

## **Persuasion**

by Jane Austen

(Adapted book. Pre-Intermediate level)

### **Chapter 1. The Elliots of Kellynch Hall**

Sir Walter Elliot, of Kellynch Hall in Somerset, only ever read one book: *The Baronetage*, a book about all the baronets in England. He always started the book at the same page, which read:

#### *ELLIOT OF KELLYNCH HALL*

*Walter Elliot, born 1760, married Elizabeth, 1784 (died 1800). Three children: Elizabeth (born 1785), Anne (born 1787), Mary (born 1791).*

Following this there was a history of the Elliot family. Then, at the end of the page, it read: Family home: Kellynch Hall in Somerset.

When Sir Walter was upset about something, he always read this page. And reading about his family always made him feel better. Vanity was the most important part of Sir Walters character. He was a baronet. He knew that he was very good- looking, too. Because he had beauty and a baronetage, he thought that he was a very important man.

Perhaps because of these two things, he had found a very good wife for himself. Lady Elliot's character was much better than Sir Walter's. She was kind and sensible, and she was a good wife and mother. She also had a good friend called Lady Russell, who lived near the family in Kellynch Lodge and helped Lady Elliot with her daughters.

After seventeen years of marriage, Lady Elliot sadly died. When she died, her three daughters were only ten, fourteen and sixteen years old. Luckily, these three girls were not left alone with their vain, silly father. Lady Russell was there to look after them. She was a very important friend to the Elliots and she loved the three girls very much.

Many people expected Lady Russell and Sir Walter to marry after Lady Elliot died. In fact, they did not marry.

Lady Russell loved all the girls, but Anne was her favourite. Lady Russell could see Lady Elliot's kind character in Anne, but not in her sisters. It was now thirteen years since Lady Elliot had died, and for Lady Russell, Anne had become a great friend.

For Sir Walter, however, Anne was not important. He was most interested in his eldest daughter, Elizabeth. Elizabeth was very good-looking and very like her father in character. She had become the mistress of Kellynch Hall when her mother died, and Sir Walter would do anything for her. His other daughters were much less important to him. His youngest daughter, Mary, had married a man from a good country family and had become Mrs Charles Musgrove. Because of this, she was now a little more important to Sir Walter. But Anne, who was clever and had a lovely character, was nobody to her father or her older sister. They did not listen to her. She was just Anne.

Anne Elliot had been a very pretty girl when she was young, but had lost her beauty early. Sir Walter no longer expected her to marry well. But Elizabeth - Miss Elliot - was still beautiful now, at twenty-nine years old. Sir Walter continued to believe that she would marry into a family as important as his own.

Elizabeth herself knew that she was still beautiful. But she had been mistress of Kellynch Hall for thirteen years now. For thirteen years, she had opened every ball in and around Kellynch and she had spent thirteen springs in London with her father. Elizabeth felt that she was getting older and she needed to find a good baronet for a husband soon.

At one time, Elizabeth had hoped to marry her cousin, William Elliot. This cousin was Sir Walter Elliot's heir, because Elizabeth did not have any brothers. Sir Walter had always planned that Elizabeth would marry William. Elizabeth first met her cousin in London when she was still very young and she liked him very much. At that time, Sir

Walter invited William to Kellynch Hall, but he never came. The next year, Sir Walter and Elizabeth saw William again in London and invited him once more- But again he did not come, and soon after this they heard that William was married. He had married a woman who was rich, but was not from a good family. Sir Walter was not pleased about this marriage. William was his heir. Why had he not spoken to Sir Walter before marrying? But William did not seem sorry. He showed that he was not at all worried about the Elliots' feelings. The Elliot family did not see William or hear from him anymore. They heard that his wife had now died. But they also knew from friends that William talked very badly about the Elliot family. It was clear that he did not care about the baronetage which he was going to inherit. Sir Walter's family were not pleased with William Elliot.

Elizabeth was getting older and she spent a lot of time thinking about it. She was worrying about something else, too. Sir Walter had problems with money. Lady Elliot had always been very careful with their money. However, after she died, no one had stopped Sir Walter from spending too much. He did not tell Elizabeth about the problem at first. But he could not hide it from her for long.

'Is there a way that we can spend a little less money?' Sir Walter had asked Elizabeth the year before, while they were in London. Elizabeth thought of a few ideas. They would not buy new furniture for the house, they would give less money to the poor and they would not bring a present back from London for Anne. But the problem was much bigger than Elizabeth had thought. Sir Walter had to tell her that these small changes would not be enough to help them.

Their friend, Lady Russell, tried to help. She wanted Sir Walter and Elizabeth to save money without making too many difficult changes to their lives. With Anne's help, Lady Russell made a list of changes for the family. But when Sir Walter and Elizabeth heard Lady Russell's ideas, they were appalled.

‘What?’ cried Sir Walter. ‘Fewer trips to London, fewer horses, fewer servants, fewer everything? I will not be able to live like a gentleman. No, I would rather leave Kellynch Hall now than live like that!’

After a few days of talking and thinking, it was decided that Sir Walter would leave Kellynch Hall. The Elliots talked about going to London, Bath or another house in the countryside. Anne wanted to move to a smaller house in the countryside, so she could still be near her sister, Mary, and Lady Russell. She did not like Bath. But as usual, Sir Walter and Elizabeth did not listen to Anne. They decided to go to Bath.

Lady Russell had to disagree with Anne. She could see that it would be too difficult for Sir Walter to live in a smaller house near Kellynch. Lady Russell spent some time in Bath every winter and she felt that the change would be good for Anne. Anne stayed at home too much, Lady Russell thought, and she should meet more people.

Lady Russell wanted the Elliots to move to Bath for another reason, too. Elizabeth had become very good friends with a clever young woman called Mrs Clay. Mrs Clay was not from an important family. She had also married badly and was not with her husband anymore. But she knew how to please everyone at Kellynch Hall. Elizabeth listened to Mrs Clay much more than she listened to her own sister, Anne. Lady Russell thought that Mrs Clay was a dangerous friend for Elizabeth. She hoped that by moving to Bath, the Elliots would leave Mrs Clay behind.

## **Chapter 2. Difficult News for Anne**

Baronets did not usually need to let their houses and so Sir Walter would not talk about letting Kellynch Hall. But he agreed that if an important person needed a house like Kellynch Hall, he might very kindly help them. Soon after this, his lawyer, Mr Shepherd, told Sir Walter that a man called Admiral Croft was looking for a house in

Somerset. Admiral Croft had heard about Kellynch Hall, Mr Shepherd said. Although he had not seen the house, he was very interested in it.

‘Admiral Croft is the son of a gentleman,’ Mr Shepherd told Sir Walter. ‘His wife is a very polite, well-spoken lady. She is very interested in the house and already knows Kellynch! Her brother lived near here, at Monkford, a few years ago. Now, what was his name?’ Mr Shepherd thought for a few moments. ‘Oh, I remember the gentleman so well, but I cannot think of his name.’

‘You mean Mr Wentworth, I expect,’ said Anne.

‘Mr Wentworth!’ cried Mr Shepherd. ‘That was him! He lived at Monkford for two or three years, Sir Walter. You remember him, I am sure.’

‘Wentworth?’ said Sir Walter. ‘Oh yes, I remember him. But you called him a gentleman. He was not a gentleman. Mr Wentworth was not an important man, I remember.’

Sir Walter could never be pleased with anyone who lived in his house. However, at last he agreed that Admiral Croft could come to look at Kellynch Hall. Sir Walter could see that it would be good to let the house to an admiral. An admiral was important enough, but not too important. ‘I have let my house to Admiral Croft,’ sounded much better than ‘I have let my house to Mr X or Y.’ An admiral would also know that he could never be as important as a baronet.

Sir Walter would never do anything without first asking Elizabeth. As she now wanted to move to Bath as soon as possible, she was very happy to let Kellynch Hall. Anne, who had listened carefully to Sir Walter’s conversation with Mr Shepherd, now left the room. When she had thought about the Wentworth family, her face had become hot. Now she needed some fresh air.

Mr Wentworth, who Sir Walter and Mr Shepherd had talked about, was nothing to Anne. But, eight years before, she had been in love with his brother, Captain Frederick Wentworth. Captain Wentworth, like Admiral Croft, was in the navy, and in summer 1806 he

had come to live in Somerset with his brother. He was a very good-looking and clever young man, and Anne was a very kind, sensible girl. As they began to know each other, they fell deeply in love. And for a short time, they were very happy together.

However, when they asked Sir Walter if they could get engaged, he was very cold. He did not think that Captain Wentworth was good enough for his family. Although Lady Russell was kinder than Sir Walter, she too believed the engagement was not a good idea. Anne was only nineteen at the time. She was beautiful and clever, and from a good family, and Lady Russell thought that she was throwing herself away.

Captain Wentworth had no money, but he said he was sure that he would soon have a ship and be rich. He had always been lucky and he knew that he always would be. But when she heard this, Lady Russell felt even more worried about Captain Wentworth. He believed in himself too much, she thought. He was too clever and he had a dangerous character.

Anne was young and good-hearted. She was strong enough not to listen to her father. But she had always trusted and loved Lady Russell. At last Lady Russell persuaded her that the engagement was wrong, both for Anne and Captain Wentworth.

Captain Wentworth himself could not see that it was wrong. He was hurt and angry that Lady Russell had persuaded Anne not to marry him. He left Somerset at once.

After he had gone, Anne felt terribly sad and sorry. She did not enjoy being young anymore and she began to lose her beauty. When she was twenty-two, a man called Charles Musgrove asked Anne to marry him. He had a good character and was from a rich, important family. Lady Russell hoped that Anne would say yes. But for Anne, no one could come near Frederick Wentworth in her heart, and so she refused Charles Musgrove. He then married Anne's younger sister, Mary, instead.

Lady Russell was very worried. Would Anne ever find a clever man from a good family to marry? Anne, who was now twenty-seven, had thought a lot about everything that had happened with Captain Wentworth. She now felt strongly that it was wrong to persuade a young girl not to marry the man she loved.

