, he is so shady. The fact that he's act-- He's had this the whole time, this power for a year or three.

Becca: Three.

Molly: Three years her husband's been dead?

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Three years, he's had this power and he's just letting her sit there and rot.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: He's just keeping his money to himself and like--

Becca: All of his efforts are now going towards making sure his inheritance is safe.

Molly: Yeah. It's insane.

Becca: And wooing Anne Elliot, who he genuinely does have authentic feelings for.

Molly: Yes. That's why I feel swindled, I think, because I was really shipping it and I think that he puts on a good front of being like a cute, sweet man, who wants to do good on his family, because if he married Anne Elliot, that would be great for her. He is a great match for her. And so, I feel swindled that he has this secret, evil [00:46:00] life.

Becca: Yeah. For me, this is just completely unforgivable because of how bad her circumstance has gotten and how little he gives a shit.

Molly: Also, I have to assume that-- To me, this reads is like he was hanging out with Mr. Smith and encouraging him to buy timeshares places. He's like, "Oh, yeah, this property in the West Indies. That'll be cool." And then, it sits there, accrues debt, he dies, and then all of a sudden, she's like, "Oh, we have this property in the West Indies. Give it back and give me the money." And he won't do it. And it's like, "You're the one who probably encouraged him to buy it in the first place."

Becca: Yeah. For [unintelligible [00:46:43] it's like a lot of bottle service stuff, I'm sure as well.

Molly: Yes. Yes.

Becca: But there would be assets that she could herself get a hold of potentially.

Molly: But she's sick and can't do much.

Becca: But also, if he hadn't squandered them in his life with Mr. Elliot, and now the only assets that are left are ones you have to [00:47:00] put effort into liquidating and unburdening and all the stuff.

Molly: She would have to travel there. She can't. Her life's--

Becca: I don't think she'd have to travel there.

Molly: It said something like, she was unable to do anything because of her health.

Becca: Well, yeah, that's part of she can't go advocate for herself.

Molly: Right.

Becca: Yeah. She also doesn't have the money to get her own attorney, and also, women don't have legal rights.

Molly: Right. Right.

Becca: There are so many reasons why she's a victim in this circumstance. We have talked about a lot of poor behavior and a lot of taking advantage of women in these books, but this one feels like borderline intentional for how egregious the actions.

Molly: Yeah, I know. I just don't understand why he would-- I understand that he's selfish and stingy, but it seems ridiculous to me.

Becca: I don't think he has a vindictive attitude towards her necessarily.

Molly: No.

Becca: Because he mentions her briefly to Anne. I think he genuinely doesn't care that she is so sick and feeble and has nothing.

Molly: Yeah, [00:48:00] it's awful.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Okay. So, this is where Anne would have come in if she had been going to marry him, because Mrs. Smith wanted to get Anne to talk to him as his lover. It also explains why she had been worried about losing her friend to marriage with him. I get it now. If Anne had in fact married him, she probably would have been shut out of that friendship.

Becca: It's a big risk on a lot of fronts, because you don't know how Anne's going to react to it, you don't know how Mr. Elliot's going to react to it, you don't know if she's going to just show pure loyalty to Mr. Elliot.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, she was trying her best, but it was a bad circumstance.

Molly: Yeah. Now that she knows that they're not lovers, however, she is like, "Okay, we're not going to have you talk to him, but at least, I'm able to tell you all of this and tell you my side of the story." Anne is surprised that Mrs. Smith spoke so kindly of him at the beginning of their conversation, and Mrs. Smith is like, "Well, I thought you were going to marry him, so I was trying to be nice." But she thought that [00:49:00] he was unkind to his first wife and she hoped that Anne would fare better, which is sad, because she thought she was sending her friend into a marriage with an evil man.

Becca: Yeah. We'll get into that, because it's like, when we were talking on the pod earlier in the Becca approved-spoilers Discord, everyone was like, "Becca, why would you let Molly talk about her as perfect all this time?" I was like, "Guys, wait for it."

[laughter]

Becca: "Give us a moment."

