

## Acknowledgements

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# Theoretical Background

## Jane Austen and *Persuasion*

Jane Austen has captured readers' imaginations ever since she wrote her novels in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The fascination with her books has also inspired a large number of adaptations, both on page and on screen, with a new surge in popularity in the 1990s and early 2000s (Munford, 61-62). Since 1960 there have been four movie adaptations of *Persuasion* (imdb.com), and more than fifty literary adaptations have been published in recent years (goodreads.com). While Austen's works have been adapted for almost two hundred years, the trend of modern adaptations has been to focus on the heroes of her stories more than on her heroines (Hopkins, *Mr Darcy's Body*, 119). These heroes are especially intriguing as in Austen's original novels the authorial voice focuses mostly on the heroine, and the heroes' thoughts and motivations largely remain a mystery to readers (Nixon, 25). This is especially true in Austen's last completed novel, *Persuasion*, where a large part of the love story between the two main characters happens before the beginning of the novel, and where the thoughts and motivations of Captain Wentworth throughout the events are never thoroughly explained. This has made reimaginations of the story from Wentworth's perspective, including the story of the character's initial meeting and courtship, more interesting to explore.

## Thesis Focus

In my thesis I want to explore how modern authors adapt a classic novel, making a new product while simultaneously catering to the fans' demand of fidelity and modernising the story in order to appeal to the modern public. I have chosen to look at two different literary adaptations of Jane Austen's *Persuasion*, where the story is told through the point of view of the hero, Captain Wentworth. The first is Amanda Grange's *Captain Wentworth's Diary* (2007), and the second is *Frederick Wentworth, Captain* (2007/2008) by Susan Kaye. Kaye has divided her story into two volumes, but as they together tell the story of *Persuasion* as a whole, I have chosen to look at them as one novel. I will explore how the two authors have

used Austen's original in different ways to create their new stories. Are they only influenced by Austen's novel? If not, which other influences might be discernible in their works? In what ways have they modernized their stories in order to appeal to modern Austen fans? And, importantly: how do Kaye and Grange in different ways use Austen's original text to create a new work in its own right, while both staying close to the events original, and appealing to the intended audience of modern Austen fans by modernizing the story?

## Literary Adaptations

Rewriting – the act of writing again, literally re-membering the old stories – is an act of memory. It is an act of re-collection in which the past is re-called and made sense of in the light of the present. As each age rewrites the past in its own image, rewriting is the process and product of cultural remembrance (Liedeke, 3).

According to Gerard Genette, a hypertext is any text derived from a previous text (called the hypotext) either through simple transformation, or through indirect transformation, *imitation* (7). The two literary adaptations I will be looking at falls under what Genette defines as a subcategory of imitation which he terms *continuation*: one author finishing a text left partially finished by the death of the original author. Jane Austen's *Persuasion* is of course not unfinished, but this is not a definite requirement, as “the function of a continuation is not always to complete a work that has been left manifestly and officially unfinished. One can always decide that a work, which is finished and published as such by its author, is nevertheless in need of a prolongation or a completion” (Genette, 175). This is what Kaye and Grange have done in their adaptations, as they have identified several untold stories within Austen's finished work, which they have continued themselves.

While a continuation is a tribute to the original, and often born from love of the original, there is a fundamental contradiction in all continuations, namely that one cannot complete the incomplete without at least betraying what is sometimes essential to it – incompleteness. Whether or not a continuation is respectful, the author of the new text has seen something in the original as inadequate and decided to “correct those flaws” (Genette, 176-177). There is an inherent criticism in a continuation, as the author of the hypertext has found something missing in the hypotext that they want to fill in. There will also always be some change to the original text through such a rewriting, as “a true creator cannot touch the work of another

without leaving his [or her] mark on it. Continuation thus becomes, in the best of cases, the pretext for oblique rewriting” (Genette, 200). When looking at an adaptation it is therefore interesting to look at the changes made, the differences between the original and the adaptation, and which inherent criticism towards the adapted work might be hidden in these changes. However, the act of writing such an adaptation in itself shows a love and reverence for the original which makes it likely that this criticism is more or less unintentional.

Genette further explains how continuation is a unique form of literature as it operates under very specific and strict rules:

Continuation is not like other imitations, since it must abide by a certain number of additional constraints: first, naturally – given that any satirical caricature is prohibited – imitation here must be absolutely faithful and serious, which rarely happens in usual pastiche. But above all, the hypertext must constantly remain continuous with its hypotext, which it must merely bring to its prescribed or appropriate conclusion while observing the congruity of places, chronological sequence, character consistency, etc. The “continuator” works under the constant supervision of a kind of internalized script girl, who sees to the unity of the whole and the invisibility of the seams. Continuation is thus a more restricted imitation than the autonomous apocryphal text; it is an imitation with a partially prescribed subject (Genette, 162-163).

This is in essence the same as what Yvonne Griggs calls narrative ‘hinge points’ – the bare bones of which the narrative consists. When adapting a story, whether for the page or the screen, adapters work with these hinge points in order to produce a story that is, to varying degrees, recognizable as a reconfiguration of the original story. Adapters who are primarily concerned with fidelity to the source text will try to incorporate as many of these narrative ‘hinge points’ as possible in order to signal the connections between the adaptation and the source text (Griggs, 89).

If the reader is acquainted with the adapted text, and experiences the adaptation as an adaptation, there will always be a kind of intertextuality, regardless of whether the author of an adaptation chooses a high degree of proximity to the original or not. According to Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation*, reading an adaptation is an ongoing dialogical process in which we compare the work we already know with the one we are experiencing. She states that “part of both the pleasure and frustration of experiencing an adaptation is the familiarity bred through repetition and memory” (Hutcheon, 21). It is of course necessary to be familiar

with the adapted work in order to fully experience the adaptation, as well as the adaptations nature as an adaptation; otherwise we will experience it as we do any other work. When the reader is familiar with the original, their memories will oscillate between the two, filling in any gaps of the adaptation with information from the adapted text (Hutcheon, 120-121).

Due to this close connection between the adaptation and the source text, the issue of fidelity or the so-called ‘faithfulness’ of an adaptation has long been the focus of adaptation studies (Griggs, 1). Hutcheon states that:

To deal with adaptations *as adaptations* is to think of them as inherently ‘palimpsestious’ works, haunted at all times by their adapted texts. If we know that original text, we always feel its presence shadowing the one we are experiencing directly. When we call a work an adaptation, we openly announce its overt relationship to another work or works (Hutcheon, 6).

There will always be a strong bond between an adaptation and the adapted work, both in the mind of the creator of the adaptation, and of the audience member who is familiar with both. “Though not the one and only source of an adaptation’s identity, the canonical text that an adaptation is in dialogue with nevertheless plays a vital part in that adaptation’s ‘identity’” (Griggs, 6). However, neither Hutcheon nor Griggs wants the focus of critical discussions surrounding adaptations to be on fidelity alone, even though an adapted text can never be completely free of its source text. Hutcheon further states how this “morally loaded discourse of fidelity is based on the implied assumption that adapters aim simply to reproduce the adapted text” (Hutcheon, 7). As any adaptation must add something to the original in order for it to be worth telling, this is not a fair assessment, and therefore not the aspect critical discussion should mainly focus on, though it the source text will always be present in the mind of a fan reading an adaptation.

Instead of letting the idea of fidelity frame any theorizing on adaptation today, Hutcheon wants the focus rather to be on the literal meaning of the word “to adapt” – to adjust, to alter, to make suitable – on how adaptations change the original to suit the time it is written for (7). As Yvonne Griggs notes, the adaptation, when written in another time than the source text, evolves from a “complex web of adaptive processes related to existing narratives, cultural modes, industrial practices, and to the agenda of those engaging in its construction” (6). “These ways of engaging with stories [telling, showing and interacting] do not, of course, ever take place in a vacuum. We engage in time and space, within a particular society and a

general culture. The contexts of creation and reception are material, public, and economic as much as they are cultural, personal, and aesthetic” (Hutcheon, 28). In other words, any adaptation will be a product of its time, influenced not only by its source text but by earlier adaptations, the culture it is created in, and the demands of the audience it hopes to appeal to. It is therefore not enough to only judge an adaptation based on its fidelity to its original source text, as there will always be other influences apparent in it as well.

Keeping the intended audience in mind when creating an adaptation becomes even more important when adapting a well-known and beloved classic, as according to Hutcheon “audiences are more demanding of fidelity when dealing with classics, such as the works of Dickens or Austen” (29). Alice Ridout states that the adapters of Austen’s novels often have an advantage in that they can identify with the intended audience, as most of them have been readers first. “Almost all the writers of Austen retellings describe their own writing as an act of homage to Austen, a way of repaying the pleasure they have gained from reading her”, she argues (13). Any adaptation will be heavily influenced by the author’s own feelings about the original, as “what is involved in adapting can be a process of appropriation, of taking possession of another’s story, and filtering it, in a sense, through one’s own sensibility, interests, and talents. Therefore, adapters are first interpreters and then creators” (Hutcheon, 18). The intended audience of an adaptation is likely to be fans of the original, who, as mentioned, demands fidelity. If an author of an adaptation is a fan of the novel they are adapting they are more likely to create an adaptation which will appeal to other fans of the original, as their interpretation of the source is likely to overlap with that of other fans, and their love for the original will shine through in the new story.

There is a strong connection between the adapted work and the adaptation in the readers mind. As Hutcheon writes:

Known adaptations obviously function similarly to genres: they set up audience expectations through a set of norms that guide our encounter with the adapting work we are experiencing. Unlike plagiarism or even parody adaptation usually signals its identity overtly. If we know the work in question, we become a knowing audience, and a part of what hermeneutic theory calls our “horizon of expectation” involves that adapted text (Hutcheon, 121).

In the reader's mind, if reading the adaptation as an adaptation, the original will be present, creating a different demand than what is present when reading any other text. Hutcheon further states that:

Like classical imitation, adaptation appeals to the intellectual and aesthetic pleasure of understanding the interplay between works, of opening up a text's possible meanings to intertextual echoing. The adaptation and the adapted work merge in the audience's understanding of their complex interrelations (Hutcheon, 117)

Reading an adaptation as an adaptation becomes its own unique pleasure with these expectations and the intertextuality creating a tension throughout the reading experience, the pleasure of familiarity and knowing what comes next mingling with the suspense of uncovering the differences. This often creates a dedicated following, and according to Hutcheon "another word for adaptation audiences is 'fans', and the community they constitute is consciously nurtured by adapters, who realize that young women in particular need to be able to appropriate cultural material to construct personal meaning" (116). The action of reading an adaptation shows a dedication to the original and a wish to prolong the pleasure given by the source novel. This makes adaptations overlap with the concept of fan fiction.

## Fan Fiction

As previously mentioned, a literary adaptation or hypertext is a new text based on another literary text (Genette, 7). However, this is also true of the type of text called fan fiction, which is by Hellekson and Busse defined as "derivative amateur writing – that is, texts written based on another text, and not for professional publication" (5). So, a text based on another text – the difference being whether or not there is an intention to publish the work. Though not called fan fiction until recently, this fan fiction is not a new concept, tracing back "at least to the Holmesian pastiche or extensions of Jane Austen's universe, although of course fans have always played with texts, rewritten endings, and in general created text" (Hellekson & Busse, 5-6). In this definition of the term the text needs to be written not for publication, but only with the pleasure of oneself and other fans in mind. In fan fiction communities the dividing line has often been set at being published or doing it for the love of the source text (Jamison & Grossman, 208). In other words, if one gets recognition from the world at large, one will lose status in the fan fiction community. It is seen as shameful to earn money on others' love



for the original work, as it should be reward enough to have others appreciate your story, and sharing the devotion to the source material.

However, it is not clear what really is the difference between fan fiction and professionally published literary adaptations, as they seem in many ways to do the same thing and serve the same purpose. According to Hellekson & Busse “fan fiction often retells the same events and scenes, but from different points of view, with a myriad of extensions and elaborations” (21). This is the same as what many literary adaptations do. There is also a confusion of cultural and financial systems of value in the world of fan fiction, according to Jamison and Grossman, as in modern times many works starting as self-published fan fiction have later been professionally published. Part of the confusion about publishing fan fiction is the fact that the term does not name any one thing. Fan fiction is a blanket term for works identified by their authors as relating to a particular cultural work or public figure, but the term itself makes no actual assertion about how closely related a given fanwork is to its purported source (208).

While the concept of continuations or rewritings of novels is not a new one, it seems that the name, amount and availability of these rewritings have changed drastically with the birth of the Internet. Jamison and Grossman states how:

Fanfiction is an old story. Literally, of course: fan fiction takes someone else’s old story and, arguably, makes it new, or makes it over, or just simply makes more of it, because the fan writer loves the story so much they just want it to keep going. But fanfiction is also an old story in that people have been doing it since “the dawn of time”. Reworking an existing story, telling tales of heroes already know to be heroic, was *the* model of authorship until very recently. Part of what is new in fanfiction in recent years simply comes down to scale (24).

The concept they are talking about, wanting more of a story one is a fan of, seems to be much the same as Genette’s aforementioned continuations, but its name has changed to *fan fiction*. Where in earlier times the continuations or literary adaptations of a novel would have to be good enough to be published as an independent piece of literature, the Internet now provides tools and opportunities for sharing and retelling stories and events, true or fictional, faster and more easily than ever before. This includes opportunities for users to create their own versions of written, aural, visual or cinematic material (Bruhn, et. al. 2). For a popular author such as Jane Austen this means that with the emergence of Internet fan fiction, there was an

explosion of stories more or less based on her body of work, as Bowles states in her chapter of *Jane Austen on Screen*:

The Internet has actively encouraged fans to engage in self-publication of fan fiction, sequelization, pastiche, and general amateur expansion of the *œuvre*. It is one thing for family members and scholarly historians to recover an author's juvenilia and unfinished works, and perhaps even for established writers to have a go at finishing them off; quite another for a new generation of enthusiasts for whom Jane Austen is synonymous with film and television to condemn her to the hamster-wheel of posthumous productivity, publication (if not quality) guaranteed (16).

Here Bowles touched upon two important aspects of modern fan fiction. Firstly, there is the fact that anyone, regardless of talent and quality, can publish a story on the Internet. Fan fiction communities have grown exponentially over the last few years, and amateur writers can have a large number of readers without ever having a book published (Bruhn, et. al. 2). Secondly, is the fact that many of these writers are influenced not only by the original work, but also by earlier film and television adaptations of the novel. As mentioned earlier, both Hutcheon and Griggs pointed out how no adaptation is created in a vacuum and they will be influenced by the society they are created in (Griggs, 6, Hutcheon, 28). However, the tone of what Bowles' writes indicates a generally negative view of fan fiction, seeing the production of amateur writing based on classics as something bad to be avoided, rather than a new and positive way of keeping classic literature alive and relevant in the twenty-first century.

Authors of fan fiction today choose a huge variety topics and angles for their stories. But while the Internet gives an opportunity to share these stories easily with a large audience, it also gives a greater opportunity for feedback from other fans, for better or worse. Fans can be the greatest critics because they are so familiar with and invested in the original:

Adaptation is not only often treated with scorn because of its supposed secondariness but also because it regularly runs counter to the ideas of connoisseurs of the original. Janeites just like anyone who has invested in the cultural capital of canonized works will be dolefully disappointed by adaptations which are not imbued with the meaning of the original they themselves believe to be crucial (Lindner, 2).

This element of interaction between reader and author which the Internet makes possible is likely to form fan fiction, as the author needs to stay close to the events of the original in order to appeal to the intended audience – it creates a demand for fidelity at least in style and tone. “For the dedicated audience, fidelity to the original source is still vitally important”

(Bruhn, et. al. 2-3). So, where Hutcheon and Griggs wanted fidelity not to be an issue in critical reading of literary adaptations, when dealing with fan fiction it is impossible to avoid the theme as it will determine the appeal of the finished story to the intended audience.

It is safe to assume that any producers of fan fiction are themselves a fan of the original work. Eckart Voights-Virchow introduces the term *prosumer* – being both a producer and a consumer for people writing new works closely built on existing ones (37). In creating a continuation of the novel they are a fan of, the prosumers create a new product, while also serving themselves and other fans by giving them more of the universe and characters they all love (Bowles, 15). According to Hellekson and Busse, all of what they call author-fans (writers of fan fiction) are embedded in a community of other fans, to whom they disseminate their work and with whom they continually engage (21). In my thesis I have therefore chosen to see the adaptations as something of a dialogue between the author and the reader, as it is safe to assume both have read and love the original novel. The adaptations will probably contain a number of references and hints from the original novel only discernible to someone who has read and knows it well. Any reader who is a fan of the original will read the new text with the original in mind and experience the pleasure inherent to reading the adaptation as an adaptation, and of discovering the similarities as well as the differences between the two. In this adaptation and fan fiction merge in terms of reception.

When writing a fan text, the author needs to fill in many gaps in the original story, depending on which version of the story they choose to tell. These are what Veerle Van Steenhuyse calls “negative capabilities” – gaps and details in the source text, which invite readers to use their own imagination (4). Fans appear to have a predilection for negative capability that relates to characters and their relationships. They treat characters as “complex creations complete with physical descriptions, histories,” and “personalities” (Van Steenhuyse, 4). At the same time, however, they accept that there is room for debate. A source character’s personality is largely a matter of interpretation, as are things like their exact eye colour, their background, or their relationship with other people. Faced with these gaps in information, fan writers tend to reproduce the reading they prefer, while they weave in “all kinds of argumentation” to defend their interpretation. This is especially true for Austen novels, as she makes characters so compelling that many readers start treating them as real people, imagining anything from their backstory to their exact physical appearance (Van Steenhuyse, 4-5).

All in all, there are many similarities between literary adaptations and fan fiction. In both instances the authors take another story as a starting point to tell an untold story. It is also a common tendency that the authors are themselves fans of the story, and the writing is a form of tribute. However, fan fiction can be said to have been written with a knowledgeable reader in mind, as it is meant not for publication but for the pleasure of the authors themselves as well as other fans in a shared Internet community. But what happens if something originally intended as fan fiction gets published? Does it stop being fan fiction? As fan fiction has become more widespread and widely read and more and more fan fiction are professionally published, the line between literary adaptation and fan fiction is becoming increasingly eradicated over time. In fan fiction there are no formal demands as far as the quality of the writing is concerned, but it is at the same time being controlled by the audience as publishing online opens up for direct interaction with the readers. And it is of course only the best, or at least the most popular works of fan fiction that will manage to get professionally published. Professional adaptation can, and often does, spring from the love of the original, from a wish to prolong the pleasure and stay in the world they love. Essentially, there is very little difference between fan fiction and professional adaptation, as the lines between professional and amateur, consumer and producer, and between audience and creator are becoming blurred.

## Modern Adaptations of Jane Austen

Cultural adaptation can be compared to biological adaptation, as it is a means of helping an old text to survive and thrive in a new era. It does not, however, necessarily equate a betterment of the original, but it does become an “aid to the survival of the original, a means to revitalize the source” (Griggs, 3). According to Linda Troost and Sayre Greenfield, modern adaptations:

Do the job of transmitting an old text to a modern audience with two cultural effects that assist reputation: an aesthetic effect and a temporal one. That is, these adaptations cut what does not appeal to modern tastes in the original and add what does, and these alterations allow texts that have survived for a while in written form to have a concentrated impact that furthers discussion, imitation and yet more adaptation of the author’s work. After all, the key to cultural survival of a text is to adapt it to a changing audience; the key to cultural growth of a reputation is to expand that audience beyond the text’s native reach (Troost & Greenfield, *Strange Mutations*, 432).

They claim that the original works cannot achieve extremely wide appeal simply by maintaining their original form, but that they need to evolve. While these changes supplement the original text, they do not replace it, and while adaptation modernizes the appeal for some, it also creates the opportunity for purist backlash (Troost & Greenfield, *Strange Mutations*, 443).

When writing fan fiction or a literary adaptation an author is of course influenced by the original text and will often have a reverence for the original – though this might not be the main motivation for writing the new text. Authors like Kaye and Grange write adaptations of stories originally written for an early nineteenth-century audience, while simultaneously wanting to appeal to modern audiences. This calls for some modernization of the original. In addition, as mentioned before, they will themselves be influenced not only by the source text, but also by decades of page and screen adaptations of the story they are adapting. This is especially true for adaptations of the novels of Jane Austen as screen adaptations of her novels had a massive surge in popularity in the mid 1990s. Any Jane Austen adaptations written after this time would therefore presumably be influenced as much by other adaptations as by the original novel, especially the 1995 BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice*, which has become secondary canon – as many audience members only know Austen’s story through this adaptation, and it becomes an important source of reference (Van Steenhuyse, 13). Like any adaptation this series was a product of its time, as Van Steenhuyse states:

Even though the BBC/A&E series is hailed for its faithfulness to the novel, several theorists have shown that it actually creates the illusion of fidelity to the original by presenting an interpretation of Austen’s narrative that is also attuned to the sensibilities of a 1995 audience. This interpretation is grounded in the late twentieth-century assumption that the needs and desires of the individual take precedence over other values (Van Steenhuyse, 14).

Like Van Steenhuyse points out, the focus of the adaptation has changed to appeal to the modern audience, while managing to *appear faithful* to the original.

One of the main traits of this modernization, which is apparent in many of the modern Austen adaptations, is the change in the male character. In the case of the 1995 BBC adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* this manifested itself in the fact that audience wanted “Elizabeth to have it all – and that included a lover who sees her as an independent subject. Because of the cultural acceptance of the idea of the New Age Man, Austen’s Darcy needed to be softened

and romanticised” (Van Steenhuyse, 14-15). The most successful of the mid-1990s adaptations of Austen’s novels contain “enhancement” and “glamorization” of the story’s heroes – making them more alive and more active and making them more of a presence. “The recent film adaptations are successful because they, quite literally, ‘flesh out’ [Austen’s] male characters” (Nixon, 23). This change to the male characters is interesting in that it appeals to the modern audience of Austen fans who crave fidelity, while in fact being an inherent critique of Austen’s male figures.