She knew that she would be happier now if she was married to Captain Wentworth. She knew too, from reading newspapers and navy lists, that he had been right about himself. He had done very well in the navy and was now a rich man.

So when Anne heard that Captain Wentworth's sister might soon live at Kellynch Hall, it was very painful for her. She knew that her sister, Mary, and Mrs Croft did not know that she had ever met Captain Wentworth. She also felt sure that Sir Walter, Elizabeth and Lady Russell would say nothing about it. So she hoped that when she met the Crofts, it would not be too difficult.

### **Chapter 3. Anne Arrives at Uppercross**

On the morning when the Crofts came to visit Kellynch Hall, Anne went to Lady Russell's house and so she did not meet them. The morning went well - Sir Walter was pleased with the Crofts, and the Crofts were pleased with Kellynch Hall. It was decided that Sir Walter and Elizabeth would move to Bath in August, and the Crofts would come to live at Kellynch Hall in September.

Anne was going to follow her father and sister to Bath a few months later. Her younger sister, Mary, was not well and had asked Anne to come and stay with her at her home, Uppercross Cottage. Mary was often a little ill. And because she worried too much about any illness, she often wanted Anne to look after her. So the family agreed that Anne would go to Bath after Christmas with Lady Russell. Until then, she would stay at Uppercross Cottage with Mary and then at Kellynch Lodge with Lady Russell.

Lady Russell had hoped that when Sir Walter and Elizabeth moved to Bath, Elizabeth's friendship with Mrs Clay would end. She was not pleased when she heard that Mrs Clay was going with them to Bath. Elizabeth said that she wanted Mrs Clay to help her choose a house.

Lady Russell felt sorry for Anne. Elizabeth had not needed Anne's help, but now she thought that Mrs Clay could be useful. Anne was not upset about that. She was nobody to Elizabeth and she had known it for a long time.

However, because Anne knew her father so well, she was worried about Mrs Clay coming with them to Bath. Mrs Clay was young and good-looking, and she knew how to please Sir Walter. If he decided to marry her, it would be a terrible thing for the Elliot family. Mrs Clay was from a very different kind of family and she was not a good wife for a baronet.

Anne decided that she must speak about this to Elizabeth. But Elizabeth would not listen.

'Mrs Clay,' Elizabeth said hotly, 'never forgets who she is. I know her much better than you. And I know that she does not like people marrying above or below themselves. Our father has never married again - because of his love for us. After all this time, how can you think that he might marry now? If Mrs Clay were beautiful, it might be wrong for me to bring her to Bath. But you could not say she is pretty! She has freckles, and you know how father hates freckles!'

'When you begin to like someone, you forget about little things like freckles,' replied Anne.

'I do not agree with you,' said Elizabeth. 'If you like someone, you think about their good looks more. But you never forget that someone is ugly just because you like them.'

That was the end of the conversation, but Anne was glad she had said something. She hoped that Elizabeth might remember her words.



When Sir Walter, Elizabeth and Mrs Clay had left for Bath, Anne went to Uppercross. Uppercross Cottage was just three miles from Kellynch Hall, and Mary lived there with her husband, Charles, and her two young sons, Charles and Walter. It was a pretty house and just a short walk away from the Great House. The Great House was Charles's family home and his parents, Mr and Mrs Musgrove, lived there with their younger children. They also had two older daughters, Henrietta and Louisa - 'the Miss Musgroves'. The two families spent a lot of time in each other's houses.

When Anne arrived at Uppercross Cottage, she found her sister alone, lying on the sofa. Mary was a happy person when everything went well. She had a better character than her older sister, Elizabeth, but like Elizabeth and her father, Mary thought that she was very important. She did not like to be alone and when she was ill, she always felt very sorry for herself.

'You have come at last!' Mary said when she saw Anne. 'I am so ill I can hardly speak. I have not seen anyone all morning!'

'Well, you will soon feel better now,' said Anne cheerfully. 'You know you always feel better when I come. How are your neighbours at the Great House?'

'I have not seen any of them today,' said Mary. 'Mr Musgrove went by on his horse and only spoke to me through the window. I told him how ill I was, but no one has been to see me. I expect the Miss Musgroves are too busy. Oh, Anne, I am so terribly ill.'

Anne's cheerfulness soon helped, as it always did. After a while, Mary was able, to sit up on the sofa. By lunchtime, she felt a little better and could eat some cold meat. Soon she was feeling so well that she asked Anne if she would like to go for a little walk up to the Great House.

Mr and Mrs Musgrove were very good people. They were friendly and welcoming, and their house was always busy and full of life. The Miss Musgroves - Henrietta and Louisa - were modern girls.

Both of them were pretty and fashionable, and they enjoyed life very much. They were not as clever as Anne, but she liked spending time with them. Everyone was very pleased to see Anne and Mary. And after half an hour of conversation, the Miss Musgroves, Mary and Anne all left the house for a walk together.

## **Chapter 4. Captain Wentworth**

Anne had been at Uppercross for several weeks and she was happy to be there. Mary was a much kinder sister to Anne than Elizabeth, and her children loved Anne very much. Charles Musgrove, too, was polite and agreeable. He did not read books, or do much at all, but he loved shooting. Although there were many things that Charles and Mary did not agree about, they were happy enough together.

The only difficulty for Anne was that everyone at the cottage and at the Great House liked to tell her their problems. They knew that Mary usually listened to Anne. And they knew that Anne was good at talking to people carefully. So they all hoped that Anne could help them.

‘Please tell Mary not to think she is ill all the time,’ Charles asked Anne. And Mary, not feeling well again one day, told her, ‘I do believe that if Charles saw me dying, he would not think I was ill. Please tell him how ill I am.’

Mary also had problems at the Great House which she shared with Anne: ‘Mrs Musgrove always wants to see the children. But she gives them everything they want. They eat so many sweet things there that when they come home, they are sick and cross.’

But Mrs Musgrove had a different story. ‘You are so good with the children, Miss Anne,’ she said when they were alone together one day. ‘Mary gives them everything they want, and they are so difficult sometimes! I am sure she thinks that I should invite them to the Great House more often. But I have to give them cake just to keep them out of trouble!’

There were other problems, too. Mary thought that because she was the daughter of a baronet, she should have the most important place at the table in the Great House. The Miss Musgroves told Anne that it annoyed them that Mary cared about it so much and always asked to sit in their mothers chair.

How could Anne possibly help with all these problems? She listened patiently and tried to talk about things carefully with her sister when she could.

In every other way, Anne's visit started off very well. She was pleased to be somewhere different. At Kellynch Hall, everyone had thought only about moving to Bath. But at Uppercross, people talked and worried about other things.

For a while, Anne almost forgot about Kellynch Hall. However, the Crofts were moving into Kellynch on the 29th September. When the day came, Anne could not think of anything else. Other people were now living in her much-loved home! The rooms and furniture, and her favourite comers of the gardens were now theirs! Her heart was in Kellynch again.

The Crofts soon came to visit at Uppercross Cottage. Admiral Croft sat talking with Mary and her young sons, and so Anne sat with Mrs Croft. She looked at Mrs Croft carefully, trying to decide if she was like her brother, Captain Wentworth. Mrs Croft had bright, dark eyes, good teeth and an agreeable face. She was open and relaxed, and when she spoke about Kellynch, she was careful not to upset Anne. This pleased Anne, She could also see that Mrs Croft knew nothing about her connection with Captain Wentworth. Anne began to feel stronger and braver.

But as the Crofts were leaving, Anne heard Admiral Croft say to Mary, 'Mrs Croft's brother, Captain Wentworth, is coming to stay with us soon. He has just come back to England.'

A few days later, Anne heard that Captain Wentworth was now at Kellynch. Soon after this, the Miss Musgroves came to see Anne and

Mary one afternoon. They were very excited - Captain Wentworth had been to visit them at the Great House. They were very pleased with him. They thought he was better-looking and more agreeable than any other man they knew. And he was coming for dinner at the Great House the very next evening! The next evening!

Charles, Mary and Anne were invited for dinner as well, of course. But Anne at once said that she would stay with Mary's son Charles, who had hurt his back that afternoon. She was happy to escape from this first meeting with Captain Wentworth.

Mary and Charles had a lovely evening at the Great House, where there was music, singing, talking and laughter. They too came back very pleased with Captain Wentworth and thought he was very polite and agreeable. Charles had invited Captain Wentworth to go shooting with him the next morning, in the parks at the Great House.

Mary and Anne had only just finished breakfast the next day when Captain Wentworth and the Miss Musgroves arrived at Uppercross Cottage. Anne was full of a thousand different feelings, but she knew that this difficult first meeting would soon be over. And it was. Captain Wentworth and Anne looked at each other quickly and he gave her a quick bow. He spoke politely with Mary, and then Charles said they should go. After just a few minutes, Captain Wentworth left with Charles and the Miss Musgroves, who wanted to walk with them to the end of the village.

'It is over! It is over!' Anne said to herself again and again. 'The worst is over!'

She had seen him. They had met. They had been in the same room once more! She tried to make herself feel calm. It was eight years since it had all ended between them. Right years was such a long time, but she found that her feelings were still very strong. For her feelings, eight years did not seem like a very long time at all.

‘Henrietta asked Captain Wentworth what he thought of you,’ Mary said to Anne later that day. ‘And he was not very polite. He said you had changed so much he almost did not recognize you.’

Mary could not know how hurtful her words were for Anne. ‘Changed so much he almost did not recognize you!’ Anne knew that it was true. Those eight years had taken her beauty from her. But she could not say the same about Captain Wentworth. He had a more manly and more open look, but she had seen the same Frederick Wentworth.

Captain Wentworth had said these things about Anne Elliot without thinking that she might hear them. He did think that she had lost her beauty and he had said what he thought. He had not forgiven Anne. She had given him up and hurt him. Even worse, she had given him up because other people had told her to. She had not been strong, and he hated weakness. He had not met anyone like Anne Elliot since. But his feelings for her had died.