Molly: Let us cook.

Becca: Let us cook. So, we'll talk about the moral, morass that is this chapter.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: But I find it to be super interesting, but we're basically at the end of the chapter.

Molly: We are. There's one more thing. Anne shudders to think that she was almost persuaded by Lady Russell to marry this man.

Becca: Again.

Molly: Again.

Becca: Tough L for Lady Russell, once again.

Molly: Yeah. And for Anne, I hope that this makes her stop and think about all of the ways in which Lady Russell has been wrong about what's best for her.

Becca: Yup.

Molly: Now, Mrs. Smith does give Anne permission to tell Lady Russell everything, so we'll see if she believes her.

Becca: [00:50:00] Yes, indeed.

Molly: And that's the end of those chapters. That chapter.

Becca: Yes. I will also note that we skipped over it, but there's a moment in the chapter which I thought was also very telling, where Mrs. Smith is showing Anne all the letters from Mr. Elliot, like casting her aside,-

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -all referral requests. And Anne says something like, "She could not believe that her friend's mind was so pliant after all of this."

Molly: I would like to hear that part.

Becca: It says, "Anne felt, at some moments, that no flagrant open crime could have been worse. She had a great deal to listen to, all the particulars of past sad scenes, all the minutiae of distress upon distress, which in former conversations had been merely hinted at, were dwelt on now with a natural indulgence. Anne could perfectly comprehend the exquisite relief, and was only the more inclined to wonder at the composure of her friend's usual state of mind." So, basically, she's like, "How are you alive?" Like, "How are you surviving this?"

Molly: Yeah. And also, normally seeming so not happy, but she's usually very cheery and like--

Becca: Yeah. She basically [00:51:00] says her situation is so bad. Like, early when we meet Mrs. Smith, her situation's so bad, but she has this elastic mind that allows her to be happy and cheerful. And now that Anne seeing all this, she's like, "How? How?"

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: So, yeah, that brings us to the end of the chapter and to the study question, starting

with our patron study questions. Listeners, if you would like to join our Patreon, you can join at the \$15 tier, if you like, and then you get the opportunity to ask questions of us about each chapter, and then we will answer them on the air. Molly will post a Google Doc a few days before we record, and then we'll chat about what you want to chat about.

So, first question, Avi says, "What do the revelations about Mr. Elliot say about Anne's judge of character? And how does that change what you think about other characters in the book?"

Molly: Well, it's interesting, because Anne did suspect that Mr. Elliot had something going on that was beyond [00:52:00] what the surface level presenting. I don't necessarily think Anne is a bad judge of character, because he was hiding it so well.

Becca: I usually think it shows Anne as a good judge of character.

Molly: Because she suspected.

Becca: Yeah. Well, because she always had qualms.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: He's extremely charming. He was charming her. He's genuinely in love with her.

Molly: And she's like, "Mm, something's off."

Becca: And she was like, "Something's off with this guy."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Like, "I still don't understand exactly why he's back in my family's life, and everyone else has no qualms about him whatsoever."

Molly: Yeah. It shows also her unwillingness to bend in her convictions. She was almost persuaded by Lady Russell that it would be fine, but she wasn't persuaded.

Becca: And what almost persuaded her about that circumstance?

Molly: What almost persuaded? The fact that it would be a really good match on paper that she could have been mistress of Kellynch Hall.

Becca: Exactly. [00:53:00] I think that scene where you see Anne closest to indulging this request from Lady Russell and this flirtation from Mr. Elliot is the one where she pictures herself in her mother's shoes as the mistress of Kellynch, her beloved home. It's not because of Mr. Elliot as a person.

Molly: Mm. Right. Right.

Becca: She likes him. She does.

Molly: As a friend.

Becca: There is inclination that she might find him attractive a little bit.

Molly: I mean, he's hot.