While the success of the current adaptations reveals a timeless love of Austen, they also reveal what we, the late twentieth-century audience, do not like about Austen, most tellingly, it is what Austen’s heroines fall in love with that we do not like: the male hero. What was good enough for her female heroines is obviously not good enough for us; the films must add scenes to add desirability to her male protagonists (Nixon, 23).

However, it is not only Austen’s heroes who get an upgrade in the modern adaptations, there are also major changes made to Austen’s heroines. The women of Jane Austen’s time, both in literature and in real life, behaved in a way that complied with early nineteenth-century expectations of women. According to Dickson: “if a woman wished to voice frustration with the limitations placed on women, she had to do so gently, unostentatiously” (47-49). In fact, Anne Elliot, perhaps at first glance the most timid of Austen’s heroines, is the only one of her heroines to do this openly. To modern audiences it seems as though Austen’s heroines are too compliant to the demands of society, especially compared to women in post-feminist society. In the 1995 film adaptation of *Persuasion* Elizabeth Elliot is portrayed as indolent and obnoxious, showing behaviour that would not have been tolerated in women of Austen’s time. While it was most likely done to appeal to the modern audience, it undermines the historical importance of Anne Elliot’s early feminist views as portrayed in Austen’s novel (Dickson, 50). In the 1995 movie version of *Sense and Sensibility* the same, if a more extreme, updating of the female characters has happened. Where in the novel Elinor’s self-restraint is seen as an achievement, in the film it is portrayed as something that needs to be corrected and overcome in order for her to find happiness. The opposite is true for the character of Marianne who, in the novel, goes on a journey of self-discovery, and in the end needs to change, but in the film no such realization happens (Dickson, 50-51). By the standards of modern audiences Elinor is repressed, and only when she is unrepressed can she receive Austen’s reward of a happy marriage. This is what modern filmgoers expect from a film: repression must be eradicated in a protagonist, especially if the protagonist is female (Dickson, 52).

Another change visible in modern adaptations, which is connected to the change in both the hero and heroine, is the tendency of making the stories more romanticized as well as sexualized (Collins, 87). Through the adaptations Austen's stories move away from the original, becoming more "like the mass-market romance, the focus is on a hero and heroine's courtship at the expense of other characters and other experiences, which are sketchily represented" (Kaplan, 178). According to Deborah Kaplan the demands of modern audiences:

Necessitates an unswerving attention to the hero's and heroine's desires for one another and a tendency to present those desires in unsurprising, even clichéd ways. The mass-market romance suggests that familiarity breeds content. The pleasures of this form are to be found not only in the unfolding of desire and the achievement of gratification but also in the comfortable knowledge of what is to come and how it is to occur (Kaplan, 178).

This move is illustrated well by the two different covers to the video cassettes of the 1995 movie version of *Persuasion*. One of the covers shows a picture of the two main actors kissing in front of a rose arbour and with Kellynch in the background, the other has decidedly more sexual overtones, showing a woman in a low-cut, off-the-shoulder dress, and a man kissing her neck from behind, none of which are actors from the movie. The first was for home sale, the other for rental stores. Neither scene takes place in the movie, but both pictures are supposed to represent what occurs in the film (Collins, 80). According to Collins, in the reviews of the mid-1990s movie adaptations, there "seems to be a collective need for the past to be nostalgic, a need to value 'romanticized' versions of Austen's texts over 'realistic' ones". There is a general focus on the escapism, on wanting to escape the troubles of the real world (Collins, 87). Modern audiences want romance and an idealized picture of the past, and in many adaptations these aspects appear to be prioritized over staying close to the events as well as the tone and feeling of Austen's original. However, this comes into conflict with the fidelity to the source material which fans of Austen crave in their adaptations, and adaptors must straddle the line between modernizing while keeping at least an appearance of fidelity in order to appeal to their intended audience.

## Amanda Grange's *Captain Wentworth's Diary* and Susan Kaye's *Frederick Wentworth, Captain*

Amanda Grange's *Captain Wentworth's Diary* was published in 2007 as part of a series retelling all of Austen's novels from the point of view of the heroes (amandagrance.com). As the name suggests the novel is told in the form of a diary, giving a subjective, first person account of Captain Wentworth's experiences throughout the events of *Persuasion*, as well as expanding it both before and after. The front page of the novel includes the title, *Captain Wentworth's Diary – a novel*, the author's name, a picture of a regency era couple, as well as a short quote: "Anne, always Anne...". It does not outright announce its relationship with Jane Austen's original, but any reader familiar with *Persuasion* will be familiar with both the name in the title and in the quote.

Susan Kaye's *Frederick Wentworth, Captain* were published in 2007 and 2008 as two novels, *None But You* and *For You Alone*. Like Grange, Kaye does not overtly announce the novel's relationship with Jane Austen's original on the adaptation's front page. Both only have the title of the novel, the name of the author and a picture completely unrelated to the story – one of open windows with fluttering curtains and one a closeup of a letter and a pen. However, anyone familiar with *Persuasion* will recognize the name of the hero, as well as the titles as being quotes from a crucial part of the original story. Kaye also tells the story of *Persuasion* from the perspective of the hero, Captain Wentworth, but her novel is written in third person narration. Unlike Grange, Kaye does not tell her story chronologically, but includes a number of flashbacks. As she has divided her story into two separate novels, her story is almost twice as long as *Captain Wentworth's Diary*.

In their text *The Fan Fiction Studies Reader*, Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse state how

Fan writers perform interpretive functions when redefining characters, retelling storylines differently, and changing points of view. To study the interpretive, analytical aspect of fan fiction, we might compare fan fiction to its literary counterpart: professionally published derivative texts. These texts resemble fan fiction in modus operandi. They use setting, characters, and scenes from well-known texts while telling a fundamentally different story, be it an expansion, subversion, or counternarrative (Hellekson & Busse, 22).



By this definition the two novels I have chosen to look at, Amanda Grange's *Captain Wentworth's Diary* and Susan Kaye's *Frederick Wentworth, Captain*, straddle the line between being defined as fan fiction and professionally published derivative texts. Both novels have clear traits of fan fiction when defined as "the imaginative interpolations and extrapolations of fans of existing literary worlds" (Hellekson & Busse, 6). However, fan fiction has also been defined as "a derivative amateur writing – texts written based on another text, and not for professional publication" (Hellekson & Busse, 5). In this the term becomes problematic to apply to Grange and Kaye's novels as they actually have been professionally published and can therefore not be defined as amateur writing. They do use the original text to tell a different story, as both are both expansions and counternarratives.

There is also a marked difference between the two publications, as one seems more clearly professional than the other when looking at their publication history. Amanda Grange's novel was published by Berkley Books, an imprint of the Penguin Group, which is a large and prestigious publishing house with a long history ([penguin.com](http://penguin.com)). Grange has also published more than twenty romance novels, most of them based on Austen's novels ([penguinrandomhouse.com](http://penguinrandomhouse.com)). Susan Kaye, on the other hand, only has two published novels, published by a small publishing house called Wytherngate Press. In addition she has an active blog where she posts short stories of fan fiction, all based on *Persuasion*, and her two published novels were shared on this site before she got them published ([susan-kaye.blogspot](http://susan-kaye.blogspot)). Kaye actually dedicated the second of the two novels to "my online readers and the Austen communities" (Kaye, 3), creating a link to the fan fiction community she comes from. All this makes Kaye's novels more closely linked to fan fiction, while Grange's more of a professionally published derivative text. As these adaptations have such strong links to the original, it is unlikely that anyone who is not a fan of *Persuasion* would read them. It is therefore safe to assume that they have been written with a knowledgeable reader in mind, and this will inform my analysis of the two continuations of *Persuasion*, as I have chosen to see them almost as a dialogue between the author and the reader.

## Thesis Outline

In the following chapters I will explore how Susan Kaye and Amanda Grange have used Jane Austen's *Persuasion* to make their own new stories while also staying close to the events of the original. I will also look at how each of them have changed the story or aspects of the original in order to appeal to twenty-first-century readers, readers that most likely were fans of Austen's novel. In the first chapter I will explore the backstory of the novel, or the events that happened before the beginning of *Persuasion*, and the first times the two main characters were in a relationship. I have chosen to look at the backstory as this is something which is only briefly mentioned, but never fully explored in *Persuasion*, though they are the events which set the story of the original in motion. As both Grange and Kaye have chosen to explore this more fully, it is clear that this is a gap that may be filled and, furthermore, is one that typically intrigues fans. First, I will present the events as they are described in *Persuasion*, then the same events as they find expression in *Captain Wentworth's Diary*, and, finally, in *Frederick Wentworth, Captain*. In the second chapter I will look at the events taking place between the time the two characters meet again and the events taking place at Lyme. Even though the events are explored from the heroine's point of view in *Persuasion*, Wentworth's thought and motivations remains quite a mystery in the original, and there are a number of gaps for the adaptors to fill in, and it is interesting to investigate how they find expression. Finally, in the third chapter I will examine the circumstances leading up to the second proposal, and how the two adaptations have chosen to end the story. As the points of view of the hero and heroine to a great degree merge towards the end of the novel, it is interesting to explore how Kaye and Grange manage to tell a new version, investigate how they choose to end the story, especially whether they give more information about what happened after, or if they end the story where Austen did.

# Chapter 1: The Backstory

## Introduction

In this chapter I have chosen to look at the backstory, or, in other words, at what happened between the two main characters prior to the events of *Persuasion*. In the original novel there are early hints that something took place between Anne Elliot and Captain Wentworth eight years before the novel begins, leaving an opening for the kind of continuation Genette calls an *analeptic* or backward continuation, which describes what came before. This is meant to work its way upstream, from cause to cause, to a more radical or satisfactory starting point than that which the original gives (Genette, 177). Both Amanda Grange and Susan Kaye have chosen to explore this backstory in greater detail, but have done so to varying degrees and in very different ways. As this part of the story is so little explored in *Persuasion*, the different ways in which each of the two contemporary novels use what exists becomes a way for them to stay close to Austen's original while creating their own new product. I will also be exploring how the story has been modernized through the backstory, especially focusing on changes made to the characters of Anne Elliot and Captain Wentworth, and how the story has been made more romantic to appeal to a twenty-first-century audience.

## The Hints of the Backstory Given in *Persuasion*

In *Persuasion* it is made clear quite early in the story that something has happened before the opening of the narrative that has influenced the characters. The first time Anne Elliot speaks directly in the story, she praises the merits of the navy: "The navy, I think, who have done so much for us, have at least an equal claim with any other set of men, for all the comforts and all the privileges which any home can give. Sailors work hard enough for their comforts, we must all allow" (Austen, 14). This speech shows that Anne has an interest in the navy clearly not shared by the rest of her family. Only a couple of pages later Mr Shepherd mentions an Admiral Croft as a possible tenant of Kellynch, and Anne clearly knows quite a bit about him, saying: "He is a Rear-Admiral of the White. He was in the Trafalgar action, and has been in the East Indies since; he has been stationed there, I believe, several years" (Austen, 16). Again, it is unclear what her interest in the navy is, and in this Admiral in particular. As the novel has already in the first few pages given the impression that Anne rarely speaks up, and

when she does is rarely listened to, it makes it even more unexpected that she would put her opinions and knowledge forward to her father. Further on in the same conversation Mr Shepherd mentions a brother of Mrs Croft's whom he cannot remember the name of, but who lived in the neighbourhood a few years earlier. Once more, Anne is the one to speak up, after the others have failed to recall the name: "After waiting another moment – 'You mean Mr Wentworth, I suppose', said Anne" (Austen, 18). At the end of this conversation Anne's reaction cements the impression that something has happened before the beginning of the narrative that is being held back: "No sooner had such an end been reached, than Anne, who had been a most attentive listener to the whole, left the room, to seek the comfort of cool air for her flushed cheeks; and as she walked along a favourite grove, said, with gentle sigh, 'a few months more, and *he*, perhaps, may be walking here'" (Austen, 19). This statement ends a chapter, leaving things open as to what or whom she is referring to with flushed cheeks and a sigh.

The full story comes at the beginning of the next chapter, which starts with an introduction of the man in question: "He was not Mr Wentworth, the former curate of Monkford, however suspicious appearances may be, but a Captain Frederick Wentworth, his brother, who being made commander [...], and not being immediately employed, came into Somersetshire in the summer of 1806; and having no parent living, found a home for half a year, at Monkford" (Austen, 20). Over the following three pages a short account of their acquaintance is given, with descriptions of their meeting, falling in love, their engagement, and eventual parting. "They were gradually acquainted, and when acquainted, rapidly and deeply in love. It would be difficult to say which had seen the highest perfection in the other, or which had been the happiest; she, in receiving his declaration and proposals, or he in having them accepted. A short period of exquisite felicity followed, and but a short one. – Troubles soon arose" (Austen, 20). This statement foreshadows the problems the couple will have, which have already hinted at through the description of Anne's status in her family circle, as well as the fact that she is not married when the narrative starts. Wentworth's talk with Sir Walter to ask for his blessing is briefly described, as well as Lady Russell's disapproval, and how this soon led to Anne being persuaded to give up their engagement: "Such opposition as these feelings produced was more than Anne could combat". She could have withstood the disapproval of her father, "but Lady Russell, whom she had always loved and relied on, could not, with such steadiness of opinion, and such tenderness of manner, be continually advising her in vain" (Austen, 21). While this sets up the conflict, giving enough information about their former

acquaintance to build the rest of the story on, but it still leaves several gaps in the story for the adaptations to fill in.

Lady Russell does not regret the past even when she has seen the consequence of it in Anne: “Lady Russell [...] never wished the past undone” (Austen, 22). The narrator also states that Anne “did not blame Lady Russell, she did not blame herself for having been guided by her” (Austen, 22), but in the same sentence Anne reflects that she would have done things differently had she been in Lady Russell’s shoes, which communicates an implicit disapproval of her actions. She is looking at the situation in hindsight, knowing that he had soon gotten both employment and a fortune, making the recollection of the past more bitter. According to Vivien Jones, throughout these musings on the past the narrator’s voice seems to support Anne’s position, as Lady Russell’s persuasion of Anne is described as “unnatural”, and her caution “over-anxious”. As this statement seems to come as much from the authorial voice as from Anne, it hints at a disapproval of Lady Russell’s judgement. In addition, it is revealed that Anne has lost her bloom and not gotten over Captain Wentworth, while it is also revealed that the Captain has done well for himself during the war, and that his financial hopes have been fulfilled. All of this creates a mistrust of Lady Russell and makes her fear that Anne should have been reduced to “youth-killing dependence” sadly ironic” (Jones, 73-74). It is further hinted that Anne is still not over Wentworth, both through her reaction to hearing of his sister leasing Kellynch, through the fact that Anne was solicited by Charles Musgrove three years after the first engagement, but chose to refuse him (Austen, 22), and that she had never married in the eight years since the failed love affair. Anne’s refusal of Charles Musgrove is also referenced later in *Persuasion* during a conversation between Captain Wentworth and Louisa Musgrove (Austen, 68).

Later in the story when the Captain is introduced, his behaviour towards Anne is cold and distant, and there is no trace of the former strong connection referred to earlier in the novel. This impression is cemented by Captain Wentworth’s comments about Anne’s altered appearance, recounted to Anne by her sister Mary: “Captain Wentworth is not very gallant by you, Anne, though he was so attentive to me. Henrietta asked him what he thought of you, when they went away; and he said, ‘You were so altered he should not have known you again’” (Austen, 46). According to Jones, the importance of feeling, and of feeling being stronger than reason, are ideas that are present throughout the novel, both in Anne and in Captain Wentworth. Wentworth comments on Anne’s altered looks are ironic, as this change

has been caused by the strength and constancy of feeling he accuses her of lacking. The themes of change and constancy are associated with the title of the novel and are important throughout (76-77).

According to Michael Kramp Austen casts her hero as a humble man with lofty aspirations who eagerly seeks advancement. Wentworth is convinced that he will get advancement and be rich soon and is full of confidence in his own abilities. In this he follows the models of Jacobin heroes who remain convinced in the efficacy of their individual desires and efforts. While Anne admires these traits, they are mistrusted by Lady Russell, which finally leads to the end of their relationship (129). The most complex character in *Persuasion*, however, is Anne Elliot. From the bare outline of *Persuasion* one, according to Jones, gets an impression that Anne's life has been close to wasted, she is a sad and unfulfilled character when she is first introduced, and she is only saved by a series of coincidences leading to her meeting Wentworth again and finally marrying him. It might at first appear that the novel argues strongly in favour of personal feeling and romantic love, and that it suggests that Anne should have followed her own instincts and taken the risk of marrying Captain Wentworth eight years before, regardless of all the apparent reasons against doing so offered by other people (Jones, 71-72). This journey becomes even more interesting when the adaptations add the backstory and show the character of Anne as she was before the failed engagement and the intervening eight years of neglect.

Jordan points out in her introduction to *Persuasion* that Austen's heroines can be divided into two categories, the ones in the wrong who learn better, and the ones always in the right. Anne Elliot falls into the latter of these two categories, but that does not mean she is in a good place throughout the story. Jordan states further that her:

'Heroines in the right' are not only unhappy, they are treated with some irony, for their scruples and hesitations. Readers then and now are challenged in the kind of woman they can take as a heroine: Austen creates heroines with whom readers might find it hard to identify, a challenge to habits of idealisation. Anne Elliot agrees not to marry her apparently unimportant lover, but she is not as pretty as the young relatives, the Musgroves, whom Wentworth begins to court, without reflecting on what he is doing. Anne is nearly thirty and has 'lost her bloom' (Jordan, VI-VII).

According to John Wiltshire, Anne, as the isolated, helpless, dependent listener, is enacting an aspect of her conventional gender position as the superfluous, unentitled spinster. Throughout

the early part of the novel she is assigned all of the usual spinster roles, being by turns a confidante, adviser, piano accompanist, baby-sitter and nurse; most frequently of all, the listener, whether preoccupied or attentive. She is powerless, and assumed to be sexless, as she is still single at 27. In contrast Wentworth incarnates or models both the masculine role and virility itself. Like all the gentlemen, he travels around on horseback or by carriage, able to go wherever he pleases, whereas ladies must wait until a suitable lift in another's vehicle presents itself (*The Hidden Jane Austen*, 153-154). This echoes what Anne says to Harville about it being easier for men to forget as they have the opportunity for exertion, to go somewhere else, do more (Austen, 184). Wentworth also places his identity in his profession. His profession is his whole life; it provides his livelihood, a circle of friends and acquaintances, and it has earned him the fortune that creates him as a gentleman (Wiltshire, *The Hidden Jane Austen*, 153-154).

The differences between the genders is made clear in the contrast between Anne and Wentworth – Anne shudders where the Captain revels in his naval stories, she rarely speaks where he is outspoken, he takes quick action where she is paralysed by her confusion, and his physical strength and ability is contrasted against her physical, as well as spiritual, exhaustion (Wiltshire, *The Hidden Jane Austen*, 154). However, by showing Anne as she was at the beginning of her first acquaintance with Wentworth the adaptations give her a chance to shine and gives a glimpse into what it was in her character that made him fall for her, as well as an opportunity of making her more of a modern heroine.

## Starting at the Beginning – the Backstory in *Captain Wentworth's Diary*

This adaptation, as the title suggests, is written in the form of a diary, which places the events of the story in relation to the original. The events of *Persuasion* are placed in time, first when recounting the events of Anne and Wentworth's first courtship: "in the summer of 1806" (Austen, 20), and then soon after: "More than seven [years] were gone since this little history of sorrowful interest" (Austen, 21). Because of this, when *Captain Wentworth's Diary* first has a page announcing it to start in 1806, and then further places the start of the events on June 5<sup>th</sup>, anyone familiar with *Persuasion* will know that the adaptation will start by giving the story of what happened before the beginning of the original., in chronological order. The

author of *Captain Wentworth's Diary* seems to operate under the assumption that all readers of this adaptation will have an intimate knowledge of the original story. This corresponds with what Julie Sanders says about adaptations, where “the text reworked needs to be well known, be a part of a shared community of knowledge, both for the interrelationship to and interplay to be identifiable and for these in turn to have the required impact on their readership” (97). It also agrees with Linda Hutcheon’s statement that adaptations are “haunted at all times by their adapted texts” (6). The adapted text will always be present in the mind of the reader, because “when we call a work an adaptation, we openly announce its overt relationship to another work or works” (Hutcheon, 6).

Throughout her adaptation Grange has included a large number of details from the original story, even in the backstory, of which very few hinge points are given from *Persuasion*. The novel starts in early June 1806 with Wentworth travelling with his friend Harville towards Somerset. The name will be instantly recognizable to readers of *Persuasion* as the friend the characters go to visit in Lyme. They are on their way home on leave, Wentworth going to Monkford. The fact that this adaptation starts a considerable time before the events of the original novel gives Grange the opportunity to capture the reader’s attention. She is not only retelling what Austen has already told, she is venturing into territory only hinted at in *Persuasion*. As this adaptation is written in the form of a diary written by Frederick Wentworth, the reader gets a first-hand knowledge of his thoughts and feelings. This style echoes the epistolary form, which was the style in which Austen wrote much of her early texts, and which later had a great influence upon her characteristic third-person free indirect speech (Bray, 108, 115). The epistolary style lets the character talk to themselves, reflect and think out loud – on paper – which allows the author to “probe the recesses of their character’s minds”, and to reveal “the tensions within the subjectivity of the self” (Bray, 1, 10). It opens up for the author to allow the free speech of the main character, speaking openly to himself on the page, and revealing thoughts and feelings in a way other narrative styles could not. It is also a way to “flesh out” the main character, which is a general trend in many modern Austen adaptations, giving the readers more of the hero, and literary letting them see into his mind (Nixon, 23).

