

Molly: Hey everyone. Before we begin today, we want to give a huge shoutout to our newest patrons, Alison and Taylor. Welcome to the team. If you too want access to bonus episodes, outtakes, our notes, and more, head on over to patreon.com/podandprejudice. And now, enjoy this week's episode covering Chapters 13 and 14 of *Emma*.

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

Becca: This is Becca.

Molly: This is Molly.

Becca: We are here to talk about Jane Austen.

Molly: We are here specifically to talk about *Emma* and even more specifically-- [crosstalk]

Becca: *Emma*

Molly: *Emma*. And even more specifically, Chapters 13 and 14 of Volume I.

Becca: Yes. Now, listeners, if you're new to this podcast, I, Becca, have been reading Jane Austen books for years.

Molly: And I, Molly have been reading Jane Austen books since the beginning of this podcast.

Becca: If you want to hear Molly read through *Pride and Prejudice* or *Sense and Sensibility* for the first time, you can listen to Seasons 1 and 2 of this podcast respectively, [00:01:00] but that is not what we're doing here today.

Molly: No. Today, we're talking about *Emma* and it is a good set of chapters. I wanted to keep going. I wrote in my notes, "I want to keep reading. Why oh, why did I have to stop?" That hasn't happened yet in this book.

Becca: Oh, yeah. And I actually did this purposely, because I had this moment, where I was like, "Ooh, am I going to give her the next chapter too," and I was like, "I want to blue ball Molly a little bit on this."

Molly: She gave me a cliffhanger.

Becca: Yes, indeed. One of our rare Austin cliffhangers.

Molly: We love it.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: So, let's tell the listeners where we left off.

Becca: Yes. So, we left off in Payfield v. Mary.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: Wait, no, it's-- Listeners, I just got my period maybe an hour ago and I am dying and clutching a heating pad. So, if I'm wrong about things in this episode, don't blame my brain, blame my body.

Molly: Painfield v. Mary? Is that what you--? [laughs]

Becca: I said Payfield v. Mary.

Molly: Payfield v. Mary. [00:02:00] It sounds like a new version of *Lord of the Rings*.

Becca: That's exactly what I was thinking.

Molly: Oh, Wingfield v. Perry. Last episode, you said, "We shass instead," of "We-- [laughs]

Becca: Oh, boy, this is a very academic podcast, listeners.

Molly: We're doing great.

Becca: We're doing so swell. So, last time, Isabella and Mr. Woodhouse were talking about their favorite apothecaries, Perry and Wingfield, and John Knightley grumpier of the grumpy set of brothers was not having it, and Emma and George were making peace.

Molly: I just thought of a name for the Knightley brothers, the brothers' grump. Oh-

Becca: Perfect.

Molly: -instead of the Brothers Grimm?

Becca: They're also grim.

Molly: They are both grim and grumpy.

Becca: Or grumpy boys.

Molly: We got some people on Instagram in defensive John Knightley.

Becca: No. Listen, we love John Knightley. [00:03:00]

Molly: We love our grumpy king. And especially in this set of chapters, he is the best.

Molly: Yeah, but he is undeniably grumpy and I will not have any listener telling me otherwise.

Molly: No, he is grumpy, he is a little rude, but we relate and we stand.

Becca: Yes, exactly.

Molly: So, should we dive into it?

Becca: Oh, yes, we shall. We shass.

Molly: We shass and now to the cream. Isabella goes about every morning on her visit seeing friends, bringing her children to her friends, and then comes back, and reports to Emma and Mr. Woodhouse about her days' travels. And in the evenings, they're just hanging out, the four of them and the kids. But there is one dinner engagement that was insisted upon and that was the Westons on Christmas Eve of all times. And even Mr. Woodhouse agrees to go rather than have Isabella spend Christmas Eve away at the Westons. So, Mr. Woodhouse tries to make a big thing about, "How are they all going to get there? We're never going to all fit in the carriage." But Isabella also [00:04:00] has her carriage there. So, it's just a nonissue.

Becca: Yeah, we're taking two carts. It's pretty easy.