Becca: But she says over and over again, "He's not the kind of guy I would marry. He's not the kind of guy I would marry." This does also open up a little bit of a door that I think is interesting, because I brought this up at the beginning of the episode. The reason I guessed that Mr. Elliot was a rake was not because I'm brilliant.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: I guessed it, because I've read a lot of Jane Austen novels, and in every Jane Austen novel, there is some guy who seems viable. Not every Jane Austen novel has this, but if you look at-

Molly: Wickham.

Becca: -Wickham, Willoughby and Frank Churchill. **[00:54:00]** He seems like a good match.

Molly: And this guy's name is William.

Becca: Exactly. I didn't want to say it at the time, but we got some W problems here.

Molly: William Walter.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: He's double W.

Becca: Double W.

Molly: [giggles]

Becca: But there is this way in which Jane Austen feels allergic to writing a real competitor in her stories, because none of them ever actually even compete. The closest you get is Wickham. And even with Wickham, very quickly-- Lizzie is clearly, immediately attracted to him. And then, afterwards, she's like, "You know what? I don't know that I'm that attracted to him--"

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -before she finds out anything bad about him. Same thing happens with Frank Churchill and Emma. Obviously, Willoughby, there's a lot of attraction there. He's the closest you get, but he is a very poor character, it's revealed. So, when I was reading this book, I was like, "It would be interesting if Elliot was actually a good guy and Anne still chose Wentworth in the end." But I don't **[00:55:00]** think that's Jane Austen's bag, because she always ends up putting heroines in a situation where she's like, "He's nice, but no. No thank you."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I don't know why. I don't know why she does that.

Molly: I think because it would be too hard on us as romance readers to have to choose between two very nice men. [giggles]

Becca: I think a lot of it also goes to the lessons that Jane Austen is always putting out there about love for marriage.

Molly: Yes. There can't be love for two men, because she has to choose love over something else.

Becca: She wants to show like, there is a reason why-

Molly: Right.

Becca: -you should follow your heart, because most of the time, it will be right for you to do that, which is interesting because following your heart can get you into bad circumstances in a lot of times. But these particular guys, all of them at first glance look very good and then, as the story goes on, are revealed to be pretty bad. So, I don't know, it is a very interesting quirk of her novels that she constantly does this. [00:56:00] But I think she outdid herself on this one. He's pretty evil.

Molly: Yeah. No, he fucking sucks.

Becca: Yeah. Okay. So, next, we have two questions from Janae. First, "How do you think Sir Walter, Elizabeth and Lady Russell will react to this character reveal about Mr. Elliot?" I will refrain from answering, because I know the answer to these questions.

Molly: I'm a little bit worried that they won't care or believe her. I feel like at least Sir Walter and Elizabeth have made up their mind about him. I don't know about Lady Russell, but the first thought that I had when it was like, "Yes, she can tell them, or at least she can tell Lady Russell." I don't know if she can tell Sir Walter and Elizabeth. But my first thought was, "Should I tell this? Who will believe me?" So, I don't know, I'm worried they won't believe her or listen.

Becca: Okay. Second question, and we'll combine this with one of mine below. "Let's discuss Mrs. Smith's dilemma for a moment. From the moment we meet her, she has this information about Mr. Elliot. [00:57:00] What do you think her feelings or thoughts were in not telling/telling Anne the truth every time they were together, given her financial situation versus her caring for Anne?" I asked a very similar question. It's like, what do we think of the morals of what she was doing?

Molly: I hadn't thought about the morals of Mrs. Smith until the end of this episode where you brought it up. I hadn't thought of the fact that she was letting Anne be led into-

Becca: A poor marriage.

Molly: -a poor marriage with this man who wronged her so much and who was mean to his last wife.

Becca: Yeah. I think I am of two minds of it. One, you could say that if we want to really not question Mrs. Smith's morals, maybe she thought it was a lost cause and that Anne was going to go for him no matter what, because it was such an advantageous match and she had to resign herself to not saying anything to the matter. Maybe that's it. I think Mrs. Smith's a little sharper than that and it does come off like she was trying to turn [00:58:00] the situation to her advantage.

Molly: She absolutely was trying to turn the situation to her advantage, because she thought-- Well, first of all, she loves Anne. I think that she maybe thought Anne could do him some good and could make him a better person. If she was going to tell Anne everything or get him to talk to him for her, that maybe it would work.