The impression the readers gets of Wentworth is slightly different in the beginning of *Captain Wentworth's Diary* compared to *Persuasion*. He is more light-hearted and is portrayed as something of a womanizer: “As we left the coach, I rallied Harville, telling him he was a fool



to exchange the smiles of a country full of women for the shackles of one” (Grange, 3-4). Wentworth also says to his brother: “I hope there are some pretty girls hereabouts!” (Grange, 7), and later in the story he is seen flirting with Miss Welling and seeing some pretty farmers girls at church (Grange, 14). While this seems to somehow break with his character as it is presented in *Persuasion* he is not completely immune to female charm in Austen’s original either, as he initially flirts with both the Miss Musgroves, and courts Louisa without being fully aware of it. Quite early in the story Wentworth arrives at his brother’s parish at Monkford. This is another name any reader of the original story will recognize as it is mentioned in *Persuasion* that Frederick’s brother was the curate of Monkford (Austen, 7-8).

The Elliots are mentioned early in *Captain Wentworth’s Diary*, further confirming that the novel exists in the universe of *Persuasion*. The first mention happens in a conversation between Frederick and his brother, when Edward mentions Miss Elliot, and Frederick replies: “It was Sir Walter Elliot who asked you if you were a member of the Stafford Wentworths, I recollect, and cut you when you replied you were not” (Grange, 8). This is a direct reference to *Persuasion*, where Sir Walter mentions while talking of the curate: “Mr Wentworth was nobody, I remember, quite unconnected; nothing to do with the Strafford family” (Austen, 19). Grange includes a large number of small details like this from the original story that will only be recognizable to very attentive readers of *Persuasion*. This appeals to readers who want the adaptation to stay close to the original story, the fans, who are the apparent intended audience of this adaptation (Bruhn, et al. 2-3). Another example of this comes only one page later, when it is mentioned that Anne’s sister Mary is away at school (Grange, 9), an instant that is mentioned on page 23 of *Persuasion*. Other such small details are mentioned throughout *Captain Wentworth’s Diary* which are picked out of things mentioned in the original novel include things like Anne never having been to London (Grange, 63), her dislike of Bath (Grange, 82), and Sir Walter’s liking of the *Baronetage* (Grange, 101-102).

Wentworth’s first impression of the Elliot sisters is given in great detail as they meet at a ball. He first sees Miss Elliot and reflects on her appearance: “I could see why she had a reputation for beauty. Her face and figure were both good, and there was something about her carriage that showed she knew her own place in the world”. Wentworth is taken with her at first sight, but then overhears her talking to her companion, “a poor, dowdy creature, in the most slighting way” (Grange, 16). Frederick spontaneously asks this companion to dance instead, believing she is a poor dependent, and feeling sorry for her. They have not been introduced,

so he does not know who she is, and only asks her in order to annoy Sir Walter and Miss Elliot, whom he has taken an immediate dislike to due to their disparaging way of speaking to and about the people around them. Though Wentworth does not like this companion, and only asks her to dance out of pity, his opinion of her improves rapidly as: “although she did not have Miss Elliot’s striking beauty, she was extremely pretty, with her delicate features and dark eyes”. He still believes she is a companion, and she does not correct him, only asking what makes him think this. He answers: “Your dress, whilst well cut, is not as elegant as Miss Elliot’s. You do not have her confidence or her air, and she speaks to you as though you are beneath her notice. Her father supports her in this and encourages her to slight you. You also have a shy and retiring disposition, suited to your role in life” (Grange, 17). They talk through the entire dance without him figuring out who the woman is, and it is only when his brother asks him afterwards what he thought of Miss Anne Elliot that Wentworth realizes his mistake. The fact that Anne allowed him to continue in his error makes Wentworth fascinated with Anne, and this marks the starting point of his interest in her. He is convinced, however, that he only intends to have a harmless flirtation before he returns to sea (Grange, 20).

This first meeting also gives a very different view of Anne to what is given at the beginning of *Persuasion*. Where in Austen’s original she is a downtrodden, silent, and timid person, here she is presented as cheeky and interesting, as she lets Wentworth continue in his deception about her identity, and cleverly teases him throughout their early acquaintance. This is a side on Anne only hinted at in the second part of *Persuasion*, but never really shown. Though she is already slighted and overlooked by her family this has not broken her spirit, which shows that the changes to her character into the person she is at the beginning of the original story is more the effect of the failed engagement to Wentworth than of the continual ill treatment by her family. This change to Anne’s character is a sign of the modernization of Austen’s heroines that many modern adaptations make, “showing heroines who can tackle physical activity, social conventions, and can love all equally well” (Troost & Greenfield, *Jane Austen in Hollywood*, 7).

Anne and Wentworth’s acquaintance continues when he meets her on a morning walk the next day (Grange, 23-27), and they soon become close. This echoes Austen’s description of their courtship: “They were gradually acquainted, and when acquainted, rapidly and deeply in love” (Austen, 20). However, it is also a sign of the modernising of the story, in that it sacrifices morality in order to make the story more romantic. The meeting alone of two young

lovers is something that would not have been allowed in early nineteenth-century England (Kaplan, 185).

Another nod to the fidelity of the author to *Persuasion* happens when Anne plays the piano at a dinner. Her father overlooks her, but Frederick comes over to her, and truly listens to her: “As Miss Anne’s song continued, I was drawn to the pianoforte, for her voice was sweet and her playing showed a superior taste. I listened with pleasure, and when she had done, I asked her to favour us again. She looked surprised, then she flushed with gratification and began another song. I sang with her, and we entertained ourselves as well as others” (Grange, 45). This is a nod to a small, but significant, instance in *Persuasion* where Anne is playing the piano at Uppercross. The Miss Musgroves have already played, been attentively listened to and lavishly praised, and Anne muses that though she plays a great deal better than either of them, she is well used to not getting attention or appreciation for her musical talents. “Excepting one short period of her life, she had never, since the age of fourteen, never since the loss of her dear mother, known the happiness of being listened to, or encouraged by any just appreciation or real taste” (Austen, 35). This reference shows how significant the brief relationship with Wentworth was to Anne, and why it changed the character so much.

The changes Grange has made to Anne’s character in the backstory compared to the original story, is a sign of the modernization the author has made presumably in order to appeal to twenty-first-century audiences. Making these changes in the description of their first courtship allows Grange to make these changes while also staying close to the portrayal of the character given in Austen’s original, as it is mentioned in *Persuasion* that Anne has changed in the intervening eight years (Austen, 46). Thus, Grange is free to interpret the character as she wants, with no hinge points she needs to include. In *Captain Wentworth’s Diary* Anne’s character in the backstory is explored throughout the conversations that take place between her and the Captain, both in public and on the aforementioned walks. It is her mind as much as her beauty that makes Wentworth fall for her, as they discuss a wide range of topics, from books to foreign affairs. This knowledge and reflection on the part of Anne is hinted at in *Persuasion*, but not fully explored until the second part of the novel, and it is interesting as a reader of the original to notice these changes in Anne’s character. These changes tie in with a more general trend in modern adaptations of Jane Austen’s works, as in both literary and other types adaptations modern authors have chosen to change some aspects Austen’s characters in order for them to be more appealing to modern audiences. According to Paulette

Richards, Austen consciously drew Anne Elliot as the antithesis to the strong-minded female characters that appeared in women's fiction of her time. However, twentieth-century romance fiction has presented more and more independent and outspoken heroines, and the taste for feisty, active heroines leaves twentieth-century readers and viewers less able to accept Anne Elliot's reticence. "In keeping with a modern Regency romance sensibility, some signs of rebellion are essential if viewers are to respect their heroine", she argues (120). This change is noticeable in Anne's character as portrayed in Grange's novel, as she is more forward, outspoken, and playful, and is hardly recognizable as the character we meet in the beginning of *Persuasion*. This is a part of the feminist aspect, as modern audiences want stronger female characters. At the same time, by only changing Anne's character in the backstory, and not in the part of her adaptation which overlaps with the original story, Grange can give the audience a more modern heroine without changing the original story in any significant way.

Throughout their growing acquaintance in Grange's story, Wentworth is firmly set against marriage (29). For a while he tries to convince himself that he only wants to entertain himself and show Anne that her family's treatment and opinion of her is not a general one but has no intention of anything deeper or more serious. Though Wentworth firmly believes he will not fall for Anne, there are hints that he starts to develop feelings for her quite rapidly, for instance in the way he constantly seeks out her company, as well as the fact that he soon thinks her very pretty, despite the less than enthusiastic description from his first seeing her. In addition, any reader of *Persuasion* will know where the acquaintance is headed and will look for signs that Wentworth realizes this for himself. The realization gradually dawns on Frederick. On page 69-70 of *Captain Wentworth Diary* he is still convinced he will go back to sea, but he also wishes to spend more time with Anne, and he admits to himself that she has become increasingly important to him. Finally, on page 86 of Grange's novel Frederick states to his brother that he will not give Anne up, and that he is truly in love with her, and this all culminated in the proposal a few pages later. The date given for this proposal is August 30<sup>th</sup>, which means they had been acquainted or less than three months at the time of the proposal.

After the proposal Wentworth needs to apply to the Baronet for his consent to marry Anne (Grange, 102-105). This situation is described thus in *Persuasion*: "Sir Walter, on being applied to, without actually withholding his consent, or saying it would never be, gave it all the negative of great astonishment, great coldness, great silence, and a professed resolution of doing nothing for his daughter" (Austen, 20). This scene is played out in detail in *Captain*

*Wentworth's Diary* over the span of four pages and is very similar to the description from the original. Sir Walter does not outright deny his consent, but expresses his astonishment that Anne has accepted him, draws Wentworth's attention to their disparity in rank and station, and makes it abundantly clear that he will do nothing for Anne financially. Though they seem happy at this point, anyone familiar with the original will know, and dread, what happens next. Their happiness is short lived, like it is described in *Persuasion*: "A short period of exquisite felicity followed, and but a short one. – Troubles soon arose" (Austen, 20). As the Grange's novel is written in diary form, it is apparent that only eleven days elapse between the proposal on August 30<sup>th</sup> and the end of their engagement on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Anne finally breaks off the engagement, and Wentworth recounts the reasons she gave in his diary as: "We were too young; that long engagements were never a good thing; that it would be unfair of her to burden me with an engagement when I still had my way to make in the world" (Grange, 108). They then argue back and forth for a while, about her young age and his lack of fortune, when finally, she says: "It will be to your ruin. I could not forgive myself if I stood in your way and prevented you from advancing the way you deserve" (Grange, 110). This echoes what is said in *Persuasion*; "But it was not merely selfish caution, under which she acted, in putting an end to it. Had she not imagined herself consulting his good, even more than her own, she could hardly have given him up" (Austen, 21).

Lady Russell's dislike of Wentworth is hinted at throughout the first part of *Captain Wentworth's Diary* as she always stares at him disapprovingly whenever they are in the same place (Grange, 65, 71, 83). While this dislike initially has no apparent cause, it is described by Lady Russell herself in *Persuasion* as her disliking his headstrong nature and what she saw as overconfidence in his own abilities. Wentworth also had no fortune, and spending his money freely, was unlikely to amass one soon (Austen, 21). Wentworth himself refers to this in a conversation with his brother, stating: "What is money for if not to spend and enjoy?" (Grange, 10). Drawing on the descriptions of Captain Wentworth in the original story, mostly from Lady Russell's reflections, creates a rather unfavourable picture of the hero. There are further reasons given for this dislike in Grange's novel, as first there is a conversation between Lady Russell and Wentworth, where Frederick criticizes Lady Russell for not standing up for Anne to her family, and Lady Russell warns him not to take advantage of her (Grange, 83-85). Later, Grange has written a scene where Wentworth, directly following his last meeting with Anne, where he runs in to Lady Russell, and being overcome by the grief of disappointed love and blaming her for the separation, speaks to her rather too freely (Grange,

112-114). She tries to part as friends, but he ends their conversation by saying: “You are no friend of mine, and you are no friend of Anne’s either, Lady Russell” (Grange, 114). This public confrontation will have cemented Lady Russell’s dislike of Wentworth, especially as the aftermath and the effect the separation had on Anne’s appearance and spirit would have required the Lady to justify her actions to herself.

The Musgroves are an important part of the story of *Persuasion*, and therefore it is natural that Grange has chosen to introduce them as a part of the backstory in *Captain Wentworth’s Diary*. Mr and Mrs Musgrove are introduced during a ball where Wentworth is overhearing two conversations simultaneously. One of these turns out to be between Mrs Musgrove and her companions, and another between Mr Musgrove and his, and both are regarding their son Dick Musgrove, who is mentioned in *Persuasion*. The two parents have very different opinions about their son, with the mother seeing no fault in him, while the father thinks him out of control, and wants to send him to the Army or the Navy. Wentworth thinks to himself: “I hope Master Dick would not find himself in the Navy, where he would no doubt plague his captain” (Grange, 32). Here the author invites the reader in on a private joke as it is revealed in *Persuasion* that only a few years later, Wentworth would have the misfortune of being the captain of this very same Dick Musgrove and being plagued indeed.

In both the situation with Wentworth’s first meeting with Anne, and this with the Musgroves, the reader is invited in on the joke by the author. By reading the original the audience can surmise what is happening in both situations, but the author keeps the suspense by waiting a couple of pages before confirming it. Grange uses small references to names, places and situations alluded to in *Persuasion* to create a connection between the two stories, especially for those readers who know the original very well – which she might expect if they are reading this adaptation. The great attention to small details continues throughout the adaptation, like the mention of the fact that the Musgroves have just returned from Clifton (33). This corresponds with a discussion in *Persuasion* where the Musgroves are discussing Captain Wentworth, “puzzling over past years, and at last ascertaining that it *might*, that it probably *would*, turn out to be the very same Captain Wentworth whom they recollected meeting, once or twice, after their coming back from Clifton – a very fine young man; but they could not say whether it was seven or eight years ago” (Austen, 40).

Another important character from *Persuasion*, Mr Charles Musgrove, is introduced when Anne is dancing with him at a ball and sitting next to him at dinner, which makes Wentworth a little jealous (Grange, 53-56). This introduction and the intimacy hinted at creates a reference to the fact that Charles will propose to Anne about a year later, something Louisa mentions in *Persuasion* during a conversation with Wentworth:

We do so wish that Charles had married Anne instead. – I suppose you know he wanted to marry Anne?’

After a moment’s pause, Captain Wentworth said, ‘Do you mean that she refused him?’

‘Oh! Yes, certainly.’

‘When did that happen?’

‘I do not exactly know, for Henrietta and I were at school at the time; but I believe about a year before he married Mary (Austen, 68).

Looking at what is written in the *Baronetage*, which Sir Walter reads in *Persuasion*, Austen writes that Mary married Charles in December of 1810, which puts his proposal to Anne at about a year after the events of *Captain Wentworth’s Diary* (Austen, 3). Again, Grange invites attentive readers to make connections between her adaptation and the original story, knowing more than the characters about what will happen. This is a part of the ongoing dialogical process any readers of adaptations will engage in, in which they compare the work they already know to the one they are experiencing (Hutcheon, 21). This inside knowledge of future events again comes into play when Frederick is feeling jealous of Charles Musgrove, and he points out that Lady Russell does “not look at Musgrove with the same jaundiced eye she turned to me” (Grange, 70). Edward replies that: “She likes him well enough in a general way, but if you are meaning that she approves of him as a suitor for Miss Anne, I think you are mistaken. She knows the value of rank, and I believe she looks higher for her god-daughter. I do not believe she will encourage the match” (Grange, 71). In this passage there is both an allusion to Lady Russell’s obsession with rank, which will turn out to be one of her main objections to Wentworth himself, as well as to the future proposal of Charles to Anne, and Louisa saying to Wentworth: “Papa and mamma always think it was her great friend Lady Russell’s doing she did not [marry Charles]” (Austen, 68).

Another important character of *Persuasion* who is referenced in the early part of *Captain Wentworth’s Diary*, though not actually shown, is Mr Elliot. During a dinner Wentworth overhears Miss Elliot mentioning a planned visit from Mr Elliot, discussing with her father

how they needed to improve the house in preparation (Grange, 35). In the beginning of *Persuasion*, it is mentioned that Sir Walter and Elizabeth had sought the acquaintance of the heir presumptive in town shortly after Lady Elliot's death. "He was invited to Kellynch Hall; he was talked of an expected all the rest of the year; but he never came. The following spring, he was seen again in town, found equally agreeable, again encouraged, invited and expected, and again he did not come" (Austen, 6). The timeline suggests that the events of *Captain Wentworth's Diary* takes place the summer after the second meeting in spring, as Anne mentions that her mother has been dead for five years (Grange, 19). In the way Sir Walter and Elizabeth discuss the visit it is a firm appointment, and Mr Elliot is expected to arrive any day. The subject is talked of more directly a little while later, in a discussion between Frederick and Edward about Miss Elliot:

'Miss Elliot is self-destined for the heir presumptive, William Walter Elliot, Esq.'

'Ah, I see. By marrying him, she will retain her position as the first lady of the neighbourhood, and she will also retain her home on her father's death. And does the heir presumptive know of her plan?'

'He must have some idea, for Sir Walter and Miss Elliot have twice sought him out in London, whither they bend their step every spring. On each occasion, they invited him to Kellynch Hall. His coming was spoken of as certain the first time. But alas, he disappointed us all, and he did not come. He was invited again the following year, but again he did not arrive. I do not believe Miss Elliot has quite despaired of him, nor do I believe she will, not until she knows him to be lost forever by virtue of his taking another wife. But he does not seem to be in any hurry to visit Kellynch Hall (Grange, 57).

In the continuation of this conversation between the brothers there are many further references to the original story, as well as foreshadowing of events to come, as Edward informs Frederick that Mr Elliot is a young man, engaged in the study of law (mentioned in Austen on page 6), as well as the fact that Mr Elliot will not inherit anything until the death of Sir Walter, which might be quite distant, and the possibility of Sir Walter marrying again and producing a son, depriving Mr Elliot of his inheritance. Frederick comments that "he is prudent then, Mr Elliot, and does not rely upon his expectations, but, rather, he wished to secure a future for himself, irrespective of his claims" (Grange, 58). This is a foreshadowing of the fact that he does just that shortly after, by marrying prudently: "He had purchased his independence by uniting himself to a rich woman inferior birth" (Austen, 6). Again, any reader with knowledge of *Persuasion* will have more information than the characters, as they know what will happen next. According to Hutcheon this is a part of what makes adaptations popular as "the appeal of adaptations for audiences lies in their mixture of repetition and



difference, of familiarity and novelty” (Hutcheon, 114). There is an extra layer of enjoyment present in knowing what is going to happen, but at the same time discovering how they will get there.

Wentworth’s relationship with his naval friends is also further explored in *Captain Wentworth’s Diary*. The novel starts with him travelling together with Harville, who is planning to propose to his later wife, Harriet (Grange, 3-4). He does this further out in the story, and is accepted (42), and when Wentworth meets Harriet he describes her as “a degree or two less polished than Harville” (Grange, 47). This description echoes Anne’s observations about her in *Persuasion*: “Mrs Harville, a degree less polished than her husband, seemed however to have the same good feelings” (Austen, 74).

Grange also gives the reader some backstory of how Wentworth came to know Harville and Benwick, during a conversation between Wentworth and Anne:

We were at the Naval Academy in Portsmouth together’, I said. ‘Two young boys, eager to be at sea. I can hardly believe it is ten years since I went there, at the tender age of thirteen’. ‘You must have had many friends there’, she said.

‘Yes, I did’, I told her. ‘Benwick, Jenson and Harville. Benwick was younger than the rest of us, joining the academy later, in 1797, but somehow he became one of us’ (Grange, 46-47).

It is briefly mentioned in *Persuasion* that Benwick is the youngest of the three (Austen, 74), otherwise there is little in the original story that refers to Wentworth’s past. This is one of the instances where Grange must fill in the gaps in the original by coming up with her own interpretations, something which is necessary to create an adaptation: “fan stories must refer to a source text to qualify as fan fiction, but they must also diverge from it to be worth telling. Fan fiction, then, is always shaped by the interplay of canon and individual creativity” (Van Steenhuyse, 5). Grange takes the hints given in the original and fills in the gaps left using her own interpretation and imagination to create a new story.

In *Captain Wentworth’s Diary* there is also a description of Fanny Harville, the woman who readers will know was Harville’s sister, and Benwick’s late fiancé by the time the events of *Persuasion* take place: “She was no longer a child but a young woman, and a very superior young woman at that. Her mind was cultivated and her wits quick. Her face and figure were such that I knew she would soon have many admirers” (Grange, 49). This description bears a

resemblance with Wentworth's description of Fanny when talking to Anne in Bath, after Benwick's engagement to Louisa Musgrove have become known: "Fanny Harville was a very superior creature" (Austen, 143). These character traits are also mentioned again after her death: "Fanny Harville was a very superior young woman. He is unlikely to meet her equal, and without another such attachment, what will there be to restore him to life?" (Grange, 131). This is another wink to the reader who knows that he will find another quite soon, though Wentworth does not think her equal to Fanny. The background of Benwick and Fanny's relationship is alluded to, as it seems Benwick becomes interested in Fanny during Harville's wedding: "Benwick seemed very taken with Fanny" (Grange, 75).

Anyone familiar with *Persuasion* knows, however, that this relationship will not have a happy ending, and it is confirmed when news of Fanny's death reaching Wentworth in a letter from Harville when he comes in to Plymouth (Grange, 125-127). In this letter Harville asks him to go to Portsmouth and break the news to Captain Benwick when he comes in. This is a situation Harville mentions to Anne in *Persuasion*, about how Fanny died in June, and how Benwick was not told until the first week in August. He also tells her how Captain Wentworth was the one to tell Benwick the news, staying with him afterwards (Austen, 84). In Grange's novel the Wentworth gets the letter on July 30<sup>th</sup>, tells Benwick on August 1<sup>st</sup>, and then stays with him longer than the week Harville mentions in *Persuasion* (84). Then the Harville's arrive and insist Benwick live with them, and Harville talks of taking a bigger house by the sea, and the reader knows they will end up at Lyme (Grange, 130).