Molly: Yeah, it's like we drove here, dad.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: So, they say that they even have room for Harriet to come. The people outside of their party that are invited are Harriet, Mr. Knightley, and Mr. Elton. The night before the dinner, Harriet was supposed to stay at Hartfield, but she came down with a bad cold. And the next morning, she's no better. So, with many tears, it is decided that she cannot come to dinner.

Becca: This is so relatable.

Molly: Yeah. Also, the whole thing with Harriet being sick, they go over there and they're just in her sick bed fawning over her like, "Emma, you're going to get sick. It's winter." I'm like Mr. Woodhouse though.

Becca: [laughs] Yeah, that's a very Mr. Woodhouse thought, but also this harkens back to Perry V Wingfield, because they were debating whether or not it was a heavy flu season.

Molly: Oh, yeah. I guess Mr. Perry was right.

Becca: Was it? Mr. Perry or Mr. Wingfield, who said?

Molly: Oh, gosh, I don't know. So, Emma's [00:05:00] over. She sits with Harriet for a while and she tells her Mr. Elton will definitely be so depressed when he finds out how she's doing and they're not going to have any fun without her. And that reassures Harriet a little bit. As she's leaving Harriet, she runs into Mr. Elton who was just on his way to see her and he's like, "Oh," and he turns around and walks with Emma.

Becca: This is the second time you've seen Mr. Elton go from going to help someone in need to following Emma somewhere, which as a priest, it is not an ideal thing for him to be doing.

Molly: I keep forgetting he's a priest.

Becca: Oh, yeah. No, he's the Mr. Collins of the area.

Molly: He's really just giving me major dumb jock vibes.

Becca: I will neither confirm nor deny.

Molly: Yeah, maybe it's because I know that this was adapted into a high school movie, but I just imagined him as the jock character like the dumb one who is really hot and people are all falling over him, but he actually has [00:06:00] no substance. That's Mr. Elton. So, Becca is doing her best blank stare at me, listeners. He turns around, he walks with Emma, and they also run into Mr. John Knightley and two of his sons. He walks with them as well. Emma gives them a report of Harriet and Elton is kind of what I just said. "Oh, my God, you were just with her. I hope she's not contagious. Are you okay? You've got to take care of yourself, Emma."

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: The reason I said Emma that way is because he cares more about Emma than Harriet and it is so obvious.

Molly: Oh, is it? Is it?

Molly: To me.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Emma assures him that she is fine and that Mrs. Goddard is taking good care of Harriet, but she wants him to stay a little bit worried. She's like, "It's looking like snow and it's really cold. If it were up to me, I think we should all stay home. But since my dad's already made up his mind and he doesn't seem to care about the cold, which is weird for him, we're all going to go. But if I were you--"

Becca: I would cancel.

Molly: "You have no obligation, Elton. You should [00:07:00] stay home and maybe go visit Harriet." He "was very much gratified by the care of such a fair lady and not liking to resist any advice of hers." But he really wants to go to dinner. I wonder why.

Becca: Oh, it seems like there might be a reason why, right?

Molly: It seems like there might be from this conversation alone.

Becca: Also, just like how much would that bum you out if someone's like, "I'm not going to cancel it, but I feel you should."

Molly: Yeah, it's rude. She doesn't realize what she's doing and he's like, "Yeah, it is really cold." And Emma, because she is too wrapped up in her "previous conceptions," which is basically what this entire book has been so far, she thinks that him saying that is him agreeing that he's not going to come and he will call on Harriet instead. But just as she says she's going to give the Westons his apologies, Mr. John Knightley is like, "Oh, you should ride with us to dinner." And Elton's like, "Oh, yeah, yeah, definitely." "Never had his smile been stronger, nor his eyes more exalting than when he next looked at her."

Becca: Oh, my God. Also, this moment, it's just like Emma's trying to pull some shit and John Knightley's like, "Don't worry, you can come with us." And she's like, "Bro, what are you doing?"

Molly: Yeah. And Emma thinks it's strange that he would choose to go with him instead of staying back with Harriet. But she figures that some men just really like dining out and she thinks to herself, "What a strange thing love is. He can see ready wit in Harriet but will not dine alone for her." Emma. [giggles]

Becca: Emma's one of the cleverest women in literature, but this is her bullshit.