I don't blame her for that, but I do think that knowing what she knows about him, she does owe it to Anne to at least reveal that they haven't had a good history, and that he did this to her. So, it's complicated, because I don't think Mrs. Smith is evil or a bad person. I think she's trying to make the most of the situation that she's in.

Becca: Yeah. I also think there is something to be said for the fact that she was living very uncomfortably right now.

Molly: Yeah. She's desperate.

Becca: It's quite selfish in some ways to not tell Anne. I agree [00:59:00] with you that there

is a resign to the world that we live in, not the world we want to see portion of Mrs. Smith's character that I think has invalid validation to it given the place she has found herself. But I think when you're in a situation like she is in, where you are trapped by a man, I get why you would be desperate enough to let your friend lead into that situation.

Molly: Yes. Okay. So, there are two ways that I could be like, "Oh, I want this to go." One, she tells Anne and has Anne work on her side to get him to do something. That would be an ideal situation. But the problem here, is that Mrs. Smith is in a destitute situation and the man that put her in this situation is also the only man that can fix it.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: If there were any other way, she would have told Anne [01:00:00] by now.

Becca: Yeah. I think the more close circumstances that Mrs. Smith doesn't have anybody else to change your situation.

Molly: Well, that's what I'm saying.

Becca: I don't think it's impossible that another person could change the situation. But who, and in what context?

Molly: There is someone. He's the executor of the will.

Becca: And the problem, is that she doesn't have a lot of connections. It's not like men volunteering to go help her, or marry her again or take this on. The only connection she has right now is Nurse Rooke, who's giving her gossip and teaching her how to have an Etsy shop. And then you have Anne, who has nothing more than her hot personality and looks, who might just be in the situation to, actually, change things for her.

Molly: Yeah. It's a very coincidental-- a happy coincidence if it were to work out.

Becca: Yeah. She could figure out another circumstance potentially, but it's not like there's a lot of people coming around. It's not like she has a lot of options. She's stuck.

Molly: Yeah. [01:01:00]

Becca: And Anne coming back into her life is like a fresh start for her. So, there are debates in the fandom about miss-miss actions here and whether or not they are justified. I tend to lean on the side of like, I would give her grace, even though I think they're not the best actions, because she is in such a bad situation.

Molly: Yeah. I totally see where people are coming from with thinking ill of her for not being a girl's girl.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: I think that maybe when watching adaptations or thinking on this further, because I do tend to change my opinion the more time I spend, like stewing on something, I might feel annoyed at her and feel like she's been caught out a little bit here by being like, "Oh, you're not in love with him. Okay, I'll tell you how terrible of a person he is."

Becca: Also, we've all been in a circumstance where you don't want to shit talk someone's boyfriend.

Molly: Yeah. Yeah.

Becca: So, [crosstalk] extreme circumstance it could happen.

Molly: It's an extreme circumstance, especially if he was [01:02:00] really not great to his wife.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: And that's the real ticker.

Becca: Yeah. That that is a ticker. I think this is accurate. I think there is a part of her that thinks that like, maybe she's justifying her own actions. We could talk all day about Mrs. Smith's motivations here, but you do get the sense that she thinks, because Mr. Elliot didn't love his first wife, and/because he genuinely loves Anne that he'll be a better husband to her.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: But I also think that that is a risk to take, and I think Mrs. Smith knows that's a risk to take. I think she's out of options and acting in a way that like, "We can all judge from our perch here, but none of us are stuck in a room with a rheumatic fever, because some guy won't sell our husband's property in the West Indies."

I'm not all game for moral relativism, but you can at least understand why someone in such dire circumstances would potentially be willing to throw their friend under the bus a little bit.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I don't think it's a great action on her part, but one that [01:03:00] I empathize with, if not approve of entirely.

Molly: Definitely.

Becca: Okay. Next, we have Emily. "It is revealed that young Mr. Elliot and Sir Walter sit on a spectrum of how the baronet title versus the money and land attached to it is valued. What does this add to the view of the upper classes shown in the book?"