Though Grange has chosen to stay quite close to the original story in plot, using many of the hints given in *Persuasion* to give the reader a convincing backstory, she has also taken steps to make the novel more appealing to modern readers which breaks with the world of Austen. According to Hopkins, these instances fall in with a trend in modern Austen adaptations for sacrificing of morality in order to make the story more romantic. An example of this is the fact that much of Anne and Wentworth's acquaintance is based on them meeting and walking alone together on several occasions. The fact that they are allowed to walk alone is a breach of morality that would not have been allowed in the society Austen writes about, and would have been unthinkable to the characters, even if no one ever found out. "For many adaptations [of Austen's works], Austen's interest in morality is of little or no concern; for them, she has become primarily a figure of romance, sometimes spiced up with a dash of proto-feminism" (*Relocating Shakespeare and Austen on Screen*, 135). Modern audiences wish for more

romance and excitement in the lovers' encounters, and Grange chooses to sacrifice a small part of her historical accuracy to provide this (Hopkins, *Relocating Shakespeare and Austen on Screen*, 148-149). This trend of modern adaptations to focus on romance and sex has been traced back to the 'Darcy wet shirt' moment in the 1995 screen adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*. According to Griggs it "has become a ploy emulated by a number of contemporary writers working with canonical texts as a means to reflecting the cultural norms of the production era rather than its antecedent" (99). This suggests that modern audiences crave sex in order to be interested in a novel or a movie, and the morality and restrictions of Victorian England is in themselves not interesting enough to keep the attention of twenty-first-century readers or viewers. Modern taste demands an Austen who shares our preoccupation with sexuality, leading modern adaptors to inject more of this into their adaptations (Troost & Greenfield, "*Strange Mutations*", 443). However, like with the changes made to Anne's character, by mainly injecting this into the backstory Grange can do so while still staying close to the events and tone of *Persuasion*.

## Breaking Up the Linear Narrative – the Backstory in *Frederick Wentworth, Captain – None But You*

Unlike the events of *Captain Wentworth's Diary*, the backstory in *None But You* is not given as a chronological narrative but as a series of analepses. It tells the story of Captain Wentworth's last days in the navy after returning to England, interspersed with his remembering Anne and their courtship eight years previous. The use of analepsis interrupts, according to Herman Rapaport, the linearity of the story as well as the reader's feeling of omniscience, which is especially important for creating interest in a story the reader knows well (71). Analepses offer opportunities for reveries or reflection on the part of the characters which otherwise could not have taken place, as the reader is given Captain Wentworth's thoughts on his memories while they occur. It also offers the opportunity for some elements of the plot to be considered so traumatic to the characters that only bits of them can be recalled. This is also true in *None But You* as it is clear from the first that these are painful memories the Captain would rather forget, or at least tries not to dwell on. When an analepsis is presented as a memory it is made clear to the reader that it is a figment, not to be taken as absolute fact (Rapaport, 71). This gives the backstory of this adaptation almost as much

subjectivity as the use of the diary form gives *Captain Wentworth's Diary*, as it is clearly the Captain's version of the story that is represented.

The events of this novel start towards the end of the Napoleonic wars, in the summer of 1814: "The summer of 1814 was overseeing the end of the war and an enormous number of ships being called back to home port" (Kaye, *None But You*, 7). The inclusion of a larger historical perspective or political detail is something Austen tried to avoid in her novels, but something which modern fan writers use extensively in order to inform modern readers of the larger context in which the stories are set (Van Steenhuyse, 9-10). The first couple of pages follow the Captain's life on board his docked ship, the *Laconia*. This name will be instantly recognizable to readers of *Persuasion* as the ship mentioned when the Musgrove girls are looking through the navy list, hunting for the ships that Captain Wentworth commanded: "Ah! Those were pleasant days when I had the *Laconia*!" (Austen, 50). Harville also mentions it as the last ship on which Wentworth was the Commander (Kaye, *None But You* 84).

The reader starts to wonder whether or not the backstory will be told, but a few pages later the first flashback begins, showing the reader how the backstory will only be told in fragments (Kaye, *None But You*, 8). The Captain is playing chess when a remark from his opponent makes him think of a picnic and playing cards with a girl the reader reasons must be Anne, even though her name is not mentioned until the very end of the flashback, more than a page later. Through the memory the reader is told how Frederick proposed to Anne while playing chess, but no other backstory is told, and the memory only lasts about a page and a half before going back to the present. Through this Kaye creates suspense in a story that it is likely her reader knows very well. The Captain then muses over his memory, reflecting that "It was unfortunate that he had fooled himself into believing she loved him. He learned a few days after the impromptu proposal that her loving him was not the truth. If she had truly loved him, she never would have sent him away" (Kaye, *None But You*, 10). This is another hint to the reader who knows the story and what will happen and creates a connection between the hero and the reader of shared knowledge. As the story continues the next memory gives the reader more context:

His acquaintance with the second daughter of Sir Walter Elliot of Kellynch Hall, Somersetshire, had not happened quickly. Wentworth was a newly made commander in the navy when he arrived but only the visiting brother of a local curate. Dinners, cards, and the occasional dance allowed for only a gradual

acquaintance. But the acquaintance, once made, burst into full-blown love on both sides and only intensified after his proposal (Kaye, *None But You*, 12).

This very clearly echoes the way their courtship is described in *Persuasion*: “They were gradually acquainted, and when acquainted, rapidly and deeply in love” (Austen, 20).

The story then goes on to Wentworth talking to Sir Walter, asking for his blessing on his and Anne’s marriage. The Captain remembers how he went in to the meeting convinced he would get a warm welcome, which both he and anyone who knows the events of *Persuasion* now know was foolish, as he soon found out “he was not genuinely welcome into any circle of the Baronet’s – particularly not into the family circle” (Kaye, *None But You*, 13). He moves on to describing the interview itself, describing it as being “short and comparatively silent. There had been a look of astonishment, silence, and a general atmosphere of contempt. Other than making it plain that he was disinclined to do anything financial for his daughter, nothing was said” (Kaye, *None But You*, 13). Wentworth has another flashback to his talking to Sir Walter later in the book, where he also remembers how the baronet made it clear there would be no money in it for them (Kaye, *None But You*, 93). When the Captain meets up with Anne after this interview, he tells her: “while your father did not precisely say, ‘I give you my blessing to marry my daughter, Anne’, he also did not expressly forbid us marrying” (Kaye, *None But You*, 14). All of this corresponds with the description of Wentworth’s talking to Sir Walter given in the original novel: “Sir Walter, on being applied to, without actually withholding his consent, or saying it would never be, gave it all the negative of great astonishment, great coldness, great silence, and a professed resolution of doing nothing for his daughter” (Austen, 20). Wentworth even believes that Lady Russell will speak for them after his talk with Sir Walter, stating that if Anne’s happiness is truly her main concern, she should be happy to use her influence with the Baronet on their behalf. Any reader with knowledge of the original story will react to this hope, knowing what will follow shortly after. The Captain himself muses over this when the story returns from the analepsis to the present day, commenting to himself “Good God, Frederick, could you have chosen a worse person in which to place your faith?” (Kaye, *None But You*, 15). This creates a connection between the main character and the reader, as they both know what happened, even if it is not stated outright in Kaye’s novel. As the Captain is looking back on what happened, and readers of *Persuasion* knows the events which will follow, both the character and the reader can evaluate the situations in hindsight. Having this connection to the character of Wentworth makes the reader trust his

interpretation of events even though it is clear throughout that he is a somewhat unreliable narrator.

The situation with Lady Russell is again referred to a little bit later in the narrative, when Frederick thinks back on a discussion with his brother after his proposal to Anne, before he went to see Sir Walter. He again remembers how he had high hopes, and was certain of his success, and even hoped for the support of Lady Russell, despite the fact that she had shown a marked dislike for him up to that point. Edward points this out, saying:

You need only enter the room and the woman is agitated. You have refused to go out of your way to curry her favour, and I think you perhaps enjoy shocking the old girl. You have put aside her opinion at your own peril, Frederick. You have undervalued the power Lady Russell exerts over the entire Elliot household, I'm afraid... (Kaye, *None But You*, 90-91).

Here Edward foreshadows what will happen next, and the role Lady Russell will play in it.

Another analepsis tells the story of Wentworth's first meeting with Anne, which according to *Persuasion* happened directly after him being made Commander and returning to visit his brother. In *None But You*, Anne was the one who sought the introduction, asking about the action in San Domingo where the Captain was made a commander, having heard of them from Wentworth's brother (Kaye, *None But You*, 47). This behaviour is much more forward and outspoken compared to her portrayal in *Persuasion*. She even admits to having read the *Times*, in order to find out as much as she could about him and the battle he was a part of. In the adaptation Anne is quite frank in her admiration of Frederick and his naval accomplishments from the beginning. This change in her character is similar to what Grange has done in her adaptation, giving modern audiences a heroine they can respect by making her more outspoken and rebellious towards the restriction of her society (Richards, 120). However, by making this change in Anne's character in a flashback and not in the overlap with the original story, Kaye can keep close to the events of the original novel, which her audience craves (Hutcheon, 29).

Throughout the first part of Kaye's novel there is a sense that Wentworth is not quite over Anne, though he seems to want to convince himself that he is. Frederick muses on how he thought of writing to Anne several times after his promotion but did not know precisely what

he wanted from her (Kaye, *None But You*, 71). This also echoes his words to Anne after his proposal in *Persuasion*:

‘Tell me, when I returned to England in the year eight, with a few thousand pounds, and was posted into the *Laconia*, if I had written to you, would you have answered my letter? Would you, in short, have renewed our engagement then?’

‘Would I!’ was all her answer; but the accent was decisive enough.

‘Good God!’ he cried, ‘you would! It is not that I did not think of it, or desire it as what could alone crown all my other success. But I was too proud, too proud to ask again (Austen, 194).

In *Persuasion*, it is never made clear to what extent Wentworth is aware of his own feelings, if he is aware the entire time that he still has feelings for Anne. In *None But You* it is suggested that he knows he still is not over her, but that his feelings are so deeply buried in hurt and resentment that he will not admit them even to himself. The letter from Sophia then seems to confirm a suspicion the Captain had about Anne being married: “A second [daughter] lives in the nearby village of Uppercross and is married to the son of another prominent family” (Kaye, *None But You*, 95). Wentworth assumes this is Anne, and therefore tries hard to remove any lingering emotions towards her. The suggestion that he knows he is not over her helps make the story more romantic, which modern Austen adaptations tend to do in order to appeal to their intended audience. According to Kaplan this is something present in many adaptations, be it on screen or page, as they provide sustained dramatizations of the heroes’ love for the heroines. They are shown to feel much more, or at least more openly than anything suggested in the original novels. The adaptations embellish the relationships early, sacrificing the morality and proper courtship of Austen’s time (Kaplan, 180).

Early in the narrative Captain Harville is introduced. He is the first figure the reader will recognize from *Persuasion* aside from Wentworth himself, which further confirms that it is the same universe. Harville arrives on the *Laconia* to tell Wentworth the news of his sister’s death the preceding June. Wentworth remembers bringing Fanny with Harville’s wife “from Portsmouth in the spring” (Kaye, *None But You*, 18), which an instance mentioned in *Persuasion*, that Wentworth brought Harville’s wife, his sister, a cousin and three children from Portsmouth to Plymouth (Austen, 52). Wentworth then asks if Captain Benwick has been told of his fiancé’s death. Harville says he has not, and Wentworth volunteers to go tell

him, before Harville can ask. This corresponds with what Harville tells Anne about the events surrounding Benwick being told of Fanny's death, during a conversation at Lyme:

'And not known to him, perhaps, so soon'

'Not till the first week in August, when he came home from the Cape – just made into the *Grappler*. I was in Plymouth, dreading to hear of him; he sent in letters, but the *Grappler* was under orders for Portsmouth. There the news must follow him, but who was to tell it? Not I. Nobody could do it but that good fellow,' pointing to Captain Wentworth. 'The *Laconia* had come into Plymouth the week before; no danger of being sent to sea again. He stood his chance for the rest – wrote up for leave of absence, but without waiting the return, travelled night and day till he got to Portsmouth, rowed off to the *Grappler* that instant, and never left the poor fellow for a week'" (Austen, 84).

Kaye's story also matches the fact that Wentworth does not wait for a reply to his application for leave of absence but goes straight away. However, Kaye narrates the whole story of how Wentworth goes to Portsmouth, tells Benwick the news, and how he deals with them. It is not merely referred to in a conversation, as it is in *Persuasion*, but it is narrated fully over the span of almost fifty pages. The reader gets a glimpse of Captain Benwick before the blow of Fanny's death made him more melancholy. Kaye also explores the friendships between the naval officers even more than *Persuasion* does, giving the reader insight into what Wentworth's life at sea would have looked like.

In her novel Kaye also includes a number of small details referring to situations or people mentioned in *Persuasion*. This creates even more of a link between the two novels and leads to increased interest in avid readers wanting to figure out all these references. One such incident takes place when the Captain is at a ball while in Plymouth, where he meets a Lady Grierson, who tries desperately to set him up with one of her daughters (Kaye, *None But You*, 77). This same lady is mentioned in *Persuasion* by Admiral Croft: "If you had been one week later in Lisbon, last spring, Frederick, you would have been asked to give passage to Lady Mary Grierson and her daughters" (Austen, 52). The Lady references this event to the Captain, saying she was at Gibraltar with her daughters, and was very put out to find out that the Captain had left with the *Laconia* less than a week before (Kaye, *None But You*, 79).

Another small detail like this happens when Sophia mentions in a letter to Wentworth that the pleasure gardens of Kellynch have been made off limits to them: "The man [Sir Walter] is over scrupulous about various, nonsensical things, even going so far as to wish the pleasure



gardens being made off limits. He is worried about the approachableness of his shrubberies!” (Kaye, 94). This sentence echoes what Sir Walter says in *Persuasion*: “But what restrictions I might impose on the use of the pleasure-grounds is another thing. I am not fond of the idea of my shrubberies being always approachable” (Austen, 14). Sophia also mentions in the same letter that they moved in by Michaelmas, and that the family has gone to Bath. It is mentioned in *Persuasion* that “the Crofts were to have possession at Michaelmas” (Austen, 24).

Kaye also frequently gives the reader a feeling of connection with Frederick as they know something which none of the other characters in the story knows. One instance of this happens when Wentworth is talking to a friend from the navy, and this friend mentions how Wentworth would be every father’s dream as a son-in-law. The audience knows, as well as the Captain, that not every father would welcome him into their family. He remembers something Sir Walter said when Wentworth asked for his blessing: “I would find an alliance between the Elliots and... your people to be a degradation intolerable on my part.” (Kaye, 81). Frederick then remembers how Anne started parroting her father’s statements when she broke off the engagement, and also how she had claimed “that their parting was for ‘his good’ as much as for her own” (Kaye, 81). The reader knows, however, that this was Anne’s genuine feeling as it is stated in *Persuasion*: “Had she not imagined herself consulting his good, even more than her own, she could not have given him up” (Austen, 21).

Due to the fact that Kaye has divided her novel in two, she has considerably more room for exploring and expanding on things only hinted at or not ever touched upon in *Persuasion*. In her novels Kaye respond to what Veerle Van Steenhuyse calls “a text’s negative capability”, which happens when a fan author chooses to fill in the gaps they see in the original. This is the hallmark of fans who want more of canon, as these fans are reluctant to leave the universe of their choice and create additional material in order to prolong the experience (Van Steenhuyse, 5). Making the story longer gives Kaye the opportunity to fill in more of the gaps and prolonging the pleasure of staying in the universe. One such instance is the history and condition of the Wentworth family, which is a gap left in Austen’s original as this is hardly touched upon. Their backstory is hinted at quite a lot throughout *None But You*, explaining how their father had been violent, especially towards Edward, who was the eldest by quite a few years. Edward had consequently left home and gone to sea at sixteen, and only returned to take care of his two younger siblings upon their mother’s death, at which point Frederick was only twelve (Kaye, *None But You*, 63). In *For You Alone* it is mentioned that the

Wentworths are from Liverpool (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 166). Edward is middle aged at the time of the story, hence Wentworth's astonishment that he has found himself a wife (Kaye, *None But You* 67). The relationship between Frederick and his brother is explored quite extensively throughout Kaye's two novels. This is an interesting flipped reflection of Deborah Kaplan's observation of how, in many modern film adaptations the friendships and relationships between sisters, which are very much present in Austen's novels, have been undervalued, as the courtship plot has been made more important (Kaplan, 185). Here, the opposite is true, as Kaye has expanded on the relationship between the brothers. The expansion of this relationship can, however, also be a symptom of the general change made to Austen's heroines, making them more appealing by adding "scenes of connection", exploring their relationships with other people around them (Nixon, 35). Nixon mostly relates this to added relationships with children but expanding on the hero's relationship to close friends and family has a similar effect.

In *Persuasion* the differences between the genders is made clear in the contrast between Anne and Wentworth. Anne shudders where the Captain revels in his naval stories, she rarely speaks where he is outspoken, he takes quick action where she is paralysed by her confusion, and his physical strength and ability is contrasted against her physical, as well as spiritual, exhaustion (Wiltshire, *The Hidden Jane Austen* 154). As mentioned previously, however, this meek and calm heroine is not as acceptable to modern audiences, as in the postfeminist society female main characters should be more independent and outspoken (Richards, 120). In order to make her heroine more acceptable to modern readers, therefore, Kaye has written Anne as much more frank and open in her backstory than she ever appears in *Persuasion*, even making her forward and chatty. At one point she is afraid she is talking too much, saying: "My rattling on tends to bore the family" (Kaye, *None But You*, 50). This remark hints that her family is not more attentive to her at this point than what they are in the original story, and suggests that the changes in her character, from this to what she is in *Persuasion*, are more a consequence of the failed engagement than the continued ill treatment of her by her family.

Like Grange, Kaye has chosen to follow the trend of making her backstory more romantic and breaks with regency codes of morality in order to appeal to modern audiences (Hopkins, *Relocating Shakespeare and Austen on Screen* 135). In *None But You* there are several instances of this in the flashbacks, as Wentworth and Anne manage to meet alone on several

occasions to talk, and he even kisses her at one point, which she accepts (Kaye, 17). There is a palpable sexual tension in this scene completely missing from Austen's original story: "She paused, and with some hesitation, toughed his brow. 'What sort of hold is it you have ever me?' Her eyes were bright with tears and her breath was quick" (Kaye, *None But You*, 16). This is something that appeals to modern audiences who are more used to physical romance but would have been almost unthinkable to Austen and her contemporaries (Hopkins, *Relocating Shakespeare and Austen on Screen*, 148-149). It also gives Anne a more proactive role in the courtship, letting her be much more forward than anything seen in novels written in the early nineteenth century, and in so doing giving modern audiences more of the feisty heroine they crave (Richards, 120). The sexual tension in Kaye's novel is further enforced by her focus on the senses, and on what Wentworth sees, smells, and hears. In a later analepsis Wentworth remembers how

It was more than her musical talent that had excited his feelings for Anne Elliot. The room had been warm with early summer, and it was then he first noticed her scent. Like most proper young women, she smelled of roses or lavender. When they passed one another while dancing or walking together, he would catch the occasional whiff of sweet flowers. As the night went on, he still noticed the occasional scent of lavender but fused with something richer, deeper; something not born of flowers. Whatever it was, he knew it was a little wild and conjured in him both desire and attachment. There was a creeping certainty that he would do whatever was necessary to have her for his own (Kaye, *None But You*, 150).

This focus on the senses and explicit descriptions of feelings and desires resembles the other modern adaptations of Austen's works much more than her original novel. According to Van Steenhuyse it also opens up the book to a charge of so called "Harlequinization", making it resemble a Harlequin romance novel more than Austen's original novel (15-16).

However, it is not only the female character that has been changed in order for the novel to attract modern audiences. The character of Wentworth has been made even more of a gentleman and a romantic figure in Kaye's adaptation, which according to Ridout is a reaction to a disappointment in the modern man, leading to a nostalgia for and romance with the English gentleman: "the post-feminist nostalgia evident in these retellings of Austen may reflect not so much women's frustrations at or rejection of feminism, so much as a disappointment with contemporary masculinity" (138-139). By giving the backstory in analepsis Kaye gives the reader his feelings and motivations, making him a more sympathetic figure than what he appears in the beginning of *Persuasion*. In Kaye's novel we also see

Wentworth in his naval life, making him more of an idealized gentleman. In this instance Kaye has sacrificed historical accuracy in order to make her hero more appealing. At Austen's time, half-pay officers were not allowed to wear their uniforms off duty, as evidenced in *Mansfield Park*. However, in Kaye's novels Wentworth spends much time on his uniform even in Somersetshire, and places great emphasis on the reaction it will get from the ladies at dinner (*None But You*, 119). This reinforces Wentworth as a romantic military figure, as is usual in Regency romance. Wentworth is portrayed as both an officer and a gentleman (Richards, 124-125).

Modern adaptations of *Persuasion* have also been known to focus more on the military and wider-world aspects of the novel. About the 1995 movie adaptation, Wallace writes that; "it confronts head-on, to begin with, the best-known criticism of Austen, that she failed to notice the Napoleonic Wars. Here at the beginning of the movie are demobilized sailors; over there, therefore, are the Wars themselves, of which Jane Austen, you see, was richly aware... Austen is being improved for the 1990s, her field of vision and her sympathies widened" (Wallace, 136). This is something very much present in Kaye's adaptation, as she takes the very few hints about Wentworth's naval career given in *Persuasion* and makes them into several pages of Wentworth reminiscing about battles and the situations at sea which led to his advancement in his profession (*None But You*, 45). The world of the novel is also vastly expanded, not only limited to Somersetshire, Lyme and Bath, but also traveling to Shropshire to visit the brother, as well as to the naval towns of Plymouth and Portsmouth. In showing the latter and describing the mood in these towns Kaye shows more of the effects of the end of the war on the people, involving the wider world to a much larger extent than anything Austen does in *Persuasion*.