Molly: Yeah. She's just stumped on this. She just cannot see past what she has already decided. It's true.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: Mm-hmm. So, Elton departs them and he's like, "I'm going to go call on Harriet and I hope to bring a better report later." Emma and John keep walking and John is like, "I have never met a bigger

trihard [00:09:00] and people pleaser than Mr. Elton and it's particularly so with women." And Emma's like, "Well, he means well. He's just being nice." And John says, "Oh, yes, he does seem to have particular goodwill towards you."

Becca: He's like, "Yeah, that guy's got a raging boner for you."

Molly: [laughs] Yeah, I lost it. I was like, "Finally, someone is calling attention to this" and Emma's like, "What do you mean? No, it couldn't be." And he's like, "Yeah." She's like, "Mr. Elton in love with me? What a thought?" Someone pointed out to us that for all Emma thinks of herself and she does think very highly of herself, this truly never crossed her mind.

Becca: We'll get into this in this study questions, but as to why this never crossed her mind, there is a reading of it that it is Emma being humble. There is another reading of it we can do and I will discuss it at a later point in this podcast.

Molly: Ooh, I cannot wait to talk about this further. [00:10:00] Can I also have thoughts?

Molly and Becca: Ooh, ooh, ooh.

Becca: But I think at this point in time, I can safely confirm for you that this theory of yours is correct-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -very obviously at this point in the book.

Molly: Yes. But I am so proud of myself for catching it early on, because there was a time in which I didn't even realize that Caroline Bingley had a crush on Mr. Darcy.

Becca: Yes. You've gotten incredible at reading these books and picking up on the cues Jane Austen is throwing at you. This one in particular I will say, Jane Austen is trying to make it obvious that Emma's a fucking idiot. But it's you know-- [chuckles]

Molly: She has no idea about love at all.

Becca: Oh, and we'll talk about that.

Molly: Yeah. "What a strange thing love is," she says.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: Mr. John Knightley tells her that he's not saying that-- This is definitive, but she should think about it and watch how she behaves around him, because she's encouraging him. She's like, "No, we're just friends," but she's amused by "the mistakes [00:11:00] which people have hypertension to judgment are forever falling into," as if she is not a person with hypertension to judgment herself.

Becca: Oh, yes. I actually wrote down this quote, because I thought it was so funny. Hang on, let me pull it up. "She walked on, amusing herself in the consideration of the blunders which often arise from a partial knowledge of circumstances, of the mistakes which people of high pretensions to judgment are forever falling into; and not very well pleased with her brother for imagining her so blind and ignorant, and in want of counsel."

Molly: Someone's blind and ignorant and unwanted counsel.

Becca: I love this part, because it's the idea of the fact that John Knightley doesn't know anything about what's happening, he doesn't have a context. And oh, man, he's so full of himself. He thinks he knows everything. How dare he think he knows more about the situation than me?

Molly: When he's right on the nose.

Becca: Yeah, at this point in time, if I'm telling you it's true, then you know this is obvious and Jane Austen wants you to know it's obvious.

Molly: Yes. [00:12:00] Otherwise, you would keep it a secret for me for longer.

Molly: Absolutely.

Molly: So, yes, John Knightley sees right through it and this is the beginning of my standing John Knightley.

Becca: Oh, yes.

Molly: So, they all get into their carriages when they arrive back and Mr. Woodhouse actually does not seem to mind the cold at all. He's just like, "I'm going on a trip. I'm so proud of myself for making this decision and we are going" and he is ignoring the fact that it is cold and snowing, which I get. And then as they're going, it starts to snow and I wanted to read this part, because I loved this description.

Becca: Oh, yes.

Molly: "The cold, however, was severe, and by the time the second carriage was in motion, a few flakes of snow were finding their way down, and the sky had the appearance of being so overcharged as to want only a milder air to produce a very white world in a very short time." They are getting snowed in at Randalls. No way they're not. That's my prediction.

Becca: Neither confirm nor deny.