Captain Wentworth had just returned from sea and was ready to marry. He was rich and was now looking for a wife. He was interested in either of the Miss Musgroves if they could catch his heart.

‘A little beauty and a few smiles, and I will be a lost man,’ he laughed to his sister, when she asked him what kind of wife he wanted. But his sister knew that he was a good man. She knew that other things were more important to him.

‘I would like a woman with a strong mind and a gentle character,’ he said, more seriously now. ‘That is the kind of woman I want.’

## **Chapter 5. A Moment of Kindness**

Captain Wentworth and Anne Elliot now often found themselves together at Uppercross, but they hardly spoke to each other. Once she had been so important to him, and he to her. And now there was nothing! There had been a time when they could not stop talking to each

other. Their hearts had been so open; they had felt the same about everything. But now they were like strangers.

Everyone at the Great House wanted to hear about Captain Wentworth's time in the navy, and Captain Wentworth liked to talk. Sometimes he talked about other things that had happened in the year when he and Anne were in love. 'That was in 1806,' he said one time. And, another time, 'That happened before I went to sea in 1806.' His voice did not change, but Anne knew that he must remember that year as well as she did. But she did not think he found it as hurtful to think about.

Anne could see that Captain Wentworth was enjoying himself. Everyone liked listening to him. Henrietta and Louisa were not interested in anyone else. Their cousins, the Miss Hayters, were now in love with him, too. Who could not enjoy being so well-liked?

Soon, Captain Wentworth was at the Great House almost every day. The Musgroves were pleased to invite him, and he was pleased to come. He thought that Mr and Mrs Musgrove were friendly and welcoming, and he found the young Musgroves very agreeable.

Everyone at the Great House was very pleased with Captain Wentworth, too - until Charles Hayter came to the house. He was not pleased with Captain Wentworth at all. Charles Hayter was one of Henrietta and Louisa's cousins and was an agreeable, pleasing young man. He and Henrietta had begun to like each other very much before Captain Wentworth came to Kellynch. The Hayters lived just two miles away from Uppercross and the two families were very close. But the Hayters had much less money and less land than the Musgroves. If Henrietta married Charles, it would not make her rich or important. However, Mr and Mrs Musgrove could see that Henrietta liked Charles and that they might be happy together.

Charles Hayter was a clergyman and he had just gone away for a short time when Captain Wentworth began visiting the Musgroves at Uppercross. When Charles Hayter came back to his father's house, he

found that Henrietta had forgotten him. He could see at once that this was probably because of Captain Wentworth.

At Uppercross Cottage, Mary and Charles Musgrove often talked about which of the Miss Musgroves Captain Wentworth liked best. Charles was happy for Captain Wentworth to marry either of his sisters. He said he had ‘never met a more agreeable man than Captain Wentworth.’ He felt sure that Captain Wentworth had a lot of money, too.

Mary, however, hoped that Captain Wentworth would choose Henrietta. She did not think that Charles Hayter was important enough for Henrietta and she did not want her family to be connected to the Hayters by marriage. So she hoped that Captain Wentworth would make Henrietta forget Charles Hayter completely.

Anne did not want to talk about which of the Miss Musgroves Captain Wentworth liked best. She hoped that he would decide soon so he did not make one of them very unhappy, or lose his own honour.

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A few days after Charles Hayter had returned, Anne was at home at Uppercross Cottage. She was looking after little Charles, whose back was hurting again, when Captain Wentworth walked into the house. He was very surprised to find himself almost alone with Anne Elliot.

‘I thought the Miss Musgroves were here,’ he said. ‘Mrs Musgrove told me they were.’ Then he went to the window to become calm again.

‘They are upstairs with my sister. I am sure they will come down very soon,’ replied Anne, full of different feelings. She wanted to leave the room, both for herself and for Captain Wentworth, but little Charles called out to her for something.

‘I hope he is feeling better,’ said Captain Wentworth politely, staying by the window.

For a few minutes, Anne looked after little Charles while Captain Wentworth stood quietly by the window. Anne was pleased when she

heard someone coming into the cottage. But, looking up, she saw it was Charles Hayter. He would not be pleased to see Captain Wentworth, Anne knew. Captain Wentworth came forward to talk to him, but when Anne invited Charles Hayter to sit down, he picked up a newspaper and started to read.

After a short while, Mary's younger son came into the room. He wanted to play, but when he saw that his brother was ill, he climbed onto Anne's back. Anne spoke to him and tried to push him away, but he would not listen.

'Walter,' she said. 'Get down now. You are making me very angry.'

'Walter,' said Charles Hayter. 'Do what your aunt says. Come here to me.'

Walter would not move. But a moment later, someone took him from Anne's back. Walter had pushed Anne's head down. So it was only after his hands had come away from her neck and he was carried away that Anne knew. Captain Wentworth had done it.

She could not speak. His kindness, and the quiet way he had taken Walter from her back, left her full of confused feelings. So when Mary and the Miss Musgroves came back, she left the room at once. It was such a little thing, but it had brought up great feelings inside her. She had to stay alone for a long time, thinking quietly, before she felt better.

## **Chapter 6. The Miss Musgroves Suggest a Walk**

Mary and Charles still could not agree about which of the Miss Musgroves Captain Wentworth liked best. Anne was often together with Captain Wentworth, the Miss Musgroves and Charles Hayter. She believed that Captain Wentworth was not in love with Louisa or Henrietta. Charles Hayter was clearly upset that Henrietta seemed so interested in Captain Wentworth. But Anne did not believe that Captain Wentworth was behaving badly. She did not think he knew that he had



upset Hayter. He probably did not even know that Charles Hayter and Henrietta had been so close. He was only wrong, she thought, to let two young women become so interested in him at the same time.

After a little while, Charles Hayter stopped coming to Uppercross. He had tried to interest Henrietta again, but he had given up. Anne thought he was very sensible to stay away.

A few days after Charles stopped visiting Uppercross, the Miss Musgroves came to see Anne and Mary one morning. It was a lovely November day, and Charles Musgrove and Captain Wentworth had gone shooting.

‘We are going for a very long walk,’ Henrietta told Anne and Mary, ‘and so we already know that you would not like to come, Mary.’

‘Oh yes, I would,’ Mary replied quickly. ‘I would like to come very much. I love long walks.’ The Miss Musgroves looked at each other, and Anne could see at once that this was not what they wanted. She tried to persuade Mary to stay at home, but Mary would not listen to her. Anne thought that she had better go as well. Then, if it was necessary, she could turn back early with her sister.

The Miss Musgroves, Mary and Anne were just leaving when Charles and Captain Wentworth arrived. They had come back from shooting early, so they were ready for a good walk and were pleased to come with the ladies. It was too late for Anne to say that she wanted to stay at home, so all six of them went together. Anne stayed close to her sister and brother-in-law. As they walked, she tried to keep her mind busy. But she could not stop herself from listening whenever she heard Captain Wentworth talking to the Miss Musgroves.

Everyone was following the Miss Musgroves on this walk, and they seemed to know where they were going. After a while, the group came to the top of a big hill, and from there they could see Winthrop, the Hayters’ home, below.

‘Oh my! Here is Winthrop!’ said Mary. ‘Well, I think we should turn back now. I am very tired.’

Henrietta, who was suddenly nervous about seeing Charles Hayter, was ready to go back, too. But Louisa cried, 'No! No!' She took her sister away from the others and talked to her in a strong voice. After a while, the group decided that Henrietta and her brother, Charles, would run down the hill to Winthrop to see their aunt and cousins for a few minutes. The rest of the group would wait at the top.

Anne was tired and she was pleased to find a dry, sunny place to sit. Mary, not happy with the seat she had found, went to look for a better one. Louisa and Captain Wentworth went looking for nuts in the hedges. But after a while, Anne heard Louisa and Captain Wentworth coming towards her. Anne was hidden from them, and she could hear Louisa talking.

'...So I made Henrietta go,' Louisa was telling Captain Wentworth. 'She told me just this morning that she wanted to go to Winthrop. But you know that Mary does not think Charles Hayter is good enough for our family. And just because of Mary's silly ideas, Henrietta nearly didn't go just now. I had to make her go!'

'Well, Henrietta is lucky that she has a sister like you,' replied Captain Wentworth. 'I understand now that the visit to Winthrop this morning is important for her. And she should not let anyone stop her from doing things! Your sister is a lovely girl, but I can see that you have the strongest mind. If someone is not strong enough and cannot make decisions, then you can never be sure about them. Anyone may make them change their mind about things. My first hope, for anyone that I care about, is that they should be strong. If Louisa Musgrove wants to be beautiful and happy in the autumn of her life, she will always keep her mind this strong!'

There was silence for a moment. What could Louisa say? Captain Wentworth had spoken so strongly and so warmly. Anne was sure she knew how Louisa was feeling at that moment. Anne stayed very still and hoped that they would not see her. Before they moved on, Louisa spoke once more.

‘Mary is agreeable in many ways,’ she said. ‘But I do get annoyed sometimes by her vanity. She thinks she is so important. We were sorry that Charles did not marry Anne. I am sure you must know that he wanted to marry Anne?’

Captain Wentworth said nothing for a moment. Then he said, ‘Do you mean that she refused him?’

‘Oh, yes!’ replied Louisa.

‘When was this?’ Captain Wentworth asked.

‘About a year before Charles married Mary, I think. We were so sorry that Anne said no. We like her so much more than Mary,’ said Louisa simply.

Louisa and Captain Wentworth had moved away, and Anne could not hear their words anymore. But she was full of so many mixed feelings that she could not move. Captain Wentworth had talked about people who were not strong enough. She knew that, in his eyes, she was one of those people. But she had also heard feelings and interest in his voice when he asked about her. She was finding it difficult to stay calm.

She was glad when everyone was together and they were ready to go. Charles and Henrietta had come back from Winthrop with Charles Hayter, and everyone could see that Henrietta and Charles were happy to be together again. They talked only to each other all the way back to Uppercross.