## Conclusion

As this first part of the adaptations deal with a period not fully explored in *Persuasion* there are less of the narrative hinge points the authors need to include in order to stay close to the original novel (Griggs, 89). This gives them greater freedom to create their own story while still appealing to fans who crave proximity to the events of Austen's novel. This freedom has led to the two adaptations dealing with this part of the story in two very different ways. Kaye's adaptation is in a way more interesting than Grange's as it gives the story in analepses

rather than in chronological order, thus keeping the tension present in *Persuasion*, where the story is also revealed piece by piece. However, both Kaye and Grange create a feeling that this is a subjective view of the story, as one is told in the form of a diary, and the other as flashbacks. In both novels the story is reflected through the Captain's own personal feelings, which allows them to project his view in a way the free indirect speech of the original novel does not allow for Anne. Both novels include many references to *Persuasion*, managing to stay close to the original by adding a large number of hinge points, while taking the backstory in rather different directions.

While most of the important plot points of the original is preserved in the adaptations, there are some changes made in both, in order to make the story more modern. First, and maybe most striking, is the change made to Anne's character. In both novels she is made more vivacious, becoming a heroine a modern audience can admire. Kaye and Grange can do this without straying too far from the events of the original, as it is mentioned early in *Persuasion* by Wentworth that she was altered almost to the unrecognizable by the intervening years (Austen, 46). There is also a change made in Wentworth's character, making him more of a gentleman again, presumably to appeal to modern audiences. This will be explored further in the next chapters. The stories have also been made more romantic and even at times sexualized, sacrificing moral propriety by letting the characters meet unattended and touch in ways which were in no way permitted before marriage in Austen's time. This is a trend in most modern Austen adaptation, and will be seen throughout the two novels I am exploring. Finally, the scope of the stories is broadened, especially in Kaye's novel, giving a wider view of the world than what Austen gives in hers. The backstory is, in both the modern novels, the most interesting part of the story for fans, as it gives the largest amount of new information, thus giving fans more of the characters they love, which is what they crave (Van Steenhuyse, 5).

# Chapter 2: Three is a crowd – Wentworth, Anne and Louisa Musgrove

## Introduction

Wentworth is almost presented as two different characters by Austen in *Persuasion*: the one he was before the first engagement, and the one he became after Anne's rejection. When Wentworth returns to Somerset after his eight years at sea there are some marked changes to his character. According to Kramp, in Austen's retrospective account of Wentworth and Anne's previous relationship, the narrator casts her hero as a charming romantic figure who is both confident and enthusiastic (129). We learn that almost eight years ago Wentworth had come into Somersetshire, "a remarkably fine young man, with a great deal of intelligence, spirit and brilliancy" (Austen, 20). Austen initially casts her hero as a humble man with lofty aspirations who eagerly seeks advancement. He is convinced that he will get advancement and be rich soon and is full of confidence in his own abilities. In this he follows the models of Jacobin heroes who remains convinced in the efficacy of their individual desires and efforts (Kramp, 129). After the end of their first relationship, Wentworth leaves the country, but he stays committed to the conventional modes of English masculinity. He no longer appears as a mysterious romantic hero, but Austen continues to present him as an industrious man who has earned his wealth and merit. He reverts to a chivalric behaviour when he returns to Uppercross, making himself popular with the Musgrove girls, and joining Charles Musgrove in gentlemanly shooting expeditions (Kramp, 129-130). However, his behaviour to Anne Elliot is quite different to how he seems to everyone else in Austen's original story.

Part of the story of *Persuasion* is one of persuading Captain Wentworth out of his resentment towards Anne (Jordan, in Austen V-VI). This resentment, and the change it brings in Wentworth's character, seems to be what leads him to courting Louisa Musgrove, which becomes the central conflict in much of the story. In the original novel the Captain's motives and the reasoning behind his behaviour are touched upon in a conversation after his reconciliation and second proposal to Anne, but they are never fully explored. Due to this fact

each of the two authors of the adaptations needs to develop their own interpretation of Wentworth's motives and thoughts throughout the texts, as they tell the full story from his point of view. One of the things made clear in *Persuasion* is the fact that Wentworth's feelings for Anne change, or at least that they become clear to him, during and after the events at Lyme. But in both adaptations this change seems to happen somewhat earlier, and to a degree he seems to have feelings for Anne throughout the story. In this chapter I will explore how Kaye and Grange each portray Wentworth's feelings and motivations when meeting Anne again, throughout his apparent courtship of Louisa Musgrove, as well as the change which takes place at Lyme. In this part of the story, unlike the in the backstory, the points of view of Anne and Wentworth overlap to a greater degree, which makes it necessary for the authors of the adaptations to include more narrative hinge points if they want to both stay close to Austen's original and appeal to their readership. However, they have also made some changes, and I will explore how they have modernized the story throughout, especially through the changes made to Wentworth's character, making him more like the modern hero contemporary readers want and expect. In addition, I will look at how they have managed to make the story more romantic and sexualized without breaking with the events of Austen's original in a thoroughgoing way.

## Memories, Hurt Feelings and Resentment – Anne, Wentworth and Louisa in *Persuasion*

Anne is convinced that Wentworth is “either indifferent or unwilling” in regard to meeting her again, otherwise he would have sought her out before (Austen, 44-45). Here the reader again gets the feeling that Anne is not over Wentworth, but she enters into the renewal of their acquaintance quite certain of his indifference towards her. Due to this fact every action of the Captain's narrated through Anne's point of view is seen through the filter of this conviction. The reader is not at first given any indication to contradict this view, until the Captain, in a conversation with his sister about his intention to marry, thinks to himself that he had “a heart for any pleasing young woman who came in his way, excepting Anne Elliot” (Austen, 47). Further, when he describes the woman he wants, he describes her as having “a strong mind, with sweetness of manner” (Austen, 47), seeming to think this describes the opposite of Anne.

Through this exchange it is made clear that whatever feelings Wentworth harbours towards Anne Elliot, it is not indifference.

The Miss Musgroves are present in their renewed acquaintance from the very beginning, even being in the room at their first meeting. In Anne's confusion at meeting Wentworth again she remarks that Wentworth "said something to the Miss Musgroves, enough to mark an easy footing" (Austen, 45). At first there is no distinct preference in the Captain's treatment of the two sisters. At one point there is a rapid change from the thoughts and musings of Anne upon Wentworth's feelings to the before mentioned thoughts from the Captain's point of view: "It was now his object to marry. He had a heart for either of the Miss Musgroves, if they could catch it; a heart, in short, for any pleasing young woman who came in his way, excepting Anne Elliot" (Austen, 47). This change comes so abruptly it takes the reader a moment to realize the narration has changed from Anne to Wentworth and seems to be a confirmation of Anne's conviction that he had not forgiven her what happened eight years earlier. It also hints at him trying to distract himself from any retentive feelings for Anne by attaching himself to another lady, which is further hinted at in his description of wanting a wife with "a strong mind, with sweetness of manner" (Austen, 47). This description is somewhat paradoxical, and it does speak to his wanting something different from Anne, whom he resents for being too persuadable – Captain Wentworth has a firm persuasion that Anne Elliot let him down unforgivably when she was persuaded to call off their engagement (Jordan, in Austen V).

The Miss Musgroves show a marked interest for Wentworth from the very beginning, asking him about naval life, fetching the navy lists to encourage him to speak of his life at sea (Austen, 49). Captain Wentworth seems to revel in the attention, as Anne reflects:

He had everything to elevate him, which general attention and deference, and especially the attention of all the young women could do. [...] As for Henrietta and Louisa, they both seemed so entirely occupied by him that nothing but the continued appearance of the most perfect goodwill between themselves could have made it credible that they were not decided rivals. If he were a little spoiled by such universal, such eager admiration, who could wonder? (Austen, 55).

This reflection suggests to the reader that Wentworth might be more flattered by the attention rather than actually falling for either of the girls. This creates a mistrust towards any show of preference on the part of the Captain towards the Musgrove girls, as it seems the narrator



invites the reader to write it off as him being reacting to flattery and admiration rather than actually having feelings if he seems to give too much attention to the sisters.

The appearance of Charles Hayter changes the dynamics in the party at Uppercross, being the intended of Henrietta before the arrival of Captain Wentworth, and “from that time Cousin Charles had been very much forgotten” (Austen, 57). Both sisters gave attention to the Captain, but Anne reflects: “which of the two sisters was preferred by Captain Wentworth was as yet quite doubtful. Henrietta was perhaps the prettiest, Louisa had the higher spirits, and she knew not *now*, whether the more gentle or the more lively character were most likely to attract him” (Austen, 57). The emphasis in this reflection hints that Anne knew him well at one point, but that his altered behaviour has told her she no longer knows him as he has significantly changed.

Anne soon gets the opportunity to observe them all together and reflects to herself that “while she considered Louisa to be rather the favourite, she could not but think, as far as she might dare to judge from memory and experience, that Captain Wentworth was not in love with either” (Austen, 63). She is convinced that neither of the sisters are truly in love either, but that they will soon be if things progress as they have done. Henrietta seems to be divided between her admiration of Wentworth and her attachment to Charles Hayter, the latter of whom finally seems to quit the field. This leads to the walk to Winthrop, which finally seems to decide the battle between the two sisters. On this trip Henrietta seems to decide on accepting her cousin’s advances and forget her admiration of the Captain. It is also on this walk that Anne overhears a conversation between Wentworth and Louisa where he talks of the value of a firm character. The statements of this conversation seem both to confirm Anne’s suspicion that Wentworth has not forgiven her, and to show Louisa how she should act if she wants to secure his affections (Austen, 67). It is in the same conversation that Louisa tells the Captain of Charles’s failed proposal to Anne, a subject of great interest to the Captain as it happened so close to their own failed engagement.

Frederick does, however, have enough compassion and attention towards Anne to push her into accepting a ride with his sister and the Admiral. This act of kindness is the second positive attention of Wentworth’s towards Anne (the first being the help he gave with the children at the cottage), and one which hints at some retained positive feelings. This act is soon overshadowed in Anne’s mind by the comments of the Admiral upon the situation with

the Captain and the Musgrove girls: “He certainly means to have one or other of those two girls, Sophy,” said the Admiral; “but there is no saying which. He has been running after them, too, long enough, one would think, to make up his mind” (Austen, 70).

Things seem to come to a head in Lyme. The trip itself comes about because of Louisa’s conviction, or hard-headedness, which gives the reader a hint this might not be an unconditionally good thing. “Louisa, who was the most eager of the eager, having formed a resolution to go, and besides the pleasure of doing what she liked, being now armed with the idea of merit in maintaining her own way...” (Austen, 72). At Lyme there are a couple of instances where Anne gets male attention, which seems to varying degrees to make the Captain jealous. Firstly, she stays all of the first night besides Benwick, talking to him and encouraging him. Though the reader is not told outright that the Captain observes this, Captain Harville commends her for this kindness to Benwick the day after, showing that it was noted by others in the room (Austen, 83). The next day the attention of the Captain is more marked, when they meet a man when returning from a walk on the beach. The man openly admires Anne, and this is noticed by Wentworth: “Captain Wentworth looked around at her instantly in a way which showed his noticing of it” (Austen, 80). On the next page they see the man leaving the inn, and Wentworth seems very interested in Anne’s reaction, especially when finding out this man must be their cousin, Mr Elliot.

The final turning point seems to happen at the pier, when Louisa insists on jumping down all the steps from the upper to the lower pier, having the Captain catch her. When the Captain has reluctantly jumped her down once, she insists on doing it again: “He advised her against it, thought the jar too great; but no, he reasoned and talked in vain; she smiled and said, ‘I am determined I will’” (Austen, 85). It ends in disaster as Louisa jumps too early, falls down and hits her head. In the chaos Anne takes control when all others are panicking, and they all look to her for guidance. The Captain’s resentment of the past seems to fade in this moment, and in a subsequent discussion of who should stay and tend to Louisa, Wentworth exclaims: “If Anne will stay, no one so proper, so capable as Anne!” (Austen, 89). Anne takes this as concern for Louisa, not warmer feelings for herself, as he seems very annoyed when Anne decides to go back to Uppercross due to the jealousy of Mary. Anne and the Captain talk very little on the way back to Uppercross, and here their paths separate for quite some time, only meeting again in Bath.

## “Anne, Always Anne” – the Hero’s Continuous Awareness in *Captain Wentworth’s Diary*

Before arriving at Kellynch, Wentworth states to himself that he is quite over Anne. “I am determined not to regret her, for I am sure she does not regret me. I put her behind me long ago, and her fate no longer concerns me. Apart from some natural curiosity, I have no desire to see her again. Her power over me is gone” (Grange, 133). When he arrives, Wentworth is at first convinced that Anne is married, therefore thinking himself completely free of her influence. When he is first introduced to the Musgrove girls he is struck by their admiration of him, as well as their beauty, reflecting that, “they reminded me of playful puppies, full of life and eager to please. My spirits soared, and I thought, *Here is just the sort of lighthearted company I need to rid myself of the lingering grief of the summer*” (Grange, 142). He is also flattered by the warm welcome he gets into the family, soon feeling at home. The reader gets the impression throughout that he is mostly flattered by all the attention, thinking about how the girls talked to him and “flattering me with such attention that I was sorry to leave” (Grange, 144).

The reader gets a hint fairly early that Wentworth’s feelings for Anne have not completely disappeared. When he first meets Mr and Mrs Charles Musgrove, and Wentworth realizes his mistake of which sister is married, he thinks to himself: “I was elated, though I did not know why, and then amused, and then felt foolish and not a little angry with myself as I realized how much time I had wasted thinking about this meeting” (Grange, 148). There is a parallel between Anne and Wentworth here – in *Persuasion* Anne thinks for a short time that Wentworth is married, though her feelings seem to be mainly confusion, as the issue is rapidly made clear (Austen, 37). In this adaptation, the attentions of the Musgrove girls seem to continually flatter the Captain, but though he admires their beauty and good spirits, he is not blind to their shortcomings: “They are both very accomplished”, I said, admiring them as much as their mother could have wished, for their faces were full of life, and their posture enchanting – though I believe they did not play very well!” (Grange, 150). The reader gets the impression that he is not in love, but that he is determined to fix his attention on them, as they are lively, pretty, and uncomplicated, and maybe (though he does not even admit so to himself) because they are not Anne. He even reflects himself that “what man could resist the attention of two such pretty girls?” (Grange, 153). This preoccupation with looks and

appearance is, according to Kaplan, something which characterizes modern Austen adaptation's tendency of increasingly resembling traditional romance novels. "Since much of selfhood is loaded into and expressed by appearance, love at first sight is understandable and appropriate" (Kaplan, 178). However, this somewhat shallow depiction of the Musgrove sisters is at odds with the stronger heroine that modern audiences crave, and which is reflected in the changes made to Anne's character in the adaptations.

Wentworth's resentment towards Anne is clear in his reflections upon seeing her again: "So. She had not married, and it was hardly surprising, for her beauty had gone. The bloom of her cheek; the brightness of her eye; all had disappeared. Her figure was bowed; and she was, in fact, so careworn, that I would not have believed it possible she could have changed so much in only eight years" (Grange, 153). As Wentworth thus comments upon Anne's altered looks it is ironic to think how this change has been caused by the strength and constancy of feeling he accuses her of lacking (Jones, 77). He is still hurt by her refusal, he has not forgiven her and thinks to himself that her power over him is gone (Grange, 154). He later reflects to himself that he will "not marry until I find someone with strength of character and a mind of her own" (Grange, 156), this being almost his sole requirement in a wife. This single-minded focus must have been the effect of Anne's rejection. Though Wentworth is still resentful, it seems he is always aware of where Anne is and what she is doing, even remarking this to himself during a dinner at the Musgrove's; "All the time I was conscious only of Anne: Anne talking low to Mr Musgrove, Anne moving over to the table, Anne taking a seat next to Miss Hayter. Anne, always Anne" (Grange, 165). This is not, however, the impression given from Anne's perspective in *Persuasion*. "Once she felt he was looking at herself—observing her altered features, perhaps, trying to trace them in the ruins of the face which had once charmed him; and *once* she knew that he must have spoken of her" (Austen, 55). Grange has made Wentworth more aware of Anne, and of his own feelings, than what is expressed in the original story.

According to Hopkins, this is a general trend in the world of romance novels, as "women authors have delighted in creating male characters who crave the love of the heroines with an intensity which, we may fear, real men rarely experience" (*Mr Darcy's Body*, 120). According to Nixon, modern Austen adaptations makes the heroes and the love stories more present and obvious throughout the entirety of the story.

While each couple's eventual marriage fulfils our twentieth-century notions of balance, this masculine emotional display removes the uncertainty and suspense from Austen's cautionary courtship tales. More important, the film has reconfigured the ideal hero; he is no longer representative of social restraint but is an embodiment of emotional display (Nixon, 41).

Grange makes her hero feel more and more intensely towards the heroine throughout, giving contemporary audiences the romance they crave without really straying too far from Austen's original as the character's true feelings are never fully explored in *Persuasion*.

Anne's timidity and insecurity in Wentworth's company have been interpreted by him as her ignoring and disliking him in *Captain Wentworth's Diary*. It is clear to readers of the original story that they both misunderstand the feelings and actions of the other and are so coloured by the recollection of the past that they cannot see their own feelings clearly, not to mention the feelings of the other. At one point Wentworth thinks to himself: "she had spoken barely two words to me since I returned, and she probably never thought of me at all" (Grange, 170), which anyone who has read *Persuasion* knows is not the case. This continued misunderstanding on both their parts creates an intertextual mirroring which creates romance and tension, and what Hutcheon describes as "palimpsests through our memory of other works that resonate through repetition with variation" (8).

Louisa seems to embody some of the qualities the Captain has convinced himself he wants in a wife, and he reflects on this during the walk to Winthrop: "She was a resolute young woman, one with plenty of strength, and the more I thought about it, the more I was convinced that she would not let anyone tell her what to do" (Grange, 173). Grange then includes the conversation between Louisa and Captain Wentworth, which Anne overhears in *Persuasion*. Louisa tells Wentworth about the understanding between Henrietta and Charles Hayter, and the Captain understands that Henrietta's apparent interest in himself was the reason for Hayter's less than cordial behaviour. Henrietta had, however, been close to giving it all up when Mary did not want to go to Winthrop, but Louisa persuaded her to go. Further, Louisa tells the Captain how she would not have been so easily persuaded to do something she had put her mind to. His answer is the same as in the original novel, which convinces Anne that he has still not forgiven her of the past, and which fixes the idea of decision and firmness in the mind of Louisa.

On the way home, the party meets Sophia and the Admiral in their carriage, and Wentworth makes sure Anne is taken home, as she looks fatigued. In *Persuasion* this is the first instance that Anne detects some of his old feelings in his behaviour, seeing her exhaustion and acting on her behalf. She does, however, see it only as compassion. “Though condemning her for the past, and considering it with high and unjust resentment, though perfectly careless of her, and though becoming attached to another, still he could not see her suffer without the desire of giving her relief” (Austen, 70). Her views seem to be confirmed by the discussion between the Admiral and his wife in the carriage, with the former being convinced that Frederick will soon marry one of the two Musgrove girls.

Grange, on the other hand, has chosen to make this the moment where Wentworth starts to examine his own feelings and try to understand Anne’s, wondering why she rejected Charles Musgrove’s proposal, and wondering if he himself might also have been in the wrong by leaving and never writing to her. Though in the end he concludes that she no longer cares for him, thinking:

But no, such thoughts were folly. She had shown neither interest nor enjoyment in my company since my arrival in the neighbourhood; indeed, she had done everything in her power to avoid me and to make any intimate conversation impossible. She had made her feelings clear (Grange, 177).

These reflections also show the before mentioned feelings attributed to the hero, making him feel more than the original suggests, and making the story more romantic. Nixon states that both the original novel and the adaptations enact their respective time periods’ visions of the correct balance between emotional display and restraint: Austen’s vision of the late eighteenth-century favours restraint, the modern adaptation’s vision favours display. It reflects each time periods’ idea of masculinity (27). In Austen’s case this is shown in how Captain Wentworth seems restrained, he does not express his feelings, and he does not even seem to examine his own feelings before a traumatic event force him to. In Grange’s story, however, Wentworth is much more aware of his feelings and he seems more able, if not to express himself to Anne, then at least to begin to examine and know his own heart and feelings much earlier than what is suggested in *Persuasion*.

During the trip to Lyme Wentworth starts to see traces of the old Anne while she talks to Harville, and he reflects that “I found myself once again torn between frustration with her for

rejecting me, anger with myself for not writing to her in the year eight, and hope that she might yet be in love with me” (Grange, 184). His renewed appreciation of Anne also begins to make Wentworth see the shortcomings of Louisa: “Her speech was unaffected, but, after Anne’s conversation, it seemed to belong in the schoolroom” (Grange, 185). In Grange’s adaptation the Captain’s feelings both towards Anne and to Louisa seem to change rather rapidly, as in the space of only a couple of days he goes from being angry with one and flattered by the attention of the other, to being completely in love with one and less than indifferent to the other. This has some grounds in his change of behaviour in *Persuasion*, as he seems a bit more attentive towards Anne in Lyme. Grange is, however, taking the few hints given in his behaviour pretty far. After the attentions at the Cobb of the man who turns out to be Mr Elliot, “Captain Wentworth looked around at her instantly in a way which showed his noticing of it. He gave her a momentary glance – a glance of brightness, which seemed to say, ‘That man is struck with you – and even I, at this moment, see something like Anne Elliot again’” (Austen, 80). Even at the end of the original story, after the second proposal, Wentworth admits only that “at Lyme he had begun to understand himself” (Austen, 190). Here, again, Grange has taken Wentworth’s emotions to an extreme, making him feel more and deeper than in *Persuasion*. Where in the original there is the impression that Wentworth is kept away from Anne due to too much (negative) emotion, in the adaptations it seems like it is rather a lack of expressing his real emotions from the start (Nixon, 34), which allows this rapid change of heart when he suddenly realizes his true feelings.