Molly: It's interesting to think about the two of them and how they would behave as baronet, because the money attached to it clearly doesn't do much for Sir Walter, because he spends it all. He's always been more interested in the title than anything, and being well respected and status and blah, blah, blah. Whereas Mr. Elliot, at least in his youth, would have exclusively wanted it for the land and the money.

Becca: Yeah. I think the [01:04:00] Jane Austen outs aristocracy and title as a preoccupation of the top-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -solely, because you see Sir Walter never knowing anything other than high status in his life, and the high status is what he values and he takes the money for granted.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: It has to be there, but he'd rather have the title than the money, because he doesn't know what it's like to live without it.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: Mr. Elliot has a clearly very indulgent lifestyle, knows what it's like to live without a lot of money and doesn't give a shit about the title.

Molly: He would keep the money, like you said, has become cheap, and just wants to have a lot of money.

Becca: Yeah. But then as he goes-- Once he has a lot of money, it becomes a preoccupation for him. A title.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: A standing.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, it's almost like the money is a prerequisite. And then, once you have it, you might lose sight of why it's important.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: But [01:05:00] the title only comes into your purview once you're rich. So, the obsession with title in this book is really interesting, because it is shown to be so superficial.

Molly: And it's also once again the lowest title you could possibly get.

Becca: And something that Mr. Elliot doesn't care about until he's rich, and then he cares a lot about it.

Molly: Because he just wants more and more.

Becca: Because it's filling a void.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: It's like the hunger of looking for meaning. Maybe if you'd been a little bit of a nicer person, you could have found that meaning with Ms. Anne Elliot who would have fulfilled you in ways that money and a title cannot fulfill you, but alas.

Molly: But alas.

Becca: That's not the choices you made.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Okay. Then, Sarah asks, "In your minds, who plays Mr. Elliot and Mrs. Smith, who would you cast as Lady Russell?" It's a good question.

Molly: This is fun.

Becca: I have such a specific image and it's so random for Mr. Elliot.

Molly: Let's hear it.

Becca: Young Ralph Fiennes.

Molly: Oh.

Becca: Like look [01:06:00] google a picture of him at like in his early days.

Molly: Like, before Voldemort?

Becca: Well before Voldemort.

Molly: Oh, my God, he does look like Bradley Cooper. [Becca chuckles] It's just that when I searched Young Ralph Fiennes and then it automatically [Becca laughs] it said slash Bradley Cooper. They are darn near identical.

Becca: I believe that.

Molly: Look at this picture.

Becca: Yeah, I see it. But yeah, that's who I'd picture in that role.

Molly: He's, I mean--

Becca: Very hot.

Molly: So hot. Yeah, I like that, if I were to cast it today.

Becca: Today?

Molly: I'm so bad at this, because I never know any actors' names.

Becca: Yeah, I'm giving a thought.

Molly: Andrew Garfield comes up as an option.

Becca: Yeah. Too hot.

Molly: You think that Andrew Garfield is hotter than a young Ralph Fiennes?

Becca: Sorry, let me rephrase that. He's too pretty. He's too gentle boy pretty. Oh, Theo James. Theo James would be great in the role. He's also very hot.

Molly: Oh, yes. Sure.

Becca: Okay. Now, for Mrs. Smith?

Molly: She's older than Anne, so she's got to be like 30.

Becca: Just about. Yeah.

Molly: Okay.

Becca: Honestly, the actor who plays Edith in *Downton Abbey* would be really good in the role.

Molly: Oh, sure.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Yeah, I like that. I'm trying to think if there's anyone else that I really love and want to play her, but I'm--

Becca: Drawing a blank?

Molly: Drawing a total blank.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: And then, what about Mrs. Russell?

Becca: Lady Russell?

Molly: Lady Russell.

Becca: That I feel like there's a lot of options there. Any really hot middle-aged actor?

Molly: Viola Davis?

Becca: Maybe. Yeah.