So now it was clearly Louisa for Captain Wentworth. As the group walked back, Louisa and Captain Wentworth were together almost as much as Henrietta and Charles Hayter. Anne walked a little way behind with Charles and Mary.

As the group arrived at a road, they heard a carriage coming and saw that it was Admiral Croft and his wife. When they heard that the young people had walked so far, the Crofts kindly asked if anyone wanted to ride with them back to Uppercross. Everyone refused, but as Captain Wentworth crossed the road, he spoke to his sister, Mrs Croft, and she at once called out to Anne.

‘Miss Elliot, I am sure you are tired. Please let us take you home.’

Anne started to refuse, but the Crofts would not listen. And without saying a word, Captain Wentworth helped her into the carriage.

Yes, he had done it. She was in the carriage and he had put her there. He had seen that she was tired and he had wanted her to rest. Anne now thought that she could see how Captain Wentworth felt about her. She understood him. He had not forgiven her, but he could still be kind. He was not interested in her anymore and was now becoming very close to another woman. But he still liked to help her and felt friendship for her. She could see that he still had a kind, warm heart. She was pleased about that, but she found it painful, too - and she could not decide which feeling was stronger.

## **Chapter 7. A Visit to Lyme**

It was now nearly the end of Anne’s stay at Uppercross. Soon she would move to Kellynch Lodge and stay with Lady Russell before going to live in Bath. But Anne’s last days at Uppercross were not what she had expected.

A friend of Captain Wentworth’s was staying in Lyme for the winter with his family, so Captain Wentworth went to visit them for two days. When he came back to Uppercross, he spoke about his visit very warmly. His friend, Captain Harville, had welcomed him very kindly, he said, and he had found the countryside around Lyme beautiful. He was so pleased with Lyme that the young people decided they wanted to see it themselves. Louisa wanted to go more than anyone else and she decided that they should go at once. It was only seventeen miles away, and so a plan was made. They would go together - Charles, Mary, Anne, Henrietta, Louisa and Captain Wentworth. They would stay for one night at an inn and they would come home the following day.

They left Uppercross early in the morning and arrived in Lyme at lunchtime. After finding an inn to stay in, the first thing they did was

walk down to the sea. Because it was November, the town itself was very quiet. Charles, Mary, Anne and the Miss Musgroves walked along the seafront while Captain Wentworth went to visit his friend, Captain Harville. He returned very soon with Captain and Mrs Harville, and Captain Benwick, who was following them. Captain Wentworth had already told his friends from Uppercross about Captain Benwick. He was an excellent young man and he had been engaged to Captain Harville's sister, Fanny. Sadly, Fanny had died in the summer while Captain Benwick was at sea, and he was now living with the Harvilles. He was a quiet, serious man, who liked reading and had strong feelings about things. He was deeply upset by Fanny's death. Anne could see at once that there was great sadness in him, and he did not easily join in the conversation.

The Harvilles were very friendly and welcoming. Captain Harville was a tall, dark man with a sensible face. He was a true gentleman and spoke warmly and politely. Mrs Harville's manners were not as perfect as her husband's, but she had the same good character. Any friends of Captain Wentworth were friends of theirs, too, they said. So after walking along the seafront, they all went to visit the Harvilles' small but comfortable house.

Captain Wentworth and his group then returned to the inn for dinner, but in the evening Captain Harville and Captain Benwick came to visit them. Anne sat next to Captain Benwick and they started to talk. He read a lot, and so they talked about poetry and their favourite writers. Anne could see that Captain Benwick was full of the deepest and saddest feelings. She told him about writers whose work, she believed, might help to lift him from his sadness. She found it easy to try and help other people escape their sadness. But she was never able to escape her own.

\* \* \*

The next morning, Anne and Henrietta were the first to wake up, so they walked down to the sea before breakfast. Captain Wentworth

and Louisa came to join them, and they all walked back towards the inn together. When they got to the steps up from the beach, there was a gentleman dressed in mourning waiting to come down from the top. He stood to one side to let them go past. As Anne looked up, she saw that he was admiring her. The sea air had given her pretty face a fresh, young look once more, and her eyes were bright. Captain Wentworth turned back at that moment and he saw the gentleman watching Anne. He looked quickly at Anne and his eyes seemed to say, 'That man admires you - and I too can see a little of the old Anne Elliot again.'

They walked back to the inn and were just finishing their breakfast when they heard a carriage driving away. Captain Wentworth went to the window.

'It is the man we saw at the beach,' he said, with a quick look at Anne.

'Can you tell me the name of the gentleman who just left the inn?' he asked the waiter when he came into the breakfast room.

'Yes, Sir, it was a Mr Elliot. He is a very rich man, Sir. He arrived late last night and now he is going on to Bath and London.'

'Elliot!' they all cried at once.

'It must be our cousin, our father's heir!' cried Mary, who was very excited. 'The gentleman was in mourning, and our cousin's wife died a while ago. How strange - he was staying in the same inn as us! Oh, I am sorry that we did not meet him. Anne, you must tell our father that we saw Mr Elliot, next time you write to Bath.'

Anne said nothing. She knew that her father and Elizabeth had been very upset by Mr Elliot's behaviour. She also knew that they had not forgiven him. So she felt very sure they would not want to hear that Anne and Mary had seen him in Lyme.

## **Chapter 8. A Terrible Accident**

After breakfast, the group went for a last walk around Lyme with Captain and Mrs Harville and Captain Benwick. But when they started to walk along the seafront again with Captain Benwick, the Harvilles returned home after many long, warm goodbyes.

As it was windy, they decided to move down to the lower part of the seafront. Most of the group went carefully and slowly down the steep steps. But Louisa wanted Captain Wentworth to catch her while she jumped. He told her that the ground was too hard, but Louisa would not listen. Captain Wentworth caught her safely, and then she ran quickly back up to jump down again. Captain Wentworth put out his hands, but Louisa was a little too fast. She fell straight onto the pavement.

There was no blood, but Louisa was not moving and her face was white. It was a terrible moment for them all.

‘She is dead! She is dead!’ screamed Mary, holding on to her husband. Henrietta started to fall to the ground, but Anne and Captain Benwick caught her. Together they held her up and tried to keep her calm.

‘Can no one help me?’ cried out Captain Wentworth. He was holding Louisa in his arms and his face was as white as hers.

‘Go to him! Go to him!’ cried Anne to Captain Benwick. ‘I can hold Henrietta myself. Leave me and go to him. Here are some smelling salts. Take them, take them.’

Captain Benwick took the salts from Anne and went to Louisa. At the same time, Charles freed himself from Mary, and together they tried to wake Louisa up. But Louisa still did not move.

‘Oh God!’ cried Captain Wentworth, holding himself up against the wall.

‘Get a doctor!’ cried Anne. ‘Captain Benwick, you will know where we can find a doctor!’

Her words seemed to bring Captain Wentworth to himself. ‘Yes, yes, a doctor!’ he said.

Charles took his sister from Captain Benwick, and Captain Benwick ran towards the town as fast as he could. Anne tried to stay calm and strong. She looked after Henrietta and tried to quieten Mary, who had become hysterical. She spoke sensibly to Captain Wentworth and to Charles, who let out great cries of sadness as he looked down at his sister.

Everyone seemed to wait for Anne to decide what to do.

‘I think we should carry her gently to the inn/ said Anne.

‘Yes, yes, to the inn,’ said Captain Wentworth. ‘I shall carry her myself. Charles, you bring the others.’

But as they were moving away from the windy seafront, the Harvilles came to meet them. They had seen Captain Benwick running past their house, and from the look on his face they knew that something was wrong. They told Captain Wentworth to carry Louisa to their house and wait for the doctor there.

At the Harvilles’ house, Louisa was carried up to Mrs Harville’s bed, while Captain Harville sat the others down and brought them drinks and salts. Louisa had opened her eyes once, but closed them again, so Henrietta was feeling a little calmer. Mary, too, was becoming less hysterical.

The doctor came quickly. They felt sick with worry while he looked at Louisa. However, he did not give them the terrible news they had all been afraid of. He said he was hopeful that Louisa would get better. Her head had been hit badly, he said, but he had seen people get better from worse accidents in the past.

‘Thank God!’ said Captain Wentworth, with a look which Anne was sure she would never forget. He put his face in his hands, as if he was trying to calm his deepest feelings.

Now they had to decide what to do. The Harvilles said that Louisa should stay with them. Mrs Harville and her servant were good nurses, they said, and would do everything for her. They said they would also



find space for some of the others if they wanted to stay. They would not listen to anyone who said that it was too much trouble for them.

After talking for a while, Charles and Captain Wentworth agreed that Charles would stay with his sister while Captain Wentworth drove at once back to Uppercross. Someone needed to tell Mr and Mrs Musgrove about the accident, and it was getting late.

‘I shall take Miss Henrietta home,’ said Captain Wentworth. ‘I think only one more person should stay to help Mrs Harville. Mrs Musgrove will want to get back to her children, of course. But if Anne will stay - nobody could do as much as Anne!’

Anne was just coming into the room as he spoke.

‘You will stay, I am sure,’ he said, turning to her. He spoke so warmly and gently, almost as he used to speak to her all those years before. Anne felt her cheeks turning red, and Captain Wentworth remembered himself at once and moved away. It was what she most wanted, Anne told Captain Wentworth. She had thought of it herself and she was very pleased to stay. A bed on the floor in Louisa’s room was all she needed.

Captain Wentworth hurried away to get everything ready. But Mary was not happy about the plan. Anne was nothing to Louisa, she said, but Mary was Louisa’s sister-in-law. Why could she not be as useful as Anne? And how could she go home without Charles - her husband? She spoke so strongly and for so long that at last her husband could argue with her no more. Mary, Charles decided, would stay with Louisa while Anne went back to Uppercross. Anne had never been so sorry to let Mary win an argument, but there was nothing she could do.