Louisa’s stubborn behaviour at the Cobb seems to make Wentworth question his own views on a determined character being the height of virtue: “I gave in to her demands but, as I did so, I began to think that a determined character was not so very desirable after all. If it was firm in its pursuit of right, then it was estimable, but if it was firm in its pursuit of its own desire, it was simply wilful” (Grange, 190). According to Jones, Anne, Captain Wentworth and Louisa represent three different kinds of constancy:

Louisa’s determination to have her own way shows a firmness bordering on stubbornness, whereas her later shift of interest from Captain Wentworth to Captain Benwick suggests that her feelings are rather less fixed. Captain Wentworth, too, shows a stubbornness of mind against Anne but, as the outcome of the novel shows, events and the constancy of his feelings for her make him willing to change. The firmness of Anne’s feelings is in no doubt and she now thinks she was wrong to give in to the opinions of others eight years before, but her flexibility of mind can be an advantage in her dealings with other people (78).

The suggestion seems to be that constancy of feeling is not necessarily incompatible with a “persuadable mind”. Though feelings must sometimes come first, a concern for others is an important factor in personal happiness. Careful choices must be made between the, sometimes rival, claims of *self* and *society* (Jones, 78). Captain Wentworth’s reflections on Louisa’s character seem to suggest that his view of her might have begun to change already before her fall and the subsequent transferal of his affections fully back to Anne. By writing it as such it does raise a question of what might have happened if he had known his own mind earlier.

After the ensuing accident Wentworth’s heartfelt relief that Louisa did not die, and that she would recover, was construed by both Anne and the Harvilles in *Persuasion* as a confirmation of his feelings for her. In *Captain Wentworth’s Diary*, however, Grange has solely made it the relief of his conscience: “My thanks were the most heartfelt of all. I had not killed her, I who had encouraged her recklessness and taught her not to listen to others. But I had injured her. It was burden enough” (Grange, 193). His low spirits are also interpreted by the others as concern for Louisa, rather than the guilt Grange ascribes to his character. “Anne wondered whether it ever occurred to him, now, to question the justness of his own previous opinion as to the universal felicity and advantage of firmness of character” (Austen, 91). Anne’s calm behaviour seems to cement her superiority in the mind of Wentworth: “Anne, always Anne who, without any fuss, showed the strength of her mind by her ability to know what was best, and to see it brought about in a quiet, calm manner. I had tried to forget her, but it had proved impossible, for she was superior to any other woman I had ever met” (Grange, 194). This shift in feeling has its grounds in Wentworth’s own reflections in *Persuasion* after the proposal: “At Lyme, he had received lessons of more than one sort. The passing admiration of Mr Elliot had at least roused him, and the scenes on the Cobb, and at Captain Harville’s, had fixed her superiority” (Austen, 190).

In Grange’s adaptation the Captain had made up his mind to ask Anne to marry him again by the time he returned to Lyme after bringing Anne and Henrietta to Uppercross. “I have acknowledged at last, what I believe I have known all along, that I am still in love with her. I have never stopped loving her. In eight years I have never seen her equal because she has no equal. As soon as Louisa is out of danger, I must tell Anne how I feel and ask her, once again, to be my wife” (Grange, 197). No sooner has he reflected thus, however, then Harville assumes that Louisa is his fiancée, and opens his eyes to his own behaviour towards her.



I remembered my conduct towards her, recalling the way I had accepted, even encouraged, her attentions. I had thought no harm in it, for both she and her sister had flirted with me, but as soon as Henrietta had made her preference for Charles Hayter plain, I should have taken less notice of Louisa. But instead I had proceeded on the same course of conduct, out of... what? Love? No, for I had never loved her. Out of what then? Pride? Yes, angry pride. *I do not regret you*, I had been saying to Anne. *Your rejection did not hurt me. See, I am happy with another* (Grange, 199).

After this realization, Wentworth avoids seeing Louisa, and before long he decides to go away, first to Plymouth, and then to his brother at Shropshire. He feels bound to Louisa if she will have him but tries to lessen her affection by distance.

## The Changed Hero – Frederick Wentworth, Captain – *None But You/For You Alone*

During the first meeting between Captain Wentworth and the Musgrove girls he notices that Henrietta is more shy than Louisa, but that they are both eager to meet him. They start asking him questions about himself right away. When reflecting on the girls after their meeting, Wentworth “judged the elder to be the prettier of the two. He also speculated that the younger, Louisa, though charming enough upon first meeting, had a spirited look in her eyes that promised a bit of mischief” (Kaye, *None But You*, 118). In Kaye’s adaptation Wentworth has made the same wrong assumption as in Grange’s novel, namely that Anne is the one married to Charles Musgrove. There is also the same parallel to Anne’s brief wrong assumption in *Persuasion* (Austen, 37). In this adaptation he only realizes his mistake when meeting Mary at the first dinner at the Musgroves’. Though he clearly tries to convince himself that he no longer has feelings for Anne there are constant hints given throughout the story, which shows the reader he is not as unaffected as he would like to think. It also enforces the knowledge of the informed reader that he is not as indifferent as he would like to appear. Wentworth’s confusion when he is faced with Mary when he expects to see Anne as Mrs Musgrove mirrors Anne’s own experience when seeing him again for the first time, and it takes him several moments of confused thought to get back into the conversation. In *Persuasion*, as Wiltshire points out, Anne’s character is often placed outside the action, overhearing others talk, which evokes a feeling of separation and emotional distance. This is also the case in her confusion when meeting Wentworth again, as she sees and hears what is happening around her but is

completely unable to take it in due to her nerves (14). Wentworth on the other hand is always on the inside in *Persuasion*, often the one talking when Anne overhears. Kaye changes up this dynamic by making Wentworth the one on the outside in this scene, him being confused and unable to control his emotions. This makes his character seem more human and appealing to the audience, as it is caused by his continued feelings for the heroine. It also strengthens the emphasis on the romance of the story that the Captain is so affected by his feelings for Anne that he is unable to function properly in society, even before meeting her again.

The fact that Wentworth still has some feelings for Anne is again hinted at quite early after his arrival at Kellynch. After dinner the first night he sees a portrait hanging over the fireplace, which he at first glance thinks is Anne, though it turns out it is really of her mother. Wentworth is quite thrown by the picture, and unable to compose himself for quite some time after seeing it (Kaye, *None But You*, 105). The shock he gets from the painting makes him realize he is not so unaffected by Anne as he thought himself to be, though he does not admit to still being in love with her: “As he reflected, it irritated him that all his pretensions of safety were now vanished. It was a fool’s notion that her wounds to his heart were no longer open, and that her marriage to another man freed him of her influence. It would be impossible to remain unconcerned and indifferent while standing in her presence” (Kaye, *None But You*, 107). According to Kramp “Wentworth is indeed susceptible to the potency of amorous emotions, and while he clings to conventional male behaviour early in the novel, Austen soon presents him acting as neither a Burkean man nor a coldly rational individual” (132). Kaye has taken this even further, making her version of Wentworth more controlled by his emotions, and less of a conventional male character of the original novel’s time. In *None But You* he wakes early the next day to go look at the portrait and at this time he starts to realize the hold Anne still has over him (Kaye, 108-109).

Wentworth’s strong feelings of love and friendship are very clearly demonstrated later in the novel, when he goes to see Captain Harville and his family. Seeing that they live in bad conditions, poor and without the means of properly supporting themselves, Wentworth arranges for large amounts of food and money to be delivered to Harville’s wife without his friend’s knowledge. The Captain knows that Harville would not have accepted it had he known, but his need to help his friend is so strong that he is willing to deceive him in order to help him. This act of kindness makes Wentworth an even more appealing character, especially for modern audiences. According to Nixon, this marks a change of Austen’s heroes

made in many modern adaptations to give them all the charms of the twentieth-century father, as well as those of a husband, by “replacing scenes of restraint with scenes of connection” (35). This may be done by giving them a relationship with children, as Kaye does both with Wentworth’s relationship with the Harville children, and his later kindness to an orphan, or by a great show of kindness as when he provides for his friend’s family.

Another change Kaye has made to the character of Wentworth is that he is shown to be rather vain and preoccupied with his own appearance. Before his first dinner at Uppercross the author has dedicated almost three pages to a scene where the Captain gets ready and muses over his dress and looks (Kaye, *None But You*, 119-122), which creates a stark contrast to his portrayal in Austen’s novel. According to Kramp, Wentworth with his dynamic masculinity marks a contrast in *Persuasion* to the pathetic status of other men in the novel. The ancestral English society that has been showed to be faltering throughout Austen’s works has now reached the critical stage of decadence, and the male leaders of this society in *Persuasion* are marked by this decay. Sir Walter is the paragon of this decaying masculinity, and as the narrator explains, “vanity was the beginning and the end of [his] character, vanity of person and situation” (Austen, 4). He is only able to navigate the world through his own egotistical concerns, and his egoism prevents him from appreciating diversity. His ignorance in isolation even threatens the sustainability of the domestic domain that secures his aristocratic standing (Kramp, 126-127). Kaye’s version of Wentworth, though not vain to the same extent, is almost petty when contemplating his own appearance when meeting Anne again, reflecting to himself that “His uniform, his bearing, and his conversation must be of quality in every way... When he was finally in the company of [Anne], she would have the most advantageous view of the future she rejected” (Kaye, *None But You*, 122).

This description of, and dwelling on, clothes also show another change modern adaptations need to make. As Troost & Greenfield points out: “Austen, writing for contemporaries who do not need the word-painting, emphatically spares us details about clothing”. Modern adaptations, however, need to show these aspects, and therefore cannot avoid placing more value on fashion than Austen would (*Jane Austen in Hollywood*, 6). Novels like these adaptations become the literary equivalents to costume dramas, allowing the readers to dream about, and experience a different time. This focus on clothes and physical appearance is another hallmark of what Kaplan calls Harlequinization, something which is present in many modern Austen adaptations, both on screen and page. Harlequinization is among other things

“typified by attention to physical appearances, the result of the subtle and not-so-subtle commodification of persons in this intensely commercial form. Since much of selfhood is loaded into and expressed by appearance, love at first sight is understandable and appropriate. Clothes, too, are of interest, not only as a means of bringing attention to the bodies of the hero and heroine but as objects of desire in their own right” (Kaplan, 178). There is also a trend in modern Austen adaptations in particular to focus on the hero, and “to fetishize the looks of the heroes and to foreground that fetishization by a variety of devices” (Hopkins, *Mr Darcy’s Body*, 119). This has gotten its expression in many of the recent screen adaptations, as the hero has been cast as good looking, though he is not described as such in Austen’s novel. The heroine has also usually been portrayed by comparatively less attractive actresses. In addition, more screen time has been devoted to the hero over what is shown in the novel, hinting at a craving for seeing more of Austen’s heroes than what she originally gave (Hopkins, *Mr Darcy’s Body*, 119-120).

In her novel, Kaye chooses not describe Wentworth’s feelings when meeting Anne again in detail – his reaction actually seems stronger when seeing the portrait of Anne’s mother earlier in the novel than his reaction when meeting Anne again. However, Kaye does describe his shock over her altered looks. In *Persuasion* Mary tells Anne that the Captain described her as “so altered he should not have known you again” (Austen, 46). However, in the adaptation this has been changed to “time makes many changes, and I think it would be foolish to expect none over so many years. I will freely admit she is altered. Where she to go by me on a busy street, I dare say I would not have known her. And I hope I would not be offended when she passed me by as well” (Kaye, *None But You*, 136). While he expresses his opinion of her altered look, it is a more diplomatic response than that which comes back to Anne. This shows how Anne’s impression of the Captain’s feelings and opinions throughout the middle section of *Persuasion* are not to be trusted, as they may so easily be altered by her own preconceptions of his resentment towards her, as well as the change made by others when rumours are passed along.

The flirtation between Wentworth and Louisa is made more explicit in *None But You* than in either Austen’s original or Grange’s novel. Small situations like when Louisa gives him a book and “the tips of her fingers met his. The pleasant tingle made him return her appealing smile with one of his own” (Kaye, *None But You*, 140), arguably lies closer to a modern teen romance rather than a Jane Austen novel. By hinting that Wentworth’s feelings are engaged in

Louisa more than what is indicated in Austen's novel, Kaye creates more of a conflict, while also making the novel more romantic, in keeping with other modern adaptations of Austen's works (Hopkins, *Relocating Shakespeare and Austen on Screen*, 135). This tendency is continued a few pages later when the Captain is standing alone on the terrace after dinner, and Louisa joins him (Kaye, 146). As mentioned, the fact that the two of them are allowed to be alone is something that would not have been tolerated in the society of the day. This scene also illustrates another way in which this novel changes the style to appeal to modern audiences. Kaye's style of prose is, like that of most fan writers, conducive to an immersive reading experience. Unlike Austen, who adds information about contextual cues, setting, and paralinguistic cues of character behaviour to her text, Kaye adds enough information to make explicit her interpretation of the scene. Throughout this scene, as well as the rest of the novel, Wentworth constantly registers the sounds, smells, textures, and sights of his environment, he displays a heightened awareness of Louisa, as well as Anne. Wentworth and Louisa discuss the smell of cigars, Louisa stating that "I like the smell of cigars. It is quite different than the smell of ladies and therefore more interesting... It is quite manly, and I like it" (Kaye, *None But You*, 146). Later the same night Wentworth catches himself in that "he was staring at the piano, and that he had no other desire but to watch Anne" (Kaye, *None But You*, 148). This adds a layer of unresolved sexual tension to the novel, which resembles other modern screen and literary adaptations more than Austen's original novel (Van Steenhuyse, 16).

The process of Harlequinization runs through the whole of Kaye's novel, becoming rather explicit in the area of adding sexualized content (Van Steenhuyse, 15). In order not to take the novel completely out of the historical context and accuracy, while giving the modern audience the sexual tension they apparently expect, she has added a dream sequence where Wentworth is imagining Anne, being with her, kissing her, and longing for more (Kaye, *None But You*, 153). This also makes his longing for Anne seem alive throughout the entirety of the novel, making the story more romantic, as the reader realizes that though he is angry, Wentworth never stopped loving Anne. This is something that is not clearly stated in *Persuasion* – to what extent Wentworth still has feelings for Anne in the beginning of the novel, and whether he is aware of them. By attributing this physical and emotional longing for Anne to Captain Wentworth, Kaye gives the novel a much more romantic tone throughout and offering modern fans more of the relationship at the core of the story, while keeping close to the events of the original novel.

While Wentworth appears to be drawn to Anne throughout the novel, these thoughts and reflections are mixed with his resentment and anger at Anne for her rejection of him. If it was Anne's lack of resolve and propensity to be persuaded is what sundered them eight years before, it is the Captain's muddled, hurt feelings and hurt pride which keep them apart for most of the novel. Wentworth's persuasion of Anne's unforgivable behaviour almost becomes his downfall as it leads him into the flirtation with Louisa without him reflecting on what he does. It also leads him to a number of statements that ultimately lead to the almost fatal accident at Lyme. As Kaye tells the story from the Captain's point of view the reader is allowed to see his thoughts when uttering these opinions. On the walk to Winthrop Wentworth reflects to himself how "the country was filled with men and women who might be fit in body but were weak in temperament and lacked strength of mind when it came to getting and keeping what they wanted" (Kaye, *None But You*, 173-174). He then goes on to tell Louisa "it is the worst evil of a too-yielding and indecisive character that no influence over it can be depended upon. You are never sure of a good opinion being durable. Everybody may sway it; let those who would be happy be firm". After going on like this for a little while he looks at Louisa and "to his shock, saw that she was taking his silly drivel seriously!" He considers teasing her for taking him too seriously, but instead continues in the same vein, uttering the speech Anne overhears in *Persuasion*: "My first wish for all whom I am interested in is that they should be firm. If Louisa Musgrove would be beautiful and happy in her November of life, she will cherish all her present powers of mind" (Kaye, *None But You*, 174). In *Persuasion* Anne's impression is that this speech comes from anger and resentment towards her, and she sees it as another confirmation of his intentions towards Louisa (Austen, 67-68). In *None But You* it does not seem like Wentworth has any particular intentions behind this speech other than expressing his frustrations towards Anne's persuadable character, which he sees as the root of all his problems.

Louisa then tells him of Charles's failed proposal to Anne, and Lady Russel's involvement in it. On the way home Wentworth seeks out Louisa to hear more about this, while Anne in *Persuasion* observes him seeking her out and attributes it to his feelings for Louisa (Austen, 69). Again, the focus is on how the change of perspective and preconceptions about a situation colours the way the characters, and on how the readers see and interpret situations and the motives behind them. This is also true for the instance when Wentworth goes out of his way to secure Anne a ride home with his sister and the Admiral as he can see that she is fatigued. In *Persuasion* Anne attributes this act of kindness to his basic humanity in not being

able to see her suffer without wanting to give relief (Austen, 70). Kaye, however, makes this a scene where the Captain works on instinct, not caring about appearances, only wishing to do anything in his power to help her. On the other hand, the Captain is convinced Anne no longer cares for him, thinking to himself: “Though she no longer thought well of him, at least she would allow him to do her this service” (Kaye, *None But You*, 178). On his later ride to Lyme Wentworth reflects to himself:

There was nothing about marrying Louisa Musgrove that he could see would be a hindrance. Nothing except Anne... Each day that passed, her cool manner made it apparent she had no interest in him... The spectre of Anne Elliot had kept him single and alone for too long... he decided that when he returned the next day and rejoined the Musgroves, he would carefully consider Louisa in light of his future (Kaye, *None But You*, 187-188).

This is in opposition to what Austen writes as Wentworth’s sentiments towards the end of *Persuasion*, where Wentworth after the second proposal tells Anne that “he had not cared, could not care for Louisa” (Austen, 190), but that it had not dawned on him until after Louisa’s fall that this was due to his feelings for Anne.

After observing his friend’s happy marriage, the Captain decides not to pursue Louisa. When returning to Kellynch he muses how “aligning himself with the Musgroves would be a disservice to Louis and to himself. Watching Timothy and Elsa Harville, as anxious as their lives had become, still caring for one another, still reaching out for one another, made him long for a solid, comforting sort of love” (Kaye, *None But You*, 204). This realization comes earlier in Kaye’s adaptation than in *Persuasion*, where Wentworth does not seem to make up his mind before the accident at Lyme. His opinion is further cemented seeing her obstinacy in insisting on the trip to Lyme, and the way she manoeuvred her father into letting them go. When they arrive at the inn at Lyme Louisa also manipulates the Captain into being alone with her, and he starts to realize that her firmness, in which he has encouraged her, has started to morph into nothing more than stubbornness (Kaye, *None But You*, 215). While he has by this time decided not to pursue Louisa, she has started to pursue him more firmly than before. Even though he has no intentions towards her, Kaye still inserts a sexual tension between them by focusing on the senses:

“With her eyes full of nothing but him, her look was entirely appealing. The blush of her cheeks was a prominent and sweet pink that swept clear to her hair. And the hair was falling teasingly from beneath

her bonnet. She reached out the short distance between them and touched the button on his blue coat” (Kaye, *None But You*, 216).

This style of writing appeals to twenty-first century readers who expect a more sexualized tone in all entertainment (Van Steenhuyse, 16). Kaye has again chosen to sacrifice the morality of Austen’s story in exchange for romance, as Louisa’s behaviour would not have been tolerated in a young woman in the early nineteenth century (Hopkins, *Relocating Shakespeare and Austen on Screen*, 154-155). What Anne observes and interprets as their growing attachment, is by Kaye portrayed as Louisa’s increasing confidence and manipulation of Wentworth. Frederick almost becomes a passive figure, observing what Louisa is trying to do but unable or unwilling to do anything about it.

As in *Persuasion* Wentworth’s realization of his lingering feelings for Anne is helped along in Kaye’s novel by his jealousy of other men. The first night at Lyme the Captain is very jealous of Benwick’s conversing with Anne, and the apparent amiable tone between them. This is further intensified when they meet the man who will turn out to be Mr Elliot, who very obviously admires Anne. In her adaptation, Kaye has also added a short scene where Wentworth overhears Anne meeting Mr Elliot briefly in the stairwell of the inn, when the latter stumble and fall into Anne. Wentworth is jealous, thinking “Miss Elliot, it appeared, seemed to be gathering new gentlemen friends right and left” (Kaye, *None But You*, 231), though he does not yet fully realize how this signals a rekindling of his own feelings for Anne.

In the attempt to make the novel more romantic (and therefore more appealing to modern audiences (Hopkins, *Relocating Shakespeare and Austen on Screen*, 151)), Kaye has not only inserted more romance into the relationship between Captain Wentworth and his two apparent love interests, but also into the other relationships in the novel, especially the marriages of Wentworth’s two siblings. The marriage of Mrs and Admiral Croft is also seen as the happiest and functioning one of *Persuasion*, but in Kaye’s adaptation this is further explored. In one scene Sophia reminisces about their short courtship, and how her elder brother had found them alone in the sitting room (Kaye, *None But You*, 181). This is also true for the marriage of Edward, who was seen as a perpetual bachelor, but suddenly decided to marry. In a letter to his brother, Edward writes that: “I will not live my life alone and unloved. I now know love and that I was but a shadow before my dear Catherine’s touch” (Kaye, *None But You*, 184).