Molly: Alison Brie is considered a middle aged?

Becca: No.

Molly: That's crazy.

Becca: Put it away. Put it away. We're done. [Molly laughs] We're done. I'm over it.

Molly: Wouldn't it be nice if Kate Winslet or someone played her, as a nice little-

Becca: [01:08:00] Nod to the past?

Molly: -nod to the past. Yeah.

Becca: And obviously, Dame Emma Thompson would always be fabulous in any Jane Austen projects.

Molly: Obviously, yes.

Becca: Now that I think about it, Carey Mulligan would be such a good Anne Elliot.

Molly: Such a good who?

Becca: Anne Elliot.

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: So good in that role. Okay, those are our answers for that question.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: All right. Lauren. "Hilarious misunderstandings and incorrect romantic assumptions are abundant in Austen and throughout romantic comedy history. But in this book and especially in this chapter, Anne has no trouble recognizing what Wentworth is feeling. Do you think he feels the same way about her?"

Molly: I feel like this is more--

Becca: That may have been more for last chapter.

Molly: More for last chapter. But we can answer it anyway. And also, there is a misunderstanding and incorrect romantic assumption in this chapter as well-

Becca: Yes.

Molly: -with Mrs. Smith assuming.

Becca: Yes. I think in a lot of these Austen books, there's like, "What is he feeling? What is he feeling?" With Anne and Wentworth, there is no question that they have this soul connection-

Molly: [01:09:00] Yeah.

Becca: -like that is hard to shake. And so, the question is not so much whether or not they have feelings for each other. The question is whether or not they can make it through the pain of before.

Molly: Right. Yeah, I definitely think that he feels the same way about her. I think that she is correct, because they know each other on a different level. But I ended last chapter asking, would he propose now and would she accept him now?

Becca: Yeah, I think there's a lot there that doesn't have to do with their feelings for one another, but solely has to do with what they've been through.

Molly: Yeah. Yeah, I think she says in this chapter, she'll love him forever no matter what happens, whether they end up together or not in the end. She's unsure as to whether their current feelings for each other-- Actually, hang on, let me read this passage.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: "She's unsure about whether their current feelings for each other will end up happy or sad." This is about Elliot's feelings for her. "Flattering, but painful. [01:10:00] There was much to regret. How she might have felt had there been no Captain Wentworth in the case, was not worth enquiry, for there was a Captain Wentworth, and be the conclusion of the present suspense good or bad, her affection would be his for ever. Their union, she believed, could not divide her more from other men, than their final separation."

So, she's feeling like it could go one of two ways, and she has no idea which. I think that he's probably feeling the same, like he'll love her forever too. I do think that the question, like you said is, will they act on it?

Becca: And Wentworth is the one who has more questions right now.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Because--

Molly: He thinks that she's in love with Elliot.

Becca: She used to think he was in love with Louisa.

Molly: Yeah. They need to talk to each other.

Becca: Yeah. All right. Those are our patron study questions. Thank you so much, patrons, for submitting those study questions. Again, listeners, if you want to ask questions about the chapters and you want us to answer them on the air, you can join our Patreon at the \$15 tier. Molly will post a Google Doc. You will submit your questions beforehand and we will ask them when we record.

[01:11:00] Now, for my study questions, I only have a few, because I think our wonderful patrons covered a lot. "Where are we ranking Mr. Elliot in terms of villainy?"

Molly: He's pretty bad.

Becca: I think he might be top honestly.

Molly: It's hard, because he doesn't give slimy vibes. But I guess neither did Wickham.

Becca: Wickham gave some pretty slimy vibes later in the book.

Molly: Yes. But knowing what I know about him now, yeah, what he has done is probably the worst.

Becca: Yeah. I think it comes down to comparing crimes. Frank Churchill gets bottom of the list, because he's barely a villain. He's really just more a gray character.

Molly: Yeah. Willoughby is pretty bad.

Becca: Willoughby's actions are worse than Wickham's actions potentially, but only because the outcome is worse. But also, I would put him as less of a villain than Wickham, honestly, because he has remorse.