When they all arrived back at the inn, Captain Wentworth was waiting for them with the carriage. He was surprised and annoyed that Mary, and not Anne, was staying with Louisa. It was a difficult moment for Anne. It was clear that she was only important to him because of what she could do for Louisa. She had wanted to stay with Louisa and

look after her for Captain Wentworth. And now it seemed that she was not doing what he had asked of her.

As they drove home, Captain Wentworth talked only to Henrietta. He spoke calmly, trying to make her feel better and give her hope for Louisa. But once he cried out, with the strongest feelings, ‘Oh God, why did I let her jump down? She would not listen when I said no! Dear, sweet Louisa!’ Captain Wentworth had talked before about a strong mind and how important that was to him. Perhaps, thought Anne, he would now agree that you should sometimes let people persuade you not to do things.

When they arrived back at Uppercross, Captain Wentworth went into the house first to tell Mr and Mrs Musgrove about the accident. He stayed until Henrietta was with her parents and they were all calm. Then he told them that he was going to drive back to Lyme in the carriage that night. He waited until the horses were ready and then he left.

## **Chapter 9. Anne Goes to Bath**

Anne spent her last days in Uppercross at the Great House with Mr and Mrs Musgrove. Charles visited the day after the accident and brought news of Louisa. Everything was going as well as could be expected, he said, but it would be a long time before she was better. The Harvilles had shown great kindness, and Mrs Harville was doing everything possible for Louisa.

The following day, news came that Louisa was staying awake for a little longer each time and talking sensibly. When she heard this, Anne persuaded the Musgroves to go to Lyme. They quickly agreed. Anne was leaving for Kellynch the next day, and they did not know what they would do without her. They decided to stay at an inn near Louisa until she could be moved. They planned to help Mrs Harville any way they could.

They left early the next morning, and Anne found herself alone in the Great House for her last day in Uppercross. The house felt empty without the Musgroves. But Anne was sure that if Louisa got better, it would soon be a much happier house. She thought about what would happen next. In a few months, the empty room she was standing in would be full of happiness as the love between Captain Wentworth and Louisa grew.

With these thoughts, on a dark, rainy November day, she was pleased to hear Lady Russell's carriage arriving for her. But she was sad to say goodbye to the house and the cottage. She had felt great pain here, but the pain was less now. She also had some happy memories. There had been times when she felt that she and Captain Wentworth were almost friends again. And moments when she felt he had almost forgiven her. She would always remember those moments.

Lady Russell was pleased that Anne looked so well. She had been worried about Anne when she heard that Captain Wentworth had been at Uppercross. Lady Russell talked about Sir Walter, Elizabeth and Bath - a world Anne had almost forgotten. Sir Walter's new house at Camden Place was very pleasing, Lady Russell said. But she was very sorry to say that Mrs Clay was still staying with Sir Walter and Elizabeth. Anne tried to be interested, but her heart was in Lyme and her thoughts were with Louisa Musgrove and her friends there.

When Charles and Mary returned from Lyme, they came to visit Anne and Lady Russell at Kellynch Lodge. They said that Louisa was doing very well and was beginning to sit up. But her head was still very painful, and they did not think she would be home for the Christmas holidays.

Just before Anne and Lady Russell left for Bath, they visited the Musgroves, who were now back at home in Uppercross. They said that Louisa was getting better every day. Henrietta had stayed with her in Lyme, and Captain Wentworth had gone away to stay with his brother in Shropshire.

\* \* \*

Anne still did not really want to live in Bath. As they drove through the noisy streets on a wet afternoon, she thought lovingly about the happy, busy life of Uppercross and the quiet life of Kellynch.

Elizabeth's last letter had brought some interesting news. Mr William Elliot was in Bath and he had visited Anne's father and sister three times. It seemed that he was now interested in the family connection that he had once cared so little about. Lady Russell was very pleased and interested to hear this. Anne was less excited. But she would be more pleased to see Mr Elliot again than the other people she knew in Bath.

Anne got out of the carriage in Camden Place, at her father and sister's new home. Lady Russell drove on to where she was staying in River Street.

Sir Walter had found a very good house in Camden Place. It was the perfect house for an important man, and he and Elizabeth were very pleased with it.

Anne felt a little happier when she walked inside. She had expected the house to be like a prison to her. But to her surprise, her father and sister were very welcoming. They were pleased to see her and wanted to show her the house and the furniture.

Mrs Clay had many smiles for Anne. Anne had known that Mrs Clay would pretend to be friendly. But she had not expected her father and sisters warm welcome. Of course, they were not really interested in Anne's news. After asking a few quick questions, all they wanted to do was tell her about Bath. They did not want to know about Uppercross and they were not very interested in Kellynch.

They were very pleased with Bath. Theirs was the best house in Camden Place. Their drawing rooms were the finest they had seen. They did not think there was another house with such good furniture. Everybody wanted to visit them. And every day, people they had never heard of called at the house and left cards for them.

These were the things that made Sir Walter and Elizabeth happy. Was Anne surprised that they were pleased with themselves? No, she was not. But she was sorry her father did not see that this was a sad change to his life.

He had been the biggest landowner in Kellynch and an important man to all the people in that area. And here he was, so proud of these silly little things. Elizabeth, too, who had for so long been mistress of Kellynch Hall, was now full of vanity about this little town house. Anne could not understand it.

But it was not just the house that was making Sir Walter and Elizabeth happy. They had Mr Elliot, too. They had a lot to say about Mr Elliot. They had not only forgiven him, but they were now very pleased with him. He had been in Bath for two weeks and had left his card at Camden Place the moment he arrived. Since then, he had visited as often as possible. He was terribly sorry for everything that had happened all those years before. And he very much wanted to be welcomed as a relative once more.

Mr Elliot had introduced Sir Walter and Elizabeth to his great friend, Colonel Wallis, a perfect gentleman. Colonel Wallis had told them about Mr Elliot's marriage. His wife had not been from a good family, Colonel Wallis told them. But she was well-educated and deeply in love with Mr Elliot. She had wanted to marry Mr Elliot very much, and he had been persuaded. She had been a fine woman, and rich. Now at last, Sir Walter felt that he could understand Mr Elliot's marriage.

However, Mr Elliot was already very rich and he knew that he would inherit Kellynch Hall one day. So why did he want connections with the family now? Anne thought it might be because of Elizabeth. Maybe he really had liked Elizabeth when he had met her years before. Perhaps he was interested in her again. She could see from the looks that Elizabeth and Mrs Clay gave each other that this was certainly what they thought.

Sir Walter and Elizabeth talked about Mr Elliot and his friends, Colonel and Mrs Wallis, for most of the evening. Mrs Wallis was very beautiful, they said, and was going to have a baby very soon. The conversation was stopped by a knock on the door. It was late - ten o'clock - but they were sure it must be Mr Elliot. A few moments later, the servants opened the drawing room doors and Mr Elliot came in.

It was the same man that Anne had seen in Lyme. He spoke politely to Elizabeth and Mrs Clay, and then Sir Walter introduced Anne to him. Mr Elliot was very surprised. He remembered Anne's face very well from Lyme, although he had not known then who she was. He almost could not believe that she was his cousin. But he was very pleased to meet her and he hoped that they would be good friends. He was a good' looking man and he had perfect manners. Anne could only think of one other person who had such good manners.

The conversation became more interesting with Mr Elliot there. Anne could see at once that he was a sensible man. He said he was very sorry that they had not met properly in Lyme. When Anne told him about Louisa's accident, he listened carefully. He asked many questions, and Anne felt that talking to Mr Elliot was a little like talking to Lady Russell. He understood at once how terrible that day had been for everybody. And he felt very sorry that Anne's stay in Lyme had ended in such a difficult way.

It was eleven o'clock before Mr Elliot left. It felt to everyone as if he had only just arrived. Anne could not believe that her first evening in Camden Place had been so agreeable.

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Anne had been worried about her father's feelings for Mrs Clay before she arrived in Bath. By the next morning, she felt more worried. When she came down for breakfast, she heard Sir Walter, Elizabeth and Mrs Clay having a quiet conversation. Elizabeth would not need her anymore now that Anne was here, said Mrs Clay. She should leave Bath at once. Elizabeth replied quietly that Mrs Clay was much more

important to her than Anne. And Sir Walter said, 'My dear Madam, you cannot leave us. You must stay and meet Mrs Wallis - they say she is very beautiful. You have a fine mind, and I know that beauty is important to you.'

Sir Walter spoke with so much feeling that Mrs Clay looked quickly at Elizabeth. Anne could see that Elizabeth had not listened carefully to what Sir Walter had said. But both Anne and Mrs Clay had understood the importance of his words. And Mrs Clay, of course, promised to stay.

When Lady Russell visited Camden Place, she could see at once that Sir Walter and Elizabeth still liked Mrs Clay very much. She found it difficult that they listened so much to Mrs Clay and so little to Anne. But Lady Russell was very pleased to meet Mr Elliot. As well as perfect manners, she thought that he had a good mind and a warm heart. He had strong feelings of family honour, but he was not proud. She was so pleased with Mr Elliot that she almost forgot about Mrs Clay.

Lady Russell did not think it was surprising that Mr Elliot now wanted to know Sir Walter and his family better. She did not think, like Anne, that he was perhaps interested in Elizabeth. Neither of them knew what would happen. But for now, Mr Elliot was the person they most liked to see in Bath.

## **Chapter 10. Surprising News**

Anne had heard that an old friend of hers from school was living in Bath. The school friend, Miss Hamilton, had been very kind and helpful to Anne when she started school, soon after her mother's death. Miss Hamilton had married a very rich man when she left school. But she was now a widow, and poor. Her husband had not been careful with his money. He had died two years before, leaving Miss Hamilton - now Mrs Smith - with nothing. She had been ill, too, and could not walk. So she had come to Bath, where she was now living in a very simple way.

Because she was poor, she did not go to balls or concerts and she had almost no visitors.