When Frederick goes to visit Edward in *For You Alone* the relationship between the brother and his new wife is shown as extremely loving, both physically and emotionally. In the first interaction Frederick observes between them is described thus: “The passion with which Edward kissed his wife shocked Frederick. He was also a bit shocked at her eager response as well” (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 54). In the early nineteenth century in England, women were supposed to pursue marriage as a means to become a mother, not in order to pursue sexual or emotional satisfaction, and some even believed women did not even have any kind of sexual feeling (Hughes, bl.uk).

After the events at Lyme the paths of Wentworth and Anne separate for a while, with the former first staying at Lyme, and then going to visit his brother, while the latter stays with Lady Russel for a while before going on to Bath. This creates a need for what Genette calls a *paraleptic* continuation, designed to bridge paralipses, or lateral ellipses (177). When reading *Persuasion*, we know little of what happens with Wentworth up until the time he arrives in Bath, other than that: “As Louisa improved, he improved”, and that “he had not seen Louisa, [and] seemed to have a plan of going away for a week or ten days, till her head was stronger” (Austen, 102). After meeting again in Bath, and after the proposal, Wentworth gives Anne a little more information about his actions and feelings at Lyme: “[He had] no sooner begun to feel himself alive again, than he began to feel himself, though alive, not at liberty... It determined him to leave Lyme, and await her complete recovery elsewhere” (Austen, 191). Kaye spends close to a hundred pages narrating Wentworth’s story between the accident and arriving in Bath, first his realization in Bath, and then his travel and visit to Edward.

## Conclusion

In this middle part of the story there are more narrative hinge points which the adaptors need to include as the stories overlap with the original to a greater degree than what they did in the backstory. There are, however, still some lateral ellipses where Kaye and Grange can fill in what happens with Wentworth at times when his and Anne’s story do not overlap (Genette, 177). Both authors are also free to explore the thoughts and motivations of Wentworth throughout, as these are not narrated in *Persuasion*, and only occasionally guessed at by Anne. Kaye expands the story to a greater extent than Grange, by filling in a number of

stories and moments that could have happened or are only mentioned but not shown outright in Austen's original, such as his first trip to Lyme.

Both adaptations make the story more romantic by having the hero constantly being in love with the heroine and having him feel more deeply for her throughout, which is not really the impression given by Austen in *Persuasion*. This also a symptom of a change in the hero apparent throughout both novels, giving him the characteristics audiences want in a modern man. In Kaye's story Wentworth is made more romantic and more focused on Anne, but also more preoccupied with looks, gentler and more connected with the people around him than Austen's original hero. Both authors, but especially Kaye, have made the story more sexualized by an added focus on looks and senses, as well as adding dream sequences. However, both have undertaken this modernization while mostly staying close to the events of *Persuasion*.

# Chapter 3: Bath, the second proposal and what happened after

## Introduction

In *Persuasion*, after the events at Lyme and Wentworth's subsequent realization of his own stupidity in his behaviour to Louisa, he decides to go visit his brother in order to get some distance. This is where he receives the information of Louisa's betrothal to Benwick, and he sets out at once to Bath. When Wentworth arrives at Bath it quickly becomes obvious to Anne that he still cares for her. Anne's impressions and thoughts on the situation are, however, coloured by her own feelings, hopes, and fears, and Austen never fully explains Wentworth's actions and motives during the time in Bath in *Persuasion*. There is also a change in Anne's narrative position, as she goes from being a marginal observer to gradually taking up a more central position (Wiltshire, *Mansfield Park, Emma, Persuasion*, 79). However, as Anne becomes the focus of the narrative, Wentworth is more absent up until the point of the proposal.

In this last part of the story the points of view of Anne and the Captain overlap more than previously as they meet more frequently and finally speak more openly. This creates the challenge for the adaptors of needing to create something new that does not exist in the original, while also staying close to the events described. This chapter will explore the ways in which Grange and Kaye have used the large number of hinge points from the original and described the building climax of the story from the Captain's perspective, while also modernizing the characters and expanding the romance. In addition, I will look at how both adaptations take the story a little further after the end of the story from *Persuasion*, choosing in different ways and to different degrees to show what happens after the final proposal.

## The Final Resolution in *Persuasion*

The events that happen after Anne goes to Bath occupy close to half of Austen's novel. Anne has little news from the Musgroves and Lyme for the first month after her arrival, but finally receives a letter from Mary informing her of the engagement of Louisa and Captain Benwick.

Anne is overwhelmed with emotion at the news, thinking: “it was almost too wonderful for belief; and it was with the greatest effort that she could remain in the room, preserve an air of calmness, and answer the common questions of the moment” (Austen, 127). This scene very clearly parallels the scene in the beginning of the novel when she is given the news of Wentworth’s sister moving in to Kellynch, and the possibility of Wentworth coming to visit (Austen, 19). Though her reaction is similar, however, her feelings on the two occasions are drastically different, as is her narrative position. Where her feelings are only hinted at through “flushed cheeks” and a “gentle sigh” early in the novel (Austen, 19), on the latter occasion her thoughts and reflections are explored in detail. Throughout the second half of the novel, increased self-esteem and cheerful feelings heighten Anne’s receptive capacities, as she suddenly becomes attuned to the people around her, picking up details she would certainly have missed before. From being the person to overhear herself being spoken of, in the climax of the novel, the roles are reversed when Wentworth is the one who overhears the conversation between Anne and Harville just before the second proposal (Wiltshire, *The Hidden Jane Austen*, 154-155).

Anne soon sees Wentworth again, as he arrives in Bath within days. When she sees him, she experiences the same confusion as earlier: “for a few minutes she saw nothing before her. It was all confusion. She was lost” (Austen, 136). However, at this instance, Wentworth’s confusion is even more evident than Anne’s, as she observes that he was “more obviously struck and confused by the sight of her than she had ever observed before; he looked quite red. For the first time, since their renewed acquaintance, she felt that she was betraying the least sensibility of the two” (Austen, 136). According to Roger Gard, Anne has throughout the novel been always accustomed to being near incapacitated by apprehension and embarrassment in Wentworth’s company. On this meeting in Bath, however, she is able to notice that he too is overcome with confusion – so different from his previous self-confidence. She can be seen as the ‘winner’ in their first encounter at Molland’s (Gard, 72). Austen highlights the effects of Wentworth’s sustained affection for Anne following his arrival in Bath. During their first meetings his manner is described as confused and not comfortable (Austen, 136). He is again discomposed by the appearance of Anne, breaking with the new nineteenth century ideal of male reserve in the face of his love for Anne (Frantz, 173). Anne’s feelings on this second meeting are striking when compared to those of the first one. When she meets Wentworth at the beginning of the novel her feelings are not explored, only being described as confusion and “nervous gratitude” (Austen, 46). Her feelings during

this second meeting, however, are given in much descriptive detail: “It was agitation, pain, pleasure, a something between delight and misery” (Austen, 136). Anne has changed as a heroine, and she has taken up a more central place in her own story.

The change in Anne is further shown at the concert when she addresses Wentworth first, despite the disapproval of her father and sister, but the biggest change seems to be with the Captain, as he speaks openly to Anne of how “a man does not recover from such a devotion of the heart to such a woman! – He ought not – he does not” (Austen, 143). This speech, combined with the other events of the concert they attend makes Anne close to confident in Wentworth’s love. He, on the other hand, must negotiate one final obstacle before he can enunciate his feelings for the heroine. Mr Elliot’s inconsistent courtship of Anne causes Wentworth notable anxiety during the latter portion of the novel. Kramp points out how

“Wentworth’s recent expressions of sincere emotions have left him vulnerable to destabilizing experiences, including envy, which threatens his tenuous aesthetic of existence. He has exposed himself to a diversity of powerful feelings, and the events at the concert in Bath compel the hero to revert to established models of masculine propriety to save face” (136).

Interestingly, it is the actions Wentworth is driven to by his jealousy that convince Anne of his feelings for her. Towards the end of the concert Wentworth leaves in a hurry, prompting Anne to think: “Jealousy of Mr Elliot! It was the only intelligible motive. Captain Wentworth was jealous of her affection!” (Austen, 149). This realization is soon followed by frustration: “How was such jealousy to be quieted? How was the truth to reach him? How, in all the peculiar disadvantages of their respective situations, would he ever learn her real sentiments?” (Austen, 149). In the course of the concert scene, Gard states that “the suspense of who feels what for whom is now resolved. It is replaced by the less weighty but equally urgent question of how these feelings are to come out. The reader can feel nothing but pleasure in Anne’s new anxieties” (Gard, 73). Anne’s new certainty of Wentworth’s feelings means that this new hurdle of expressing her own feelings feels less depressing and more hopeful compared with the hopelessness of Anne’s situation throughout the early parts of the novel.

Things finally begin to come together after the Musgroves arrive in Bath, at the inn where they are staying. The focus of the narrative zooms in on Anne and her feelings in the same way the whole world of the story narrows to this small room at the White Hart. Wiltshire observes how:

Anne's key interpretive role in the narrative is in stark contrast to what is at first her peripheral place in her social circle. The novel is shaped by the way this marginal observer gradually comes to take up a more central position, till in the climactic scene she is the focus of attention in the room. This is paralleled by the way Anne's inner life gradually comes to correspond to, make contact with, and be declared through, the outer life that surrounds her. These processes can be traced in her developing articulacy, for Anne is at first a silent observer" (Wiltshire, *Mansfield Park, Emma, Persuasion*, 79).

Despite the restrictions, Anne manages to leave hints to Wentworth of her true feelings, saying how she would rather go to a play with the Musgroves than stay at a party at home (Austen, 176). This is enough encouragement to make Wentworth seek her out and start a conversation. Their interaction is cut short, however, and they do not meet again until the next day. Interestingly, the conversation which conveys Anne's feelings to Wentworth, and which makes him express his own, is not between the two main characters themselves, but between Harville and Anne, overheard by Wentworth. The hero has up to this point either been unaware of, or unable to express, his true feelings for Anne (Frantz, 169). This all changes with this one overheard conversation, as Wentworth can finally put aside his fear and resentment and confess his feelings. Wentworth's letter to Anne is somewhat stunning in its effect as it is written while listening in on the preceding conversation, and therefore functions as a dramatic commentary upon it. The letter also recalls Austen's lifelong interest in the epistolary novel (73-74). While the heroes of Austen's novel often struggle to express their feelings, by the end they realize that they need a wife, a woman who can teach him what it is to be a true man. What makes this so extraordinary for the time, however, is the fact that the hero himself argues this point, he sees how his love for the heroine has changed him for the better and freely admits this to her, and this confession becomes the emotional climax of the novel (Frantz, 173). In the letter he writes Wentworth also touches upon his earlier feelings of bitterness towards Anne, and how he maintained his strong passions by dismissing her behaviour as irrational and unworthy, effectively protecting himself from his own emotions. He also realizes the happiness he has achieved has not come from his own hard work, like he is used to at sea, and that he must "learn to brook being happier than I deserve" (Austen, 194).

At the end of the novel Austen does not place Anne and Wentworth in a secure, permanent domestic setting, but leaves their future open and uncertain (Kramp, 139) – "The dread of a future war [was] all that could dim her sunshine" (Austen, 199). According to Adele Kudish, through *Persuasion*, each moment of happiness is undercut by a stipulation or contingency, a

twinge of pain, and a “sideways glance at the world at large”. The danger and anxiety which throughout the novel emanated from the past, are by the end of the novel projected onto the future (122). Wentworth is a soldier, and the possibility of another war is looming over the happy ending. The central couple is to live in a world where little else has improved – the union itself is still threatened by the uncertainty which led to its delay in the first place. It might be the knowledge acquired by later readers, of an era of peace following 1815, which leads to the idea that this novel has a perfectly unclouded happy ending (Gard, 88). Anne herself describes the differences in their social circles and the coldness of her family, problems which will likely not evaporate with their marriage. There are still problems to be faced, and Austen gives the reader no promise that the hero and heroine will “live happily ever after”.

## The Settled Ending of *Captain Wentworth's Diary*

As this adaptation is told from Wentworth's point of view, Grange describes his visit to his brother, as well as his feelings when realizing that Louisa and Benwick are to be married, and that he himself is free from any obligation to her. In this adaptation Wentworth receives hints of the growing attachment between Benwick and Louisa through several letters from Harville. On one occasion the Captain tells his brother that “[Harville] mentioned that Louisa and Benwick seem much taken with each other, and they spend all day reading poetry together” (Grange, 218). This gradual realization is in opposition to what the original describes as Wentworth being “at once released from Louisa by the astonishing and felicitous intelligence of her engagement with Benwick”, when hearing of it (Austen, 191). In *Captain Wentworth's Diary* the hero sets out for Bath as soon as he hears the news of the engagement. Before leaving his brother's house he expresses his feelings very openly to his brother, not holding back his intentions. This is another instance of the modern adaptations showing the hero's feelings more openly and exuberantly than anything they do in Austen's original, or than what would be acceptable in the society of the time (Kaplan, 180).

During their first meeting in Bath, Wentworth's feelings are described much as how Anne interprets them in *Persuasion*: “I could do nothing but stand and stare at her, as a range of emotions flooded over me: surprise on seeing her, relief that I had found her, pleasure on seeing her and chagrin that she was not alone” (Grange, 224). His thoughts and feelings on

the occasion are given in a tumble, showing his uncertainty and the confusion of feelings he struggles with, while also echoing Anne's confusion on their first meeting back in Somerset. As mentioned, Anne's narrative position changes from the periphery to an articulated central position (Wiltshire, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Persuasion*, 79). In Grange's adaptation the opposite seems to happen to Wentworth as his growing feelings make him less articulate even when thinking and renders him unable to speak to Anne: "I was not comfortable, I was not easy, I could not assume that manner which we had had before" (Grange, 225). It seems their narrative positions have been switched around, with Anne and Wentworth mirroring each other in the beginning and the end of the story.

This uncertainty is further exacerbated by his jealousy of Mr. Elliot, which starts at their first meeting, and continues at the concert a few days later. The events are described much the same in Grange's adaptation as in Austen's novel. At this point in the original Anne's new perception allows her to understand Wentworth in a way she did not before (Wiltshire, *The Hidden Jane Austen*, 154). Due to this fact Grange no longer has to guess at Wentworth's feelings, as they are mostly described as the same attributed to him by Anne in *Persuasion*, and later confirmed by Wentworth after the second proposal. During the concert he constantly oscillates between hope and despondency as he cannot discern Anne's feelings towards either himself or Mr. Elliot. He talks quite openly to her of a man not recovering from a true attachment to a superior woman when they first meet in the Octagon Room, and feels encouraged by her talking to him, but he does not feel sufficiently secure in Anne's feelings to talk more openly due to his jealousy of Mr. Elliot. His uncertainty continues throughout the concert as Anne sits next to Mr. Elliot, talking to him. Wentworth contemplates going to sit by her during a break, but is tormented by uncertainty: "I hesitated, tormented by doubt once more. Should I go to her, and discover once and forever that she regarded me as nothing more than an acquaintance from the past? Or to do nothing, and perhaps miss my opportunity with her?" (Grange, 241). The jealousy and doubt win out in the end, and he chooses to leave the concert abruptly. According to Kramp, the fact that he has opened up to his feelings for Anne again has made him vulnerable to "a diversity of powerful feelings, and the events at the concert in Bath compel the hero to revert to established models of masculine propriety to save face" (136).

In these closing chapters the adapted text is especially haunted, in Hutcheon's terminology, by the adapted work as the events most likely will be extremely familiar to the fan reader (6).



The final part of the story is already very romantic in Austen's original story, so there is little need to make it more so in order to appeal to modern readers. According to Jones, Austen moved towards romanticism in her later novels, and "the end of *Persuasion* satisfies both the romantic and the rational elements which Anne represents; it is a novel of reconciliation, sometimes near to loss and disaster" (Jordan, in Austen, VIII). The scene at the White Hart is described in Grange's novel much as in *Persuasion* with few additions other than Wentworth's thoughts on hearing Anne's conversation with Harville. As Grange's adaptation generally has chosen to stay very close to the events of the original novel, this pivotal scene cannot diverge too much from the original if she wants to please fans of *Persuasion*. With contemporary readers wanting both romance and fidelity the scene at the White Hart and the proposal which follows must be rendered as faithfully as possible, and Grange has done this, only adding Wentworth's confused thoughts as he goes from hope to despondency and back several times. In the adaptation, as in the original, Wentworth writes the letter outlining his feelings on a moment's impulse, reacting to what he overhears in the conversation between Anne and Harville, not really thinking, but overcome by his emotions. According to Kudish, *Persuasion* is a novel of "in-betweenness", especially between reason and romance (120). Anne accepts Wentworth's first proposal out of romance, but reason takes over and she ends their engagement. Later, Wentworth almost persuades himself out of declaring himself again, thinking Anne will act out of reason as she did before, and marry Mr. Elliot. However, in the end romance wins out in Wentworth, and he openly declares his love.

In *Persuasion* Anne and the Captain spend most of their time together after Anne accepts his proposal, and during this time Wentworth expresses his thoughts and emotions quite freely. Therefore, there are less of what Van Steenhuyse calls "negative capabilities", fewer holes for the adaptor to fill in (4). Grange's adaptation relies on these holes, as it is built on filling the gaps left in Wentworth's thoughts and motivations throughout *Persuasion*. However, from about the time when he arrives in Bath, and especially after the second proposal, Wentworth's thoughts and motivations are generally clear to Anne, and they have open conversations, so there are less for Grange to imagine if she aims for proximity to the original. However, the conversation following the second proposal is not given in detail in *Persuasion*, and so Grange is free to insert dialogue. Where the conversation only spans less than three pages in *Persuasion*, in *Captain Wentworth's Diary* it stretches to almost twelve. This allows Grange to give the audience more of Wentworth, detailing his feelings and fleshing out the hero even more than Austen does (Nixon, 23). Even after the proposal the romance is expanded upon,

describing the sexual tension of their stolen intimacy at the party following their conversation. “Every now and again I managed to snatch a few moments with Anne. Her shawl slipped, and I helped her with it. A fly settled in her hair, and I wafted it away, feeling the soft strands of her hair brushing my fingers” (Grange, 271). This extends the romance even after the apparent resolution of the central conflict, with focusing on touch and the desire of the hero and heroine for each other (Kaplan, 178), as will be discussed in greater detail below.

At one point Captain Wentworth tells Anne of his considering to buy Kellynch so that it would stay in the family. This actually happens in the 2007 movie adaptation of *Persuasion*, suggesting that this idea might be present in other fan writings or interpretations of the novel (Van Steenhuyse, 4). Anne, however, does not want to move back to Kellynch, as she has her “heart set on an estate by the sea” (Grange, 283). Wentworth mentions this as something they dreamed of back when they first got engaged, which further expands the romantic feelings of the novel, as it seems all of their dreams of eight years before are finally coming true.

In the last pages of her novel, Grange has chosen to focus on, and stretch out, all the different instances where Anne and Wentworth announce their engagement to family and friends on both sides. Most of these are briefly mentioned in *Persuasion*, but Grange adds some not mentioned in *Persuasion* like the instance of Anne and Frederick going to visit Edward. The different reactions to their engagement emphasises the differences in their friends and family, which Anne frets over at the end of *Persuasion*: “[she] had no other alloy to the happiness of her prospects than what arose from the consciousness of having no relations to bestow which a man of sense could value”. In addition, adding these scenes of connection between Wentworth and the different people in their circle goes towards what Nixon calls “adding scenes of connection” to make the hero even more appealing (Nixon, 35). Among others, Grange includes Wentworth’s meeting with Mrs. Smith, showing them getting along very well as well as his offering to help her regain her properties in the West Indies. Scenes like these expands on Wentworth’s character, making him appear likeable and compassionate.

Grange gives little information past the end point of *Persuasion*. She does, however, give them the settled ending of buying the estate they wanted by the sea, and getting married exactly nine years after they first met. In this adaptation the two main characters are given a settled ending, secure and happy, and with a hopeful view of the future. The concluding sentence of the novel is Wentworth thinking “I handed her into the carriage and we set out for

the future” (Grange 293). This is in opposition to *Persuasion* where, as mentioned, Austen creates a feeling of uncertainty for the future (Kramp, 139). Grange might have filtered the ending through the knowledge of a period of peace for England following 1814 and given the main couple the happy ending modern readers crave (Gard, 88).

## Heightening the Romance – the Second Proposal and what happened After in *Frederick Wentworth, Captain – For You Alone*

As previously mentioned Kaye spends a long time describing Wentworth’s visit to his brother and his new wife, an instance only briefly mentioned in *Persuasion*. In the adaptation the Captain meets a young orphan on his way to his brother’s whom he takes under his protection. This added interaction is another instance of what Nixon calls “scenes of connection”, making him more appealing to modern readers as he seems likely to become a good husband and father (Nixon, 35). This is especially true for showing affection toward children, heightening the hero’s desirability (Troost & Greenfield, *Jane Austen in Hollywood*, 7). Kaye has also added several other connections with old naval friends whom the Captain meets in Bath, making him even more relatable and appealing. Though Kaye’s adaptation also follows the events of Austen’s original closely, she has seen more gaps in the story, and chosen to fill it out even more, adding several characters and fleshing them out, making the novel considerably longer than both *Persuasion* and *Captain Wentworth’s Diary*.

In Kaye’s novel the Captain has stayed with his brother for a time following the events in Lyme. It is during this stay that he receives the letter from Harville announcing the surprising engagement of Captain Benwick and Louisa Musgrove. Wentworth goes straight to Bath upon hearing these news, though like every situation in Kaye’s adaptation it is made longer and more detailed than Grange’s, describing his reaction to the news and his departure from his brother’s house, as well as his arrival in Bath, before his meeting Anne again. This will appeal to fans of the original who wants more of the canon, adding as much detail as possible in order to prolong the experience they love (Van Steenhuyse, 5). When the first meeting of Anne and Wentworth in Bath finally takes place, Wentworth’s thoughts on the occasion, while confused, seems less so than in either *Persuasion* or Grange’s adaptation. In Kaye’s book the Captain was actively looking for Anne around Bath, and therefore their meeting is

not as much of a surprise as it seems in the original. His jealousy of Mr. Elliot is the same though, starting after this first meeting.