Molly: But he impregnated a woman and then abandoned her.

Becca: Yes. And Wickham would have done the same thing if he had gone that far, but [01:12:00] Darcy cut him off.

Molly: But Mr. William Walter Elliot did not do that. But he did abandon a woman who was not pregnant, but who was destitute.

Becca: That's really the question. So, the reason that he tops my list is if we're—So, both Willoughby and Elliot have done egregious things.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Wickham has tried to do egregious things and been prevented by our guy, Mr. Darcy, so let's put him to the side for a second and just focus on the consequences of Willoughby's actions and the consequences of Elliot's actions. By the way, we are discounting all the like-- Sir Walter is clearly a villain. Elizabeth is a villain. Fanny Dashwood is a villain. We're discounting all of those and just going with our love interest villains.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, Willoughby ruined a young woman's life, and she is currently only living comfortably, because she is on Colonel Brandon's dime in goodwill.

Molly: Right.

Becca: And Elliot has [01:13:00] ruined Mrs. Smith's life and left her in a destitute state. It doesn't carry the same vibes of sexual predator that Willoughby does, but it is a different type of abuse, a financial one.

Molly: Yeah. She's directly applied to him for help and he's been like, [crosstalk]

Becca: So, has Eliza in-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -*Sense and Sensibility*.

Molly: True.

Becca: I would put the differences into a few categories. One, Willoughby knows that Brandon is there for Eliza to a certain extent. So, she's not completely without resources. And two, Willoughby has regrets for how his life has played out. I don't think Mr. Elliot has regrets. And that, I think, is the reason he's the biggest villain-

Molly: Yeah, I have to agree with you.

Becca: -of all of them, because he is clearly fine with all of his life choices and where it's led him. What I've said, the interest for I have [01:14:00] in Mr. Elliot as a character is the void, the thing that's keeping him going forward and making him preoccupied with meeting certain goals in his own life. Clearly, he's attracted to Anne. Clearly, he's in love with Anne. But how much of it is tied to how tidy that match would be for him.

Molly: I think it's 100% tied to that. He's convenient that she's hot.

Becca: I think it's like 80% tied to that. I do think he actually has genuine affection for Anne, which I think is interesting in the story. I do think he's just an outrageous villain. I really do.

Molly: No, he's awful.

Becca: Yeah. So, fuck our guy, Mr. Elliot. By the way, guys, I have some screenshots from when Molly was reading the book before, and I sent them to her and it was like, "Why am I starring Mr. Elliot?" I'm so happy. I screenshot that immediately. All right. "What is Jane Austen telling us here about marriage through Mrs. Elliot, Mrs. Smith and Anne?"

Molly: Mrs. Elliot being his dead wife-

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: -that the love match may not always be the good match. [01:15:00] For example, through Mrs. Elliot, she fell in love with the douche canoe.

Becca: Yes. I think they all three show the precarity of women's positions in this society, because you have Mrs. Elliot, the love match was a terrible one for her.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: You have Anne, who, if she had gone the route of the advantageous match, it would have been terrible for her.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And then, you have Mrs. Smith, who pursued both, and it was still terrible for her.

Molly: But she had a wonderful love match. She loved Charles very much, and he was a silly man who was persuaded by Elliot-

Becca: It's in the title.

Molly: It's in the title. -to do away with all of his wealth.

Becca: Yes. And what kind of control did she have over that?

Molly: None.

Becca: Even if you marry a nice man-

Molly: Right.

Becca: -it's still a precarious situation for you.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: The plight of women in this time period, this is one of those chapters that is built around it, that Jane Austen wrote. [01:16:00] Sometimes this chapter gets some flak, I have learned, for being a little bit of a 180 in the story and a little bit out of nowhere.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: But I actually think it's a great chapter, because I think it really is one of Austen's most-- to this point, of the books we've read, one of her most stark moments of reflecting on the plight of women in her society.

Molly: Yeah. I also don't think it's out of nowhere, because Anne says so many times in this chapter, "Okay, what you're saying makes sense to me. I had an idea of that, but what else?"