Because Mrs Smith had been so kind to Anne, and because her life was so difficult now, Anne wanted to see her as soon as possible. When she visited Mrs Smith at her home in Westgate Buildings, the two women quickly became friends again. Mrs Smith was sensible and agreeable, and illness and difficulty had not closed her heart or broken her spirit. On Anne's second visit, Mrs Smith talked very openly about herself. Her life was almost impossibly difficult. She had loved her husband and he had died. She had been rich and she was now poor. She was ill, but had no children or relatives who could help her. Her home was a small room and she only had one servant to look after her. But Mrs Smith's mind was too open for her to feel sorry for herself.

She was helped, she said, by a good nurse, who was a very clever, sensible woman.

'Nurse Rooke understands people,' said Mrs Smith. 'Many better-educated people are much less interesting than her. She tells me what is happening in Bath. A conversation with Nurse Rooke is always fun. But at the moment she is nursing Mrs Wallis, who I understand is a silly, fashionable woman. And I do not expect she will have anything interesting to tell me.'

Anne had visited Mrs Smith several times without telling Sir Walter and Elizabeth. But one night the family were invited to visit some cousins who were staying in Bath. Because Anne had already promised to visit Mrs Smith, she told her father and sister that she could not go with them.

'You are going to Westgate Buildings?' said Sir Walter. 'And who is Miss Anne Elliot visiting in Westgate Buildings?'

Anne told him about Mrs Smith and he was appalled.

'A widow? Living in Westgate Buildings? A poor widow, thirty years old, who has almost nothing? Miss Anne Elliot, you choose very strange friends!'



Mrs Clay decided to leave the room at that moment. Mrs Smith was not the only woman in Bath who was thirty years old with little money and no husband, Anne thought to herself. But she said nothing. She went to see Mrs Smith, and Sir Walter and Elizabeth went to visit their cousins.

The next morning, she heard that they had had a lovely evening. Lady Russell and Mr Elliot had been there as well. They were both sorry not to see her there. Mr Elliot had been very pleased when he heard that Anne was visiting a poor, ill friend. He thought Anne was a wonderful young woman, Lady Russell told her. He admired her character, her good manners and her mind.

‘I think that you could be very happy with Mr Elliot,’ Lady Russell told Anne. She was sure that Mr Elliot wanted to marry Anne.

‘Mr Elliot is very agreeable,’ Anne replied. ‘But we would not be good for each other.’

‘When I think that you could one day be mistress of Kellynch Hall, it gives me the greatest happiness,’ Lady Russell went on, ‘You are so like your mother. And when I think of you in her home, with her name, taking her place ... the next Lady Elliot ... My dear Anne, nothing could make me happier!’ Anne had to walk away for a moment. This picture of Kellynch and Lady Elliot excited her, too. But when she thought of Mr Elliot, she knew that she could never be the next Lady Elliot. She did not want to marry him, and not just because she still had feelings only for one person. There were other, quite different reasons.

Anne had known Mr Elliot for a month now, but she still did not know him very well. She was sure that he was sensible and agreeable. But when he talked about the past, she could see that he had once been a very different person. For a while, he had not been careful about serious things. How could anyone be sure that he had really changed? Mr Elliot was polite and had perfect manners, but he was not open. He never showed strong feelings of happiness or anger about anything. And a warm, open heart was more important to Anne than anything.

It was the beginning of February, and Anne had not had a letter from Mary for three weeks. She wanted very much to hear news from Uppercross and Lyme. So she was glad when a letter arrived for her. She was also very pleased when she saw that the letter had been left by the Crofts. So the Crofts were in Bath!

*My dear Anne,*

*I am writing with news about Louisa, who is now much better. She and the Harvilles arrived at the Great House on Tuesday. You will not believe her news. Captain Benwick is in love with her, and they want to get married! He wrote to Mr Musgrove to ask him. Can you believe it? We are all so surprised, but we are very pleased, too. Mr Musgrove has written back to Captain Benwick to say yes. We are expecting' Captain Benwick today. Charles wants to know what Captain Wentworth will think. But if you remember, I never thought he planned to marry Louisa. Charles sends his love.*

*Yours*

*Mary M.*

Mary was right. Anne had never been so surprised about anything in her life! Captain Benwick and Louisa Musgrove! Louisa, who had such high spirits and was always talking. And Captain Benwick, who liked reading and thinking, and had such strong feelings of sadness. They were so different, but they had been thrown together. Perhaps, with Louisa getting better and Captain Benwick's heart opening up, they had both felt ready to love. But what about Captain Wentworth? Had he given Louisa up? Had he found that he could not love her? Captain Wentworth and Captain Benwick were good friends. Anne hoped so much that there was no bad feeling between them. The colour came into her cheeks when she thought of Captain Wentworth without any attachments. She could not stop herself feeling happy - madly happy!

When the Crofts visited the Elliots, Anne could see at once that they had not yet heard the news about Louisa and Captain Benwick. But one morning, about a week later, Anne was walking home to Camden Place when she passed Admiral Croft. They decided to walk together. After a while, Admiral Croft told Anne that he and Mrs Croft had just heard the news.

‘And we know that it is true,’ continued Admiral Croft. ‘We had a letter from Frederick himself. He had heard it from Harville, who is at Uppercross.’

‘I hope that Captain Wentworth did not seem unhappy in his letter,’ Anne said. ‘It did seem that there was an attachment between him and Louisa Musgrove. So I hope that he does not feel Captain Benwick has behaved badly. They are such good friends, and it would be terrible if anything changed that.’

‘No, Frederick does not seem upset at all. He says nothing against Captain Benwick and he hopes that he and Miss Musgrove will be very happy together,’ replied Admiral Croft. ‘Poor Frederick! Now he must start again with someone else. There are enough pretty girls here, I am sure. Do you not think, Miss Elliot, that we should tell him to come to Bath?’

## **Chapter 11. Captain Wentworth Comes to Bath**

Captain Wentworth was already on his way to Bath. Before the Crofts had written to him, he arrived. The very next time Anne was out in town, she saw him.

Anne was walking with Elizabeth, Mrs Clay and Mr Elliot in Milsom Street when it started to rain. While the ladies waited in a shop, Mr Elliot went to find a carriage for Miss Elliot and Mrs Clay. Anne looked out of the window and suddenly saw Captain Wentworth walking down the street. For a few moments, she could not think or move. When she had calmed down, she found that Mr Elliot had

returned. He promised that the carriage would arrive soon and then went out again to get something for Mrs Clay. Anne decided to go to the door and look outside for Captain Wentworth, but at that moment he walked into the shop with a group of friends.

Captain Wentworth seemed surprised and confused when he saw Anne. He looked quite red, and for the first time Anne felt that their meeting was easier for her than for him. Because she had seen him first, she had been prepared. But she was still full of feelings - partly great happiness and partly terrible pain.

Captain Wentworth spoke to Anne and then turned away, embarrassed. Then after a short time, he came towards her and spoke again. He looked well, and he talked about Uppercross and the Musgroves, and even Louisa. However, he was much less calm and comfortable than before. Time had changed him, or Louisa had changed him.

The carriage arrived and Captain Wentworth offered to take Anne out to it.

‘Thank you,’ she said. ‘But I am not going with them. I prefer to walk. I am just waiting for Mr Elliot. He will be here in a moment, I am sure.’

That very moment, Mr Elliot came in. Captain Wentworth remembered him perfectly from that day when he had admired Anne on the steps at Lyme. Mr Elliot did not look at anyone but Anne. He took her arm and she walked out of the shop with him. Anne only had time to say a quick ‘Good morning’ to Captain Wentworth.

Anne found it difficult to listen to Mr Elliot as they walked home. She could think only of Frederick Wentworth. She needed to know how he felt about Louisa. Until she knew that, she could not be herself.

Anne did not see Captain Wentworth for two days. The following evening, however, the Elliots were going to a concert, and Anne knew that Captain Wentworth loved concerts. If she could talk with him for just a few minutes, she hoped that she would understand his feelings

better. She felt braver now and was ready to start a conversation with him.

When Captain Wentworth arrived at the Assembly Rooms the following evening, Anne moved forwards at once. He was ready to bow and move past, but Anne's gentle 'How do you do V stopped him. He came to stand near her, and they talked about the weather and Bath. Then Captain Wentworth said with a smile, 'I have not really seen you since our day in Lyme. It was a terrible hour, a terrible day.' He moved his hand across his eyes, as if it was still too painful to remember. Then he smiled a little again. 'But some things that have happened because of that day are certainly not terrible. When you asked Benwick to go for the doctor, you surely did not know that he would make Miss Musgrove better himself.'

'Certainly not. But I hope that they will be very happy together,' said Anne.

'Yes,' said Captain Wentworth. 'I very much hope so, too. I am glad that they have no problems at home, no one who is against their marriage, and nothing stopping them. All this will surely help them to find happiness. More happiness perhaps than...'

He stopped. It seemed that he had suddenly remembered something. Anne's cheeks had turned red and she looked away from him.

'I must say that I do think they are very different,' he went on. 'Too different. Louisa Musgrove is a very likeable, sweet girl. But Benwick is something more. He is a clever man, a man who reads. I am surprised by his attachment to Miss Musgrove. Fanny Harville was a much finer woman, and he loved her very much. A man does not - should not - forget the strong feelings he had for a woman like Fanny.'

Captain Wentworth stopped, and Anne began to breathe quickly. She felt confused, pleased, surprised - a hundred different things in one moment. They said nothing for a while, then Anne, not wanting to

change the conversation too much, said, 'You were in Lyme for a while, I think?'

'About two weeks. I could not leave until I was sure that Louisa was getting better. I was wrong to let Louisa jump - I was too weak. Because the accident was so much my fault, I had to stay. The countryside around Lyme is beautiful, and I walked and rode a lot.'

At that moment, some more people arrived and Anne had to leave Captain Wentworth to go and talk to them. Their conversation had brought her so much happiness! In only ten minutes she had learnt so much more about his feelings for Louisa. As she walked into the concert room, her eyes were bright and her face was full of warmth. The way Captain Wentworth had talked, and everything he had said, could only mean one thing. His heart was turning back to her and his anger was gone. Now there was not only friendship, but also some of the gentleness of the past. The change could only mean one thing - he must love her.

