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In *Persuasion*, the element of Wentworth and Anne's relationship I found to be the most important or crucial was their undying love for each other, and although they were apart from each other for eight years, that love never wavered. When writing my fanfiction, is the element I wanted to focus on the most, how two people's love for each other could stay so sound, despite the time and distance between the two. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is an important book in my life, growing up I always identified with Charlie and his thought process and the decisions he made in his life, but also his relationship with Sam. I've always wondered at the end of the book, what happens next to Charlie? His relationship with Sam? Everything is left a little open ended, so that's why I decided to use the characters from the book, to continue on their lives. Also, the format that *Perks* is written in, Charlie writing a letter to an unknown person, I knew in continuing the lives of these character's I had to write this in the same format. In my fanfiction, I know there is not a lot of similarities between it and *Persuasion*, but I did this to focus more on Charlie and Sam's relationship. To focus on the time gap between the two, how they've changed as people, but the fact that their love for each other did not. Anne and Wentworth's relationship is inspiring in that being apart from each other for eight years, and how their lives have changed, their love did not. This is the first creative piece I have ever written, and in have a page limit of seven pages I couldn't expand on Charlie and Sam's relationship like I wanted to, but I wanted to show the undying love between the two, just like Anne and Wentworth's love for each other.

Accepting the Love We Deserve: *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* and *Persuasion*

September 27th, 2003

Dear friend,

I saw Sam today for the first time since the worst day of my life. I have not seen her in over 8 years and she looks like a completely different person, while also looking like the same girl I loved in high school. I hate to admit it, but I'm not over her, I don't think I ever will be. Sitting there in Central Park I had a weird feeling as if someone I knew was nearby before looking up and seeing her across the park. At that moment, a million different emotions filled my body, everything from pain and suffering, to joy and nostalgia. But I couldn't move. Everything inside of me was telling me to go up to her, to tell her how much I miss and love her. How sorry I am for breaking up with her. How devastated I was and still am. But I just couldn't. I thought of how she must have felt when I ended things, how broken she looked and must have felt. The look in her eyes as I walked away, a look of pure heartbreak and hopelessness. I couldn't lose my parents though, my family, in doing so I would have lost myself. So, I went back to my reading and pretended as if I never saw her. This makes things easier, pretending as if they never happened. But seeing her face after all of these years has consumed me. I can't think. I can't hear, all I hear is her. Her crying. Her voice breaking as she called out my name. The words that came out of my mouth. The words that came out of hers.

"Sam, I'm sorry but I can't marry you. I'm not capable of loving you how you deserve"

"Charlie, what are you talking about? You love me. You said it yourself, nothing or no one will ever come between us. Why are you saying this?" Sam said absolutely dumbfounded by me.

“I just can’t. I’m not mentally ready to love you how I know I can. I have to work on myself, and I’m starting college in New York, and you’re moving to Portland, how would we make that work?”

“We would Charlie, you know we would. You’re the only good guy I’ve ever met, and I love you so very much”

“Sam you know I love you more than anything. But I’m sorry Sam, I just can’t. I know you don’t understand, but I hope you will one day”

I tried to return to reading my book sitting in the park, but I couldn’t. So, I walked away, hoping the city would drown out my feelings. Hoping the city would make them disappear. Hoping to see her again to tell her how I feel. To tell her how sorry I am for breaking her trust, her heart. I was told I wasn’t capable of loving her all those years ago, but I was. I still am.

Love Always,

Charlie

May 22nd, 1995

Dear friend,

Sam came home from college today for my graduation. I was very excited to see her, since I haven’t seen her in over a year, but we still stayed in contact almost every week when we weren’t busy with school. I love Sam very much, we aren’t dating and have never dated, but this is what we discussed. She didn’t want me to be tied down to someone who lived hundreds of miles away, and wanted me to date freely, and I didn’t want her to be dating a high schooler, while she was away at college, meeting new people. When I first saw her, I was overflowed with love. I wrapped my arms around her and hers around me. We stayed hugging while we both cried letting out every single emotion we wanted. Love. Peace. Happiness.

“Charlie, I’ve missed you. And congratulations on graduating! I’m proud of you. I told you how fast it would go by, and now you’ll be in college like me”

“Thanks Sam. I’ve missed you more than anything in the world. I’m excited for college, but sad you’ll be leaving. Moving far away”

“We’ll stay in touch. You know we will. We’ve stayed in touch all these years while I’ve been away. We’ll make it work. We always do”

“I know. But Portland is a lot farther from Pittsburgh than Penn State is. Life is different over there. The people are different”

“Of course, Portland is different, farther. But we’ll stay in touch I promise”

Seeing Sam restored every feeling of hope, happiness, and love in my body. I no longer was concerned about college or what life has next. I wanted to enjoy graduation. To enjoy Sam. To enjoy life.

Love Always,

Charlie

May 25th, 1995

Dear friend,

I finally did it. I graduated high school. Starting high school, I remember counting the days until graduation. 1,385 days. And now zero. Walking across that stage I looked into the crowd, at my parents, my brother and sister, and then Sam. Looking at Sam, I am reminded of why I love her. Her strength. Her beauty. Her love for others. And despite all of my flaws, her love for me. All I can think is, I can’t wait to marry her one day. To start a life with her. If that what she wants. I’m not like the boys she dates. Like Craig. But that’s fine, because I am me, not Craig.

“Charlie, I love you for you. You are different. You’re sensitive. You’re smart. You’re kind. And you love me for me, and everything that comes with that” Sam said to me once.