Becca: I agree.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I agree. I think it's built too. All right. Here's a fun one. Let's do a little comp between Wentworth and Mr. Elliot, because both of them are socially climbing in their own right in the story. Why is Austen valorizing one and damning the other?

Molly: Well, my first thought is one of them worked for it-

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: -and one of them tried to do it in the easiest way possible.

Becca: Yeah. [01:17:00] One of them took on the excesses of the landed gentry, and the other one fought for her Majesty's navy.

Molly: Right.

Becca: You get a real bias from Jane Austen on what the appropriate way to make something of yourself is in society.

Molly: It's interesting, because she also gives the impression that a lot of the people in the upper classes look down upon the navy, because they think they're social climbers. Whereas someone who marries into wealth, they're great.

Becca: Actually, I don't know that I agree with that.

Molly: Really?

Becca: Well, because most of the world is okay with the navy. You can see that Captain Wentworth has made it far enough up in the rank that people approve.

Molly: I guess I'm more talking about just the Elliots.

Becca: Oh, yeah. No, the Elliots have a very warped view of class, and that is what's so interesting. It bends to who flatters them.

Molly: Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Exactly. So, it's more saying about something about them

than society.

Becca: Yeah. I really do think that it is interesting that Jane damns Mr. Elliot for his actions towards [01:18:00] pursuing money, where Wentworth made something of himself and gave himself title, rank and money, a fortune of his own, but did so in the more honest, sailor seaworthy way. Elliot did so through cunning, and seduction and marrying up. That wasn't enough for him and now he wants the rest of it. So, it's a delightful little comp between the two men.

Molly: It's juicy.

Becca: Yeah. Because neither one of them born particularly well off.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Both of them climbing.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And Jane Austen says, "This way to climb is okay, this way to climb is not okay."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I get it. Although, listen, we support getting your bag, but we don't support anything else that Mr. Elliot has done in the last few chapters.

Molly: No.

Becca: Yeah. I think I'm actually going to end it there, because my last question is about Mrs. Smith. But I think we've really delved into her.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: So, that's going to lead us to funniest quote.

Molly: Okay. So, this is when Anne [01:19:00] is being asked by Mrs. Smith who was at the party or who was at the concert, and she says, "But I ought to have looked about me more," said Anne, conscious while she spoke that there had in fact been no want of looking about, that the object only had been deficient." Because she was at the concert, looking around, but only looking for Wentworth and not looking at who else was there.

Becca: Yes, exactly. Questions moving forward.

Molly: What's Anne going to do with this information? That's my biggest question.

Becca: Great question. Who wins the chapter?

Molly: We've got some losses.

Becca: Yeah. Let's give Lady Russell a big old loss for this chapter.

Molly: Lady Russell lost. Mr. Elliot lost. Anne lost for being-- Well, Anne didn't lose, but--

Becca: Let's give it to Nurse Rooke.

Molly: Let's give it to Nurse Rooke for bringing the tea.

Becca: Let's stan an incredible gossip spy-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -in Nurse Rooke getting all of her high-class ladies to talk her ear off about all their shit, and bringing to light and exposing villains.

Molly: [01:20:00] We love it.

Becca: Yes. All right. Listeners, that concludes this episode of Pod and Prejudice. For next time, you want to read Chapter 22 of this book. Or, if you're in a volumed book, that would be Chapter 10 of Volume II. Molly, are you ready for the next chapter?

Molly: I don't even know.

Becca: Well, until next time, stay proper.

Molly: And if you're the executor of an estate, just do your freaking job.

Becca: Liquidate those assets.

Molly: Liquidate them.

[music]

Molly: Pod and Prejudice is edited by Molly Burdick and audio produced by Graham Cook. Our show art is designed by Torrance Browne. Our show is transcribed by SpeechDocs 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://twitter.com/podandprejudice). If you love what you hear, check out our Patreon at patreon.com/podandprejudice to see how you can support us or just drop us a rating and a review wherever you listen to podcasts. Thanks for listening.

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