Molly: Emma is riding with her brother, Mr. John Knightley, who's very grumpy about leaving and he thinks that Mr. Weston must think very highly of himself to ask [00:13:00] them to come over on a day like this.

Becca: I find this part with John Knightley immensely relatable. If the weather is bad, I do not want to leave my apartment.

Molly: Same. And he talks about it for two hefty paragraphs. He is like, "An endless snow and it's cold. And how dare he? Why would he pull someone from the comfort of their own home and their own fire?" and all this stuff. I'm like, "Yeah, they should have just had a Zoom Christmas."

Becca: Exactly.

Molly: That was the vibe. I was like, "You got snowed in or it's about to get snowed in. You should be careful before you leave. I get it." And also, when the weather's bad, I want to put on PJs. I want to order takeout, but I don't want to do that to the delivery drivers. So, instead, I'll make pasta, or soup, or something and watch a movie.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: So, my notes say, "John Knightley is a relatable queen."

Becca: [laughs] John Knightley is a relatable queen.

Molly: He is a relatable queen.

Becca: But you see how he's Michelle?

Molly: He is Michelle. Yeah, someone commented on that. Well, you found the Michelle of whatever this book is.

Becca: Jane Austen.

Molly: Jane Austen. [00:14:00]

Becca: [laughs] Whatever this book is.

Molly: [laughs] Yeah. He's like, "Nature is literally telling us to stay home and we're venturing out into the wild." Emma can't bring herself to give him any reply. She's like, "I don't want to agree with you. I don't want to start a fight." So, she doesn't say anything. They go to pick up Mr. Elton and he is so cheerful that she thinks he must have gotten a better report of Harriet than she had when she had called for news of Harriet just before and they had told her that she was not better and he's like, "Oh, yes. I also called. Mrs. Goddard told me that she was much worse, which is surprising, because I was sure that your visit earlier would have healed her." Emma's like, "Well, even I can't charm away a cold. But as you must have heard, Mr. Perry was with her." He's like, "I imagined so, but I did not--" He didn't go up to see her, did he?

Becca: Well, he called on her.

Molly: So, he went, he talked to Mrs. Goddard, and then he left?

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Like if she's not doing better?

Becca: Yeah. Also, if he's not trying to fuck, then why would [00:15:00] he go see a sick lady? He's a priest, but you know.

Molly: Right. Well, that's the thing is that he's not and he didn't want to see her, but Emma is expecting that he went up to see her. So, this is another sign that he does not want to see her. Emma's like, "I'm sure Harriet will be better tomorrow, but it's really a loss to our party tonight," and Elton agrees that she will be missed. But then 30 seconds later, he moves on to talk about how wonderful it is to have sheepskin carriages. And he can't even feel the cold outside and basically, then he has to have two paragraphs about everything the opposite of what John said a minute ago.

Becca: Oh, yes.

Molly: Which I love that juxtaposition there. He's like, "Oh, yes, it's looking like snow." John is like, "Yeah, we're going to get a lot of snow." And then Elton is like, "Oh, what a perfect thing for Christmas like a white Christmas. Look at that."

Becca: I love this part, because you can feel both Emma and John Knightley getting more irritated with Elton as they're in this carriage with him longer. Emma, because he doesn't seem to give a shit about Harriet and [00:16:00] John Knightley, because he's so cheerful about everything that is making John Knightley fucking furious right now.

Molly: And when someone's being cheerful when you're grumpy-

Becca: Especially about the thing that is making you grumpy.

Molly: -it's the worst.

Becca: Yeah. [chuckles]

Molly: Elton is like, "Oh, one time, I went to a friend's house for Christmas and we were snowed in for a week and it was the best." And John is like, "Well, I really hope we're not snowed a week at Randalls. And Emma is just shocked at how easily he's forgotten Harriet. So, he goes on to say he's glad their party is small, because he prefers a small party though he thinks John's probably used to large London parties and John says, "Well, I wouldn't know. I never dined with anybody." And Elton's like, "Oh, you poor thing. You're a lawyer married to your work. I hope one day you'll be able to leave that and work less and party more." And John says his first enjoyment will be to get back to Hartfield. I don't think he's getting back to Hartfield anytime soon.