It’s true I am me, despite all of my problems though, those are part of me. Besides my parents, Sam is the only person who knows about what my Aunt Helen did to me as a child. I told her. I had to tell her. To have any kind of relationship with her, she had to know. While I want to escape what Aunt Helen did to me, in order to live with it I have to face it. That’s what Dr. Burton told me after my breakdown freshman year. As much as I love Sam, I can’t imagine her living a life, with someone as broken as me.

So when Sam proposed to me, I wasn’t expecting it at all. It was after my graduation party, all my family was finally gone. And just like after her graduation, it was just the two of us alone, but this time with me packing up all of my things to go to college.

“Charlie, do you love me” Sam said suddenly. “Of course I do Sam, more than anyone”

“No, you know what I mean. Do you love, love me?”

“Yes Sam, I have ever since I met you. I know people say that all the time, like in movies and stuff. The first time I saw you at the football game with Patrick, I thought you were the most beautiful girl I’ve ever seen and now three years later, I still feel the same way if not stronger, because I know you. The real you”

Sam smiled wide at me saying this. And looked out the window, before taking a knee in front of me. “Charlie, I have never loved anyone as much as I love you. I know you’re younger than me, and I know we’ll soon be thousands of miles apart, but I need you in my life. Always have and always will. I know what you’ve been through, and that no less decreases my love for you, just as you know what I’ve been through. You’re the best boy and person I’ve ever met. So Charlie, I can’t imagine my life without you. Will you marry me?”

I stood there looking at her, processing everything she said. Perplexed at the words she said to me. To the way she looked at me. I've never seen anyone look at me this way before. Say the things she said to me. I looked at her, then squatted down in front of her. I looked at her eyes, then took her hands in mine. "Sam of course I'll marry you. I love you" before I kissed her and all of the world disappeared. Nothing else mattered. Nothing at all. Except her and me. I felt infinite.

Love Always,

Charlie

May 26th, 1995

Dear friend,

I told my parents about marry Sam. They weren't happy for me as people should be. But practical as parents should be. The distance. The age. The sense of it all. My mental issues. My age. I'm still young. I haven't experienced the world. Were all reasons my parents cited for us not to be together. Of course, I thought of all these things, but I didn't care. I didn't care how far apart we were. Or that Sam is older than me. Or that I have issues. Everyone has issues. Issues are meant to be worked out. I became angry at them for denying me the one person I cared about in this world. For denying me the only true love I've ever known. My dad sat down with me, and told me, that if I truly loved Sam and she truly loved me, we would be together when the time was right. When I've experienced the world and she has too. When I've gotten through my issues. My PTSD. My depression. My anxieties. I hated my dad for telling me all of this, but I understood why he did. My dad is the wisest man in the world to me. He always knows the right words to say. I understood why he said what he said. But I wish I didn't. I can't imagine a world with Sam in it, but I know my dad is right. I know we won't make it right now, with the distance,

with my inexperience of the world. Mr. Anderson, my freshman English teacher, once told me something I've never forgotten, "we accept the love we think we deserve". And Sam's is a perfect kind of love. One I know I don't think I deserve yet. Who knows if I ever will.

So doing the hardest thing I've ever done, I told Sam I couldn't marry her. It was the hardest and worst decision I've ever made in my life. Making it the worst day of my life. But I had a feeling we would meet again. When I was ready to accept her love.

Love Always,

Charlie

October 5th, 2003

Dear friend,

I saw Sam again today. This time I talked to her. I had to no matter what. I walked into my usual coffee spot to write and there she was. Sitting there all alone. I walked up and sat down without thinking. Without wanting to think. "Hhhhey Sam" My whole body was nearly shaking. Sam looked at me, with fierce but kind eyes. "What are you doing here Sam? How are you? How have you been?" Still she stared silently at me, as if blown away I was sitting here.

"Hello Charlie, I've been great, I just moved here for a job. I figured I might run into at some point" Sam was both happy to see me but also in her eyes I could tell she was still mad, still heartbroken over what happened eight years ago. I didn't know what to say first. To say how sorry, I am. To say how much I've missed her. And to say how much I still love her. So I just started somewhere.

"Sam, I know we haven't talked to each other in over 8 years now, but I've missed you. I know we ended on bad terms. I regret the decision I made. I have since I made it, but it was necessary. I still love you Sam. I have since I met you and have since that day. I'm not asking you to

forgive me for breaking things off. But just to hear me out. Since being in college, I've gotten to experience life and just like you said, it gets better. I decided when I left, I would work on myself. Better myself. For you. So one day I could get you back. So one day I could marry you. And I have. I no longer care what anyone has to say about us" Sam sat for a long time not saying anything at all, just looking at me quietly. I thought should I leave? Maybe Sam found someone else, found a new life. One without me. She finally started to speak, and I swear the world seemingly disappeared.

"I've had a lot of time to think, to better myself, and work on making myself happy since last seeing you. And I have. For so long, I was so pissed at you Charlie for doing what you did to me. But after awhile I moved on. I tried to move on. Every time I tried to go on dates, something in the back of my head would nag me. That was you Charlie. You ending things with me, I thought showed a lack of character, a lack of judgement in you. When I moved here, I began seeing your posters for book readings and I went to a few of them, sneaking in the back so you wouldn't see me. I needed to see you and hear you. I could hear the change in your voice, the pain you were feeling, but also the joy as well. You sounded like the person I fell in love with in high school" We both sat for awhile, not moving, not talking, not thinking. Just looking at each other. I loved her just as much as the last time I saw her, this time determined to never lose her again. Finally, I had to do something, so in the scariest moment of my life, I got down on one knee and proposed to Sam, I actually did. I didn't care about what my parents had to say or anyone else. I couldn't live another day without her. I was ready now.

Love Always,

Charlie