Anne was so busy with her thoughts that she did not look around as she walked into the concert room. When she sat down next to Mr Elliot, she found that she could not see Captain Wentworth. She was so happy that she enjoyed the first part of the concert very much. During one of the intervals, she explained the meaning of an Italian song to Mr Elliot. She was sorry, she told him, that her Italian was not better.

'You have just turned this difficult Italian into clear, beautiful English. You talk too little about all the many things you can do, Miss Anne Elliot. I have known you for longer than you think,' he said.

'How is that possible?' asked Anne. 'You have only known me since I have been in Bath.'

'I had heard about you a long time before you came to Bath,' Mr Elliot replied. 'You were described to me by someone who knows you very well. I have known everything about your character for many years. The name Anne Elliot has always been very interesting to me. I only hope that name will never change.'

Before she could think about Mr Elliot's words, Anne saw Captain Wentworth. He was standing with a group of men, and when her eyes met his, he looked away from her. Then he moved away. Anne wanted - she needed - to see him again. She was worried about what Mr Elliot had said and did not want to talk to him anymore.

At the next interval, Anne moved to another seat. She saw Captain Wentworth once more, and this time he came slowly towards her. He looked serious and he was very different from the Captain Wentworth of their earlier conversation. He had not liked the singing, he said, and he would not be sorry when the concert was over.

They talked for a few more minutes, and his smile returned again for a while. But then Mr Elliot touched Anne's arm, asking her to explain some more Italian for one of the ladies.

When Anne turned back to Captain Wentworth, he said a quick, quiet goodbye and turned to go.

'Will you not stay for this song?' Anne asked.

'No!' he replied. 'There is nothing for me to stay for!' And he was gone.

He was jealous of Mr Elliot! Anne could not quite believe it. For a moment, that thought gave her a beautiful feeling. But how could she calm his jealousy? How would he know the truth about her feelings? She hated now to think of Mr Elliot's interest in her. It could only bring her terrible problems.

## **Chapter 12. The Truth about Mr Elliot**

Anne had promised to visit her friend, Mrs Smith, the next morning. She was very happy to go because she did not want to be at home if Mr Elliot visited. As she told Mrs Smith about the concert, Anne's face lit up and the happy feelings of the evening came back to her once more.

‘I can see in your eyes that you had a very enjoyable evening,’ Mrs Smith said, smiling. ‘I can see that there was lots of agreeable music, and that in the intervals there was good conversation.’

Anne half smiled. ‘Do you see that in my eyes?’ she asked.

‘Yes, I do,’ said Mrs Smith. ‘Your face tells me that you saw somebody last night - the person you think is the most agreeable in the world. The person who interests you more than anyone else.’

Anne’s cheeks went red. She could say nothing.

‘Please tell me,’ Mrs Smith went on. ‘Does Mr Elliot know that we are friends? Does he know that I am in Bath?’

‘Mr Elliot!’ said Anne, surprised. So Mrs Smith thought she was in love with Mr Elliot. ‘Do you know Mr Elliot?’

‘I did know him very well,’ replied Mrs Smith. ‘But I have not seen him for a long time. I want to ask if you can do something for me. Mr Elliot can help me very much. Could I ask you to speak to him for me?’

‘I will do anything I can for you,’ said Anne. ‘But I am afraid that I am not as important to Mr Elliot as you may think. I am only his relative.’

Mrs Smith looked at Anne carefully.

‘I am sorry,’ she said. ‘I spoke too soon. I shall wait until the engagement is agreed. Next week, perhaps?’

‘No,’ replied Anne. ‘Not next week, or the next one, or the one after that. I am not going to marry Mr Elliot. I do not think he wants to ask me, but if he does, I shall say no. I can promise you, it was not Mr Elliot who I so enjoyed seeing last night. It is not him that

She stopped, sorry that she had said so much. ‘Did you know Mr Elliot before he was married?’ asked Anne.

‘Yes,’ Mrs Smith replied.

‘And ... did you know him well?’

‘Yes, very well,’ replied Mrs Smith.



‘What was he like when he was a young man?’ asked Anne. ‘I have not seen Mr Elliot for three years,’ Mrs Smith replied, in a serious voice. They both said nothing for a while. Then Mrs Smith spoke once more in her usual soft voice.

‘I am sorry, dear Miss Elliot. I am sorry for my short answers. I have not known what to do or what to say. But now I have decided. I believe that you should understand Mr Elliot’s real character. He is a cold-blooded man who has no feeling for what is right. He thinks only of himself and does not care about others at all. Oh, he is black at heart - empty and black!’

Anne looked so astonished that Mrs Smith stopped for a moment and then spoke more calmly.

‘Mr Elliot was a great friend of my dear husband, who loved and trusted him. I liked him too, and we were always together. At that time, we were very rich and Mr Elliot was poor. He often stayed with us. He was always welcome in our house - he was like a brother. And I know that my dear Charles often gave him money.’

‘This was perhaps the time when my father and sister first met Mr Elliot,’ Anne said.

‘Yes,’ replied Mrs Smith. ‘He often spoke about them. I know that he was invited to your home by your father, but he decided not to go,’

‘Why did he not visit?’ asked Anne.

‘At that time,’ said Mrs Smith, ‘he wanted only to be rich. And he wanted to become rich by marriage. He believed that your father wanted him to marry your sister. But he could see that this marriage would not make him rich.’

‘Perhaps,’ cried Anne, suddenly thinking of something, ‘you sometimes spoke about me to Mr Elliot?’

‘Oh yes, very often,’ said Mrs Smith.

‘Mr Elliot told me last night that someone had described me to him. Now I understand that it was you! Oh, but I am sorry. I have stopped you. So Mr Elliot married only for money?’ asked Anne.

‘Oh yes, but many people do. Money was all that Mr Elliot wanted. He may be interested in family honour now, but as a young man he did not care about it at all. I often heard him say that if he could, he would sell his baronetcy,’

‘But why does Mr Elliot want to know our family now?’ Anne asked.

‘I can explain this, too,’ said Mrs Smith, smiling. ‘Mr Elliot tells everything to Colonel Wallis, who then talks to his pretty, silly wife. And she tells everything to Nurse Rooke. Mr Elliot wants to marry you, and his visits to your family now are honest and from the heart. But there is another reason why he wants to have closer connections with your family. I hear that your sister’s friend, Mrs Clay, has been staying with you in Bath, and that she is a good-looking, clever woman. She is poor, and Sir Walter’s friends believe that she hopes one day to be Lady Elliot. When Mr Elliot came to Bath for a day or two before Christmas, Colonel Wallis explained this to him. Mr Elliot has been rich for a very long time and he now hopes to find happiness in other ways. He hates the idea of not being Sir William. So when he heard this news from Colonel Wallis, he decided to come and stay in Bath. He wanted to watch Sir Walter and Mrs Clay. He visited as often as possible, and sometimes very late at night. He is a clever man. And he will do anything to get what he wants.’

‘Yes,’ said Anne. ‘I have heard nothing that surprises me. When he started to visit my father and sister, I never quite understood it.’

But Mrs Smith had not finished yet. At the beginning of their conversation, she had told Anne that Mr Elliot was black at heart. Now she explained why she had such bad feelings towards him. After Mr Elliot’s marriage, she said, he had made Mr Smith spend too much money. After Mr Smith’s death, it became clear that all of their money

had gone. Mr Elliot then refused to be executor of Mr Smith's will, which gave Mrs Smith more worries and difficulties. Mrs Smith wrote to Mr Elliot several times, asking for his help. His replies were hard-hearted and showed clearly that Mr Elliot did not care at all about Mrs Smith's great difficulties. One of the worst things was that Mrs Smith's husband had owned some land in the West Indies, which Mrs Smith wanted to sell. She knew that selling the land would give her enough money to live comfortably. But because she was ill and had no money or connections, she could do nothing. Once again she asked Mr Elliot to help, and once again he refused. This was what she had talked about earlier to Anne. If Anne and Mr Elliot were engaged, she had hoped that Anne could persuade him to help her sell the land.

After listening to this long description of Mr Elliot, Anne could not think about him without feeling appalled. 'What if I had married this man?' she thought to herself. What if Lady Russell had persuaded her that it was a good idea? It was too terrible to think about. Anne wanted to tell Lady Russell the truth about Mr Elliot as soon as possible. Before she left Mrs Smith, she asked her if she was happy for Anne to tell her friend everything.

### **Chapter 13. A Letter from Captain Wentworth**

When Anne arrived home, she found that she had, as planned, escaped a visit from Mr Elliot. However, he came again that evening, and it was painful for her to speak to him. She had never quite believed everything he said, but now she believed nothing. His politeness when talking to her father was empty and horrible to watch. And when she thought of how he had behaved towards Mrs Smith, his smiles and gentleness seemed hateful. She did not change her behaviour towards him completely, but she was as cool as possible. When she heard that he was going to be away from Bath for the next two days, she was very pleased.

The next morning, Anne was planning to go and see Lady Russell to tell her everything she had heard. But before she could leave, there was a knock on the door, and Charles and Mary Musgrove arrived. Their visit was a great surprise, and Anne was very glad to see them. They had come to Bath for a few days, they said, and were staying at an inn with Mrs Musgrove, Henrietta and Captain Harville. They brought the news that Henrietta and Charles Hayter were getting married very soon, and that Louisa was much better.

Elizabeth invited everyone to come to a party the following evening. 'It will be a small but very agreeable party,' she said. 'Mrs Musgrove and her group will be so pleased to come. I am sure they have never seen drawing rooms like ours before.' Anne walked back to the inn with Charles and Mary. Mrs Musgrove and Henrietta were there alone and they gave Anne the kindest, warmest welcome. Other visitors soon arrived, and Anne had only been there for half an hour when Captains Harville and Wentworth walked in. Anne's last meeting with Captain Wentworth had given her a wonderful belief in his feelings for her. But it seemed that he did not want to come near enough to talk. She was afraid he still had the same thoughts which had made him leave the concert early.