Becca: Yes, but I also wanted to read one more bit, because I just thought it was so funnily phrased by Jane Austen. This is from the paragraph [00:17:00] where he's talking about how wonderful the party is going to be. Mr. Elton, he goes, "I think you will agree with me, (turning with a soft air to Emma) I think I shall certainly have your approbation, though Mr. Knightley perhaps, from being used to the large parties of London, may not quite enter into our feelings." But I just love that it's in parentheses. It says, "Turning with a soft air to Emma."

Molly: Yeah, he's all over her and she simply doesn't notice.

Becca: Well, yes. [chuckles]

Molly: She's starting to and we'll get to that.

Becca: Yeah, I think we have to get to that. Part of the reason I'm willing to confirm is this next chapter, you see that he's just following her around this party.

Molly: Yes. So, that brings us to the next chapter.

Hello, hello, hello, I am so sorry to interrupt, but it's me, Molly, from the future here to bring you a segment that we are now calling the Economics of Podcasting about Jane Austen. So, Graham, the sound effect, please. [Economics of Podcasting sound effect] [00:18:00] This week on the Economics of Podcasting about Jane Austen, I'm going to tell you a little bit about Athletic Greens. They have a product that I use literally every day, it's called the AG1. So, as a lot of you know, I'm a vegan and I have to take a bunch of different vitamins and supplements all the time. So, I started drinking AG1 by

Athletic Greens, because I wanted to try one that actually tastes good. And it really does. It's kind of sweet, kind of fruity, and it doesn't really taste like a nutritional drink. What I do is I like to fill my AG1 bottle with water every night and put it in the fridge to get really cold and then in the morning, I add one scoop of AG1, shake it up, and drink it. It's super easy. You just take one scoop and you're absorbing 75 high-quality vitamins, minerals, Whole Foods source superfoods, probiotics, and adaptogens to help you start your day right.

I've been drinking it for a couple of weeks now, and I found that I have more energy throughout the day, and I'm able to focus better while I'm at my day job. And right now, Athletic Greens has a special offer **[00:19:00]** for you guys, our listeners. They're going to give you a free one-year supply of immune supporting vitamin D and five free travel packs with your first purchase of AG1. All you have to do is visit athleticgreens.com/whosmt. Again, that's athleticgreens.com/WHOMST to take ownership over your health and pick up the ultimate daily nutritional insurance. And now, let's get back to talking about Jane Austen.

They arrive at the Westons and Mr. Elton has to chill out and Mr. John Knightley has to get happy. It says that Elton needs to smile less than John needs to smile more. I wanted to point out another person who needs to smile less according to Mr. Darcy, Jane Bennet. And I think that actually Mr. Elton does smile too much, but not in the Jane Bennet way, because it's not like, I don't want to say it's not genuine, but it's not genuine. He's a people pleaser in a way that's gross to me. I don't like him.

Becca: Oh, we don't like Elton now.

Molly: Well, it's not that I don't **[00:20:00]** like him. I'm equally as annoyed with him, not as Emma, but as Mr. John Knightley.

Becca: [laughs] So, from this perspective, you are John Knightley, because one, you don't like leaving your house, two, you think Emma's an idiot for not realizing Elton wants to bang her, and three, you're getting pissed off at Mr. Ellison for being too cheerful.

Molly: Exactly.

Becca: I love this.

Molly: Yeah. So, we love John Knightley, we relate. Mr. Woodhouse arrived first and he has already caught the Westons up on the whole Harriet situation, so they don't have to catch him up. And then Emma arrives, and she's so happy to see her friend, and they catch up for half an hour, and she is just determined to forget about the whole Elton situation. However, this is hard, because he decides to sit next to her and just keep talking your ear off while she's trying to have a conversation with other people. But he's just in her ear just like, "Blah, blah, blah." **[00:21:00]** And she can't help but wonder in this moment if John was right and that perhaps he is starting to transfer his affections to her from Harriet. Again, he never liked Harriet, Emma, but at least she's starting to see it.

Becca: Are you sure he never liked Harriet?