In her adaptation Kaye hints throughout that Wentworth's sister, Mrs. Croft, suspects the attachment between Anne and himself quite early, and especially after his arrival at Bath. The two of them frequently talk of her, the Captain being eager for any information. During one of these conversations, when Wentworth mentions meeting Anne, Sophia asks "did you and Anne have a good chat?", and Wentworth thinks how "it amused him that his sister was, no doubt, rubbing her hands together, entertaining visions of him and Anne tucked away in a quiet corner" (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 103). This shows Mrs. Croft's growing interest in Anne and her brother as a potential couple. Mrs. Croft's involvement in the main couple's relationship, while not apparent in *Persuasion*, still has a foundation in Austen's own writing. In an early draft of her original novel Austen intended the proposal and final resolution of their affairs to be the result of a scheme put in place by Mr. and Mrs. Croft (Wray, [jasna.org](http://jasna.org)). In a deleted chapter included in the Wordsworth edition of *Persuasion*, Admiral Croft invites Anne into their house as she happens to pass their door. He then arranges for the Captain to be alone in a room with Anne in order to ask whether the Crofts should move out of Kellynch, if Anne intends to marry Mr. Elliot and move back into their rightful home. In Anne's complete denial of all these rumours Wentworth finds his courage to declare himself to her. This chapter was later exchanged for chapters 21 and 22, and the events at the White Hart, but the deleted chapter shows that Austen intended for the Croft's to play a role in their courtship, and for Mrs. Croft's perception to have penetrated the situation between her brother and Anne to a greater extent than what is shown in the final version of *Persuasion*.

As mentioned, one symptom of the modernization of Austen's heroes is how the emotions displayed are considerably heightened. According to Troost and Greenfield, Austen's men are modernized out of their repression, into displaying feeling. While Austen generally celebrates male restraint, modern adapters seem to think that modern audiences cannot tolerate this in their hero, and make them express themselves more openly (Troost & Greenfield, *Jane Austen in Hollywood*, 7). One of the ways this is done in Kaye's adaptation is to have Wentworth brood and speculate endlessly on his meetings with Anne, and plan how he could contrive to see her again. He seeks out all the gossip he can find about Anne and her family, emphasising his preoccupation with Anne in all he says and does. Kaye has also added a lengthy scene, more than a page in length, of Wentworth imagining a conversation between

Anne and Mr. Elliot in which the latter professes his love for Anne, which she gratefully accepts. This continues as Wentworth has a nightmare of himself being forced to attend Anne and Mr. Elliot's wedding (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 128-130). These scenes show both Wentworth's preoccupation with, and lingering love for, Anne while also showing the depth of his jealousy of Mr. Elliot. Throughout the adaptation a number of the men discuss feelings openly and at length, seen in several conversations between both Wentworth and his brother, and between the Captain and many of his naval friends. This shows the difference between the emotional restraint seen as the masculine ideal of Austen's time, and the modern ideal of emotional display – the concept of masculinity has changed, and this is reflected in the portrayal of the hero throughout the adaptation (Nixon, 27). It might also be a projection of the wishes modern female readers onto the heroes of Austen's time, wanting to have men think and obsess over them in ways modern men do not seem to – the wishful thinking of women disappointed with contemporary masculinity (Ridout, 139).

The focus on physical appearance and clothing is also apparent in the later part of Kaye's adaptation, creating a focus on the body which is a symptom of the aforementioned Harlequinization of Austen's stories (Kaplan, 178). When Wentworth is going to the concert his sister and his valet takes a great interest in his dress, which is described in detail, and he muses to himself as he arrives at the concert that "he was pleased to find there was plenty of respect for the heavy gold lace of his rank". When he first sees Anne on this occasion he describes her dress and her hair, drawing focus to and showing awareness of her body, and continuing to create the layer of unresolved sexual tension common to modern adaptations, which is present throughout (Van Steenhuyse, 16). The uniforms of the naval men are often mentioned, as when they are exiting the concert, and "the colour and rank of the men's gleaming uniforms worked their magic" (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 124). This constant focus on Wentworth's rank, status, and good looks creates a heightened desirability to modern readers.

Kaye has added another, secondary romance plot in having one of Wentworth's naval friends, an Admiral McGillvary, being hopelessly taken with Anne's sister Elizabeth. The Admiral talks of his admiration of the lady the Wentworth quite openly throughout their time in Bath, and he tries on several occasions to make her acquaintance without luck. Though any reader of *Persuasion* knows this will never amount to anything if the adaptation stays close to the events of the original, it does add an extra layer of intrigue to the familiar story, which is important in order to keep the interest of readers. In adding these secondary characters and

situations Kaye takes advantage of what Van Steenhuyse calls the “holes” of the original, adding incidents, conversations or interactions that take place within the timescale of the canon and is compatible with canon, that might have happened and in some cases must have happened, but which are not seen on the page or the screen (5). Kaye manages to simultaneously keep the proximity to the events of the original, while also adding a number of scenes which could have taken place out of sight of the narrator of *Persuasion*. This secondary romance also reflects the main couple, showing the way in which society expects a relationship between a naval officer and a baronet’s daughter to go, with him seeking out her without success, in contrast to Anne and Wentworth’s ultimately successful courtship.

Another of these instances gives earlier hints at the true character of Mr. Elliot, which is revealed in Austen’s novel only after he elopes with Mrs. Clay. In the adaptation the first hint of this is given when Wentworth, in a stroll through Bath with a friend, observes Mr. Elliot and Mrs. Clay at a carriage in Westgate Street, Mr. Elliot entering the building and staying for an hour (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 109). Any reader familiar with the original story will remember this as the residence of Anne’s friend Mrs. Smith, and the unfortunate relationship between this lady and Mr. Elliot, the latter being responsible for the poverty of the former. This connection makes it strange that he should go visit her and creates a curiosity as to what his motives might be. During the concert clearer hints of Mr. Elliot’s true character are given, as Wentworth overhears a conversation between this gentleman and his friend Colonel Wallis. In the original Anne spends considerable time during the concert translating Italian songs for her cousin at his request, an intimacy which makes Wentworth jealous. In the course of the overheard conversation in Kaye’s novel, Mr. Elliot reveals to his friend that he understands Italian perfectly well, but that he was trying to make her translate some inappropriate lyrics and use it to create greater intimacy (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 120). These additions add more tension and drama to the familiar story and again show how fan fiction is shaped by the authors using both the original story and their own imagination (Van Steenhuyse, 5). Kaye never strays too far from the events of *Persuasion* but imagines scenes which might have taken place outside the view of the narrator of the original story. She also reinforces the view of Mr. Elliot as the villain of the story, not creating him as such, but showing the reader his true colours much earlier in the narrative than what Austen herself does. However, as any reader of the adaptation is presumably familiar with the original this does not spoil the tension of the story, but rather creates an interplay between the original and the adaptation which heightens the reading experience. When reading an adaptation as an adaptation recognition

and remembrance are part of both the pleasure and risk of the experience, as is recognizing changes made (Hutcheon, 4).

In this adaptation as in Grange's story, the events after the concert bring Anne and Wentworth's points of view together for a while, creating less negative capabilities for Kaye to fill in (Van Steenhuyse, 4). Though Wentworth is plagued by jealousy of Mr. Elliot in this adaptation, like in Grange's, he also seems more hopeful and secure in his own chances. He seems close to declaring his feelings for Anne on several occasions and is only deterred by circumstance from doing it earlier. This confidence seems to be missing in both *Persuasion* and *Captain Wentworth's Diary*, as he seems more racked by doubt about his own behaviour and jealousy of Mr. Elliot, only having his declaration drawn out of him by the hints Anne let slip in her conversation with Harville. In Kaye's adaptation he actually decides to write to her before the start of the overheard conversation (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 153). This change in his character makes the hero appear more confident, and therefore more appealing, but may also make him appear cocky, and remove some of the tension of the story's climax. This early resolution of the heroes' feelings and struggle to balance these against social restraint removes some of the suspense of a relationship hindered by inner or outer impediments. The learning process of the hero disappears when he can express his emotions too early (Nixon, 25). In Austen's novel Wentworth's confession of his feelings is the emotional climax of the story, the realization that his love for Anne has changed him for the better has built up over time, and his confession of this is drawn out of him as he cannot contain his feelings anymore (Frantz, 173). In Kaye's adaptation, when Wentworth realizes his feelings and expresses them to the reader if not to Anne herself, this climax loses some of its emotional weight.

Also, like Grange, Kaye has been free to fill in the conversation following Anne's receiving the letter, as it is not rendered in detail in *Persuasion*. In *None But You* Anne stalls a little after they are left alone together, keeping Wentworth in suspense to torture him playfully. Anne does not only tease the Captain by briefly withholding her feelings: when expressing these feelings, she seems calm and articulate in a way not really compatible with the Anne Elliot of Austen's novel. She rather resembles the version of Anne that Kaye presents in the flashbacks of the time before their first engagement, making her appear as more of the modern heroine which twenty-first century readers can respect (Richards, 120). This changing of Austen's heroines is part of a general tendency in adaptations of *Persuasion*, as the filmmakers behind the 1995 movie adaptation have been criticized for trying to "make

Austen's antiquated Cinderella into the strong, assertive, and independent woman who becomes the mistress of her own fate, but it ill suits the quiet, contained heroine of Austen's text" (Wallace, 132). The same thing happens in this scene, where Anne's character seems rather abruptly changed. This is different from Anne's changed character shown in the flashbacks of eight years before, as her character is described as having changed so much in the intervening years that Captain Wentworth describes her early in *Persuasion* as being "so altered he should not have known her again" (Austen, 46). Here, however, the change has no apparent cause.

Throughout her adaptation Kaye sometimes changes the narrative style, first by telling the backstory of Anne and Wentworth in flashbacks throughout, and later by including the aforementioned dreams and imagined situations on the part of the Captain. This has the effect of changing the story and keeping it interesting to readers who are familiar with the original, while also remaining close to the original as she includes all of the narrative 'hinge points' of Austen's story (Griggs, 89). Another instance of such a deviation from the chronological order of the story, is included after the conversation between Anne and Wentworth in which they declare their feelings (Fludernik, 34). For the span of one page the point of view briefly changes to Anne, as she comes up to her room after the party that evening. There is a conversation between Anne and her maid in which the latter observes how something has changed in her mistress (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 165). It is made clear that some time is missing here, and on the next page there is an analepsis to earlier the same evening, narrating the story of the party, still from Anne's perspective. After descriptions of the evening, the story jumps back to the conversation in Anne's room. When the maid leaves Anne continues to think of Wentworth, re-reading his letter and musing on their happiness. This again is a symptom of Harlequinization, with the hero and heroine's desire for each other getting a lot of focus throughout (Kaplan, 178). It also emphasises the change in Anne's character, seeing her happier and more hopeful than anything shown in *Persuasion*, showing the reader how their love has changed not only the hero but the heroine as well. Kaye suggests that the union between Anne and Wentworth is a true and equal one, by showing true and open feelings from both of them. Including this gives the fans more of the main couple, allowing them to see the happiness of the hero and heroine from both perspectives and focusing more on the romance. From this point on, in the adaptation, the point of view keeps changing between Anne and Wentworth. This is made possible by the fact that the events following the second



proposal is only briefly narrated in *Persuasion*, leaving ‘holes’ in Anne’s story as well as Wentworth’s, which Kaye has chosen to fill in (Van Steenhuyse, 5).

The second meeting between Wentworth and Sir Walter is very different from the first. Initially Sir Walter seems to be under the impression that the Captain wants to ask for Elizabeth’s hand in marriage. He does not state this outright, however, and there is a tension built up through the conversation, only hinting that there is a misunderstanding between them. Again, this creates suspense in the adaptation, making it more interesting for readers who are very familiar with the original. This extension and embellishment of scenes barely mentioned in the original is continued in the meeting where Anne and Wentworth tell Lady Russell of their engagement. The meeting itself is not described in *Persuasion*, where Austen only writes how the Lady had to change her mind about both Captain Wentworth and Mr. Elliot, and that though this was initially difficult for her, she soon learned to love the Captain (Austen, 195-196). Kaye has again written this out as a long scene in which Anne and Wentworth go to see Lady Russell. Mr. Elliot is also present, and before they make the announcement Anne and the Captain spend some time teasing this gentleman, hinting at their knowledge of his true character, as well as at their attachment to each other. First, Anne offers to serve tea, and makes a show of knowing exactly how Wentworth takes his, while having to ask how Mr. Elliot prefers his. She then goes on to mentioning how she was “visiting my dear friend Mrs, Smith”, which unsettles Mr. Elliot greatly as this lady knows much about him he would rather not have Anne know (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 190). This scene functions both to create more interest, for readers familiar with the original, and as a show of Anne as more of an outspoken, modern heroine which readers expect (Richards, 120).

Kaye has chosen to continue her story in detail a bit beyond what both Austen and Grange do, and she has chosen to take it in a slightly different direction. Like Grange, Kaye includes all the meetings with friends and family announcing the engagement. In addition, she adds scenes of the wedding planning, having the dress made, agreeing on the time for and size of the wedding and looking for a house to rent for after it takes place. This gives the reader time to see the hero and heroine as a couple, observing their dynamic, as we get to see their continued affection for each other. The continuation also allows for more focus on the physical side of their romance, as they spend more time alone together. Kaye has added several scenes of them being intimate, as they at one point sit on a sofa in front of the fire, Wentworth telling Anne how he wants them “to be married as soon as it can be arranged”,

while “Anne rested against his chest, listening to his heartbeat” (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 195). Inserting such scenes makes the adaptation more modern and romantic, and therefore more appealing to its intended audience (Troost & Greenfield, *Strange Mutations*, 433).

All is not well in this ending, however, as before their marriage Wentworth is ordered to report for duty again before the set date of their wedding (Kaye, *For You Alone*, 214). This inclusion of the wider world is another nod to the modern criticism of Austen not focusing enough on the world at large. As a result, many modern adaptations, such as the 1999 film version of *Mansfield Park*, has added a wider view of the world such as Kaye does here (Wallace, 136, Monaghan, 86). As a result of this summons Anne and Wentworth decide to elope and go to Gretna Green to be married, in case Wentworth should be sent abroad again. This is possible the biggest divergence from Austen’s original in Kaye’s adaptation. The only possible basis for this move from the original is the beginning of Austen’s last chapter:

When any two young people take it in their heads to marry, they are pretty sure by perseverance to carry their point, be they ever so poor, or ever so imprudent, or ever so little likely to be necessary to each other’s ultimate comfort. If such parties succeed, how should a Captain Wentworth and an Anne Elliot, with the advantage of maturity of mind, consciousness of right, and one independent fortune between them, fail of bearing down every opposition? (Austen, 194-195)

This elopement breaks not only the fidelity to the original, but also with the spirit of Austen’s works. If elopements take place in her other novels, it is a rash and immature act, and never truly ends well, as in the case of Lydia Bennet and Mr. Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice*, or Henry Crawford and Maria Bertram in *Mansfield Park* – the latter having worse consequences for the involved parties, but neither having a positive outcome. The decision to elope does, however, show a general trend of modern society which has appeared in many modern Austen adaptations, namely that the will of the individual is the most important consideration in any decision. Where Austen’s novels end with “a careful discrimination among relationships and a weighing of personal inclinations against moral and social obligations” (Van Steenhuyse, 15), Kaye’s adaptation suggests that personal gratification should take precedent over social obligation.

The story continues with their wedding and subsequent wedding night at a small inn. The last few pages of the adaptation describes the beginning of something closely resembling a modern-day sex scene. This is again a symptom of Harlequinization, the novel becoming a

modern romance where nudity is welcome, and love scenes should “be described sensuously and in detail” (Kaplan, 177). While Kaye’s ending breaks with Austen in many ways, it also resembles the original more than Grange in that she does not give them a settled, secure life, but creates an uncertainty for their future. The adaptation also ends in the middle of the sex scene, reinforcing the unsettled feeling of the reader. Even though Kaye expands the ending past what Austen does in *Persuasion*, she does not promise that they will live “happily ever after”, but as the main couple gets married and have each other they can overcome any future difficulties.

## Conclusion

In this final part there are fewer negative capabilities for the authors to fill in as Anne and Wentworth meet more frequently and speak more openly than earlier in the novel.

In addition, there is not much need for making the story more romantic as the original is very romantic towards the end. Still, while the adaptations do not really heighten the romance, they do expand on it by fleshing out the conversations and feelings represented. In addition, they include scenes of connection, showing the reactions of friends and family to the engagement. Even here, changes are made to Wentworth’s character, especially in Kaye’s adaptation, making him more focused on Anne and more willing to show these feelings openly, reflecting the modern rather than the nineteenth century ideal of masculinity. Kaye also changes Anne’s character, making her more like the version shown in the flashbacks recounting the events and characters of eight years before.

In what happens after the end of *Persuasion* the two authors have almost no hinge points they need to include, being free to include their own imaginings. This has led to them going in two very different directions: Grange adds little after Austen’s original ending, but she does give the main couple an apparently settled and secure future by having them buy an estate. Kaye, on the other hand, adds more detail, but takes the story in a different direction, both straying further from Austen’s original by adding the elopement, while staying close to *Persuasion* in not giving them a settled and secure ending.

# Conclusion

Fan fiction is an old story told in a new way and from a different point of view. It needs to stay close to the original while also including scenes and details not present in it, in order to make a new product worth reading. Fan fiction in general, especially if written after the emergence of the Internet, are usually written with a knowledgeable reader in mind and the reader needs to know the original story well in order to fully appreciate the adaptations. The Internet makes this connection between the fans and the fan fiction writers more immediate as they can give direct feedback and critique while reading. The Internet also creates a community in which stories can be shared and anyone can get inspiration to create their own work. No adaptation is made in a vacuum, whether they are Internet fan fiction or not, and the influence of other adaptations or fan stories will be traceable throughout any new product of this kind.

Both Kaye's and Grange's adaptations have elements of fan fiction, as they both stay close to the original novel as fans usually crave, while they also give fans more of the story they love. They are apparently written with a knowledgeable reader in mind and they create almost a dialogue between the authors and the reader. However, both novels are published professionally, and therefore does not fall squarely into the category of fan fiction. The influence of other Austen adaptations is traceable throughout both Grange's and Kaye's books, both in the tendencies of making the story more romantic, in the sustained focus on the hero, in the changes made to the male main character, as well as in the modernizing of the heroine. In this way the adaptations function as pieces of the evolution of Austen's works, of making them appeal to a whole new generation of readers. While these changes alter the tone and events of *Persuasion* to an extent, Kaye and Grange have also managed to include most of the hinge points of the original story, and by doing so manage to give an impression of the fidelity demanded by fans of Austen's novel. They have achieved this apparent fidelity by filling in gaps left by Austen, and by extending rather than changing the events. In a knowledgeable reader the thoughts will inevitably jump back and forth between the original text and the adaptation, comparing and evaluating. Both of the modern novels have added some content to the source text, which is necessary in order to make them worth reading, but also stayed close to *Persuasion*. However, in the nature of adaptations is change, and with change comes criticism of what they are changing. The aspects of the novels which Kaye and

Grange have changed, especially the changes made to the hero and heroine contain an implicit discontent with what is portrayed in the original, or at least a comment that it needs to be changed to continue to appeal to audiences. In any case, Austen has a devoted fanbase who have kept her works alive and relevant for two hundred years, and with the emergence of Internet fan fiction, in combination with screen and literary adaptation, they will probably continue to do so for many years to come.

The publication and professionalizing of fan fiction implies a change in what is accepted as “good literature”. One of the criticisms against fan fiction in general is a general lack of quality content. The fact that Grange and Kaye have managed to get their works published is in itself a step away from fan fiction by its original definition, and show that they are good enough, or at least popular enough, to be professionally published. These authors seem not only to be fans and lovers of Austen wanting to extend the pleasure of her works, but they are also skilled and well-read authors. When writing an adaptation, the author needs to manage a challenging balance between staying close to the original while also making a new and exciting product worth reading for its own sake. They have less room to manoeuvre than authors of original works, but both Grange and Kaye have managed to create a well-crafted product despite the challenges. This blurring of the lines between professional adaptation and fan fiction shows the burgeoning importance of fans in literature in general, and especially in the commercial side of the field. Fan writers are important for the afterlife of classic authors such as Jane Austen, introducing their works to a new generation. The area of literature and literary criticism is no longer just for the scholarly community, as the fans are demanding their place both as producers, consumers and critics.

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## Abstract

This thesis is a study of Jane Austen's novel *Persuasion*, and how it has been updated in two modern literary retellings, Amanda Grange's *Captain Wentworth's Diary* (2007) and Susan Kaye's *Frederick Wentworth, Captain* (2007/2008). It explores the areas of literary adaptation and fan fiction, what characterizes each of these disciplines, and how these increasingly overlap, as exemplified in Grange's and Kaye's novels. The main part of the thesis includes a close reading of the adaptations and the ways in which they use, and stay close to, Austen's original, while also modernizing the story to appeal to the twenty-first-century audience. The adaptations are both told from the point of view of Austen's hero, Captain Frederick Wentworth, and the thesis explores how Kaye and Grange have updated the hero, as well as other aspects such as how they update the heroine and make the story more romantic. It also looks at the ways in which these retellings resemble other modern Austen adaptation, both on page and on screen.

The study finds that both adaptations have stayed close to Austen, while also managing to update and modernize the story. Both novels straddle the line between professional adaptation and fan fiction, and thus signal a blending of these two concepts, as well as the increasing importance of fan fiction in the area of literature.