As Anne was trying to keep herself calm, Mary suddenly cried out from near the window. 'Anne, there is Mrs Clay, talking with a gentleman. Oh my! It is Mr Elliot!'

'No,' said Anne quickly. 'Mr Elliot is away from Bath today and tomorrow.'

As she spoke, she could feel Captain Wentworth looking at her. She also saw some knowing smiles and looks from some of the lady visitors. They clearly felt that they knew her secret.

'It is him, I am sure,' said Mary. 'I know my own cousin! Do come, Anne, before it is too late.'

Anne moved quietly to the window. She was very surprised to see Mr Elliot and Mrs Clay, just as Mary had said. What were they doing

together, Anne asked herself, these two people who wanted such different things?

The visitors left, and Mrs Musgrove and her group began to get ready to go out. But suddenly the door opened, and Sir Walter and Elizabeth arrived. As soon as they came in, everyone became quiet and a coldness fell on the room. Anne was appalled that she could feel it so strongly! Her father bowed and Elizabeth curtsied to Captain Wentworth. Anne was pleased. They could see now that he was an important person. Then, Elizabeth gave out invitations for her party. There was an invitation for Captain Wentworth, too. Anne watched him as he took it politely. Her father and Elizabeth had behaved very badly towards him all those years ago, and she did not expect that Captain Wentworth could forget that easily.

\* \* \*

Anne had promised to be with the Musgroves from breakfast until dinner the next day. It was a wet morning, so she was a little late leaving home. When she arrived at the inn, she found that Mrs Croft and Captain Wentworth were already there with Captain Harville, and that Henrietta and Mary had gone out for a walk with Charles. Captain Wentworth was sitting at a table writing a letter with Captain Harville, and Mrs Musgrove was telling Mrs Croft about Henrietta's engagement.

'In the end we thought they should marry at once,' Mrs Musgrove was saying. 'There is nothing worse than a long engagement.'

'Oh no, Madam,' said Mrs Croft. 'I do agree. I do not think anyone should get engaged unless they know when they will be able to marry. It is not sensible at all, and parents should do what they can to stop it.'

Anne looked up. They were talking about something which had been true for her, and she felt suddenly nervous and excited. At the same moment that she looked across towards Captain Wentworth, he turned around to look quickly at her.

For a while, she was too confused to listen to the conversation anymore. Then she saw that Captain Harville had moved away towards the window. He asked her to go to him.

‘Look,’ he said quietly, holding out a small painting of a man’s face. ‘Can you see who it is?’

‘Yes, certainly. It is Captain Benwick.’

‘My poor sister, Fanny, had asked him for a painting of himself, and he was bringing it home for her. But now he wants me to put it in a frame for someone else. Captain Wentworth is writing to Benwick about it now. Poor Fanny! She loved him so much, and now he has forgotten her so quickly,’ cried Captain Harville.

‘It must be difficult for you,’ said Anne gently. ‘I do think men can forget a lost love quickly. I know that a woman would find it much harder.’

‘Oh, I will not let you say that,’ replied Captain Harville. ‘Our bodies are the strongest, and our feelings are, too. Even the stormiest weather cannot touch our feelings.’

‘Your feelings may be the strongest,’ replied Anne. ‘But ours hurt us more. You have enough difficulties to live with. You are always far from home, with no time to yourselves, living in danger.’ Her voice was shaking now. ‘It would be too hard for you if you had feelings like ours to hurt you as well.’

‘We will not agree about this,’ Captain Harville started to say, when they heard Captain Wentworth drop his pen. Anne had not thought that they were so close to him. Was he listening to their conversation?

‘No, Miss Elliot,’ Captain Harville continued, ‘we shall never agree about this. There is nothing worse for a man than saying goodbye to his wife and children. Especially when he does not know if he will ever see them again. And if you could feel the warmth in his heart when he is with them once more, then you would believe me.’

‘Oh!’ cried Anne. ‘I could never think that you had anything less than the finest feelings. I believe that men can be great and good in their

marriages. You have strong feelings for the women you love when they are living. And when they are living for you. But I believe that women love longest, particularly when that person or hope is gone.'

Anne's heart was so full she almost could not breathe. At that moment, Mrs Croft got up to leave, and Captain Wentworth finished his letter. He seemed to want to leave at once. Captain Harville gave her the kindest goodbye, but there was not a word, not even a look, from Captain Wentworth.

Captain Wentworth had only just left when the door opened once more and he returned. He told Mrs Musgrove that he had forgotten his gloves and then walked back to the table. Looking at Anne with bright, questioning eyes, he put a letter on the table in front of her quickly. Then he was gone again.

The letter was addressed to 'Miss A Elliot'. So he had been writing to her, and not only to Captain Benwick! Anne felt as if the letter would decide everything in the world for her. She had to know what it said at once. Mrs Musgrove was busy with something at another table. So Anne sat down and began to read.

*I cannot listen in silence anymore. You break my heart. I am half full of terrible pain, half full of hope. Tell me that I am not too late, that those special feelings are not gone forever. I offer myself to you again with a heart that is all yours, It is yours now even more than when you broke it eight and a half years ago. Do not say that a man forgets sooner than a woman. I have loved no one but you. I have been unkind, weak and angry, but I have never forgotten you. I came to Bath, only for you. Everything I have done is for you. Have you not seen this? I almost cannot write. Every moment I hear something which makes me feel weak. You try to talk quietly, but I could understand that voice anywhere. You are too good, too perfect. You know that men can love forever. Please believe that my love could never end.*

*I must go, but I will come back as soon as possible. Please give me a word or a look so I can decide to come to your father's house tonight, or never.*

*F.W.*

It was not possible to feel calm after reading these words. The great happiness Anne was filled with made her feel weak. Before her feelings could quieten, Charles, Mary and Henrietta returned. Anne's head was full of a thousand thoughts and she could not listen to anything they said. And so, explaining that she did not feel well, she got up to go home.

## **Chapter 14. Captain Wentworth Explains**

Charles would not let Anne walk home alone. As they were walking along Union Street, Anne heard someone coming up behind them. She knew at once that it was Captain Wentworth. He said nothing, but looked at Anne. She looked back at him, her cheeks bright with happiness.

'Captain Wentworth,' said Charles. 'Are you going near Camden Place? Can I ask you to take Anne home? She is very tired and must not walk alone. I have something I must do in town. If you could go with her, it would be very helpful for me.'

Captain Wentworth, of course, agreed at once. He and Anne walked towards a quiet path, where they could talk together. And there they shared again the same wonderful feelings and promises they had shared years before. They went back into the past once more, but more perfectly happy this time, more sure of each other, even more loving.

As they walked, they talked about everything which had happened between them, in the last week, yesterday and today. Anne had been right that Captain Wentworth was jealous of Mr Elliot. He had been jealous from the hour of first meeting Anne in Bath. The jealousy had



returned when he saw her with Mr Elliot at the concert. Certain looks or words of hers had made him feel more jealous and this feeling had only died when Captain Wentworth heard Anne talking with Captain Harville that afternoon. That was why he had decided to write to her.

Captain Wentworth said that he had never loved anyone but Anne. He had wanted to forget her, he said. He knew of course that her character was perfect - the loveliest mix of braveness and gentleness. But it was only at Uppercross that he had learnt to see that again. And it was only at Lyme that he had begun to understand himself. He had always known, he said, that he could never love Louisa. But it was only on that terrible day in Lyme that he saw how much finer Anne's mind was. After that he began to hate his pride and anger, which had stopped him from trying to win Anne back again.

'But then I found,' he said, 'that Harville and his wife thought I was an engaged man! I had not been careful. And what if others - Louisa's family or Louisa herself - felt the same? I had to behave honourably. I was Louisa's if that was what she wanted.'

He knew then that he did not care about Louisa at all. But he was no longer a free man if the Harvilles were right about Louisa's feelings for him. He decided to go away from Lyme. He stayed for six weeks with his brother, until he heard the happy and astonishing news of Louisa's engagement to Captain Benwick.

'As soon as I heard the news, I left for Bath,' Captain Wentworth said, 'It was possible, I thought, that you still had feelings for me. And one thing made me hope. I knew that you had refused one man, a better man than me. And I thought ... perhaps ... you had done this for me.'

They talked about their first meeting in Milsom Street and the night of the concert.

'When I saw your cousin sitting next to you, talking and smiling, it gave me terrible pain,' Captain Wentworth said. 'If you married him, it would be perfect for the family. I could see that everyone around you was hoping for it. And then I saw your friend behind you, who had

persuaded you to give me up. I felt that everything was against me. Suddenly I was lost again in those feelings which have hurt me so much year after year. But I still wanted to see you. This morning I felt a little stronger and I decided that I had a reason for staying here.’

\* \* \*

Who could be surprised at what happened next? Sir Walter did not try to stop the engagement, and Elizabeth just looked cold and uninterested. But there was one person who Anne was afraid might be against it. Anne knew that Lady Russell would be sorry that she had not chosen Mr Elliot. And she knew that her friend would find it difficult to get to know Captain Wentworth. But Lady Russell was a very good woman. She soon found it easy to love the man who was making her dear Anne so happy.

Mr Elliot quickly left Bath, and he was closely followed by Mrs Clay. News soon came that she was living in London and was seen often with Mr Elliot. She had given up her hopes of marrying Sir Walter. Mr Elliot’s baronetcy was safe for the moment. But perhaps Mrs Clay would later persuade him to make her the wife of Sir William.

Mrs Smith was one of Anne and Captain Wentworth’s earliest visitors after their marriage. She had been a great friend to Anne, and Captain Wentworth now became a great friend to her. He helped her to sell her husband’s property in the West Indies. Having a little money did not change Mrs Smith at all. Her happiness came from her strong spirit, just as Anne’s came from the warmth of her heart. Anne was gentle and kind, and Captain Wentworth loved her for it.

- THE END -

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