Molly: I never noticed him liking Harriet, but I suppose it's possible. I feel there's a lot of stories of someone trying to get someone else with their best friend and they like that movie, the half of it. Have you seen that?

Becca: I haven't, but I know the plot.

Molly: Yeah, it's like she's trying to help this guy get with this other girl. And in the process, she falls in love with the girl. So, it's different. But [laughs] I guess, that would be like if Emma and Harriet fell in love when--

Becca: No, it would be like, if Emma fell in love with Elton, [00:22:00] which you can tell from this chapter is not currently happening.

Molly: Totally not happening. So, the idea to her is absurd and insufferable. Yet "he would be so anxious for her being perfectly warm, would be so interested about her father, and so delighted with Mrs. Weston, and at last would begin admiring her drawings with so much zeal and so little knowledge as seemed terribly like a would-be lover." Now, this has been happening for quite some time.

Becca: Yes. So, here's exactly what happened. Emma had it in her brain that Elton was going to be for Harriet, because she saw and she was like, "These are two people I think would be well matched." And because that's what she saw, that's all she saw. And then, you have Elton giving her poems, following her around, wanting to talk to her, obsessing over her painting, and all this such stuff. And you have now a circumstance where John [00:23:00] Knightley has lifted the wall from Emma's eyes and now she's seeing all of the ways Elton is with her. It is not something she's enjoying.

Molly: Totally.

Becca: I'm picturing it like a montage and a movie with like a dumb song underneath like [dumb song imitating] and just little cuts of Elton just like chasing after Emma and her being like, "Ooh."

Molly: Yeah. No, I can see exactly what you're saying.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: So, it's really hard for her to remain civil as this is happening, because he just won't shut up and she's trying to hear what's happening in the other conversation. She hears them talking about Frank, but before she can actually get Elton to be quiet, so that she can ask about it, they've moved on. So, it'd be awkward. I'm going to read a quote. "Now, it so happened that in spite of Emma's resolution of never marrying, there was [00:24:00] something in the name, in the idea of Mr. Frank Churchill, which always interested her."

Becca: Boom.

Molly: What? She thinks if she were to marry, it would be Frank Churchill.

Becca: Yes. That is something Emma has decided for herself. Let's talk about that [crosstalk] again.

Molly: Yeah. So, early on, we read that the Westons had plans for Emma and I do recall saying that I think that they want her to marry their son.

Becca: That is something that we deduced-- well, you deduced from the Westons and their designs on Emma. This is Emma herself.

Molly: Right, which is it's a lot. I guess, her thing is, she doesn't know him and she doesn't like him, but she likes the idea of him and she likes the idea that her friends have pictured them together and want her to view with [00:25:00] him, and she sees him as belonging to her because of their family connections. But what's weirdest is that she is okay with that and wants that, potentially.

Becca: Yeah. And let's take a moment to think about it in total, because there's a lot to unpack here.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: First of all, what have we learned about Frank Churchill so far in the story? We've gotten some facts about who he is as a person. We know he's about 23 years old. So, a young man. He's been raised by his aunt and uncle, people have quite a bit of wealth. We know Mr. Churchill keeps up with his father but has not been back to Highbury since he was a child. And so, he is the like prodigal son, air of mystery for the town of Highbury, and for Mr. Weston, and for everyone in his life. So, there is this sense to which he is simultaneously quite a suitable match for Emma.

He's wealthy, [00:26:00] he's of the right age, albeit a little young for her, because women usually did marry a bit older men in that era and Frank is not very far off Emma's actual age. And Frank is, by all accounts, a gentleman but he's also of her town, he's also of her history, he's also of her people. So, Emma can continue to have this connection to the life she has in Highbury, which as we've learned, when women get married, they're cut off from their original lives in this era, but she would also have someone new and exciting and have appropriate marital status for her.

Molly: But on the last thing that you said like, he's of her town and that he is Mr. Weston's son. But he hasn't been back since he was a kid. It's hard. We'll learn later on in this chapter, but his [00:27:00] aunt really doesn't like him leaving or going to visit his dad. So, were she to marry him and go live with him? There's a possibility that she would also be kept from her family and kept from the Westons, who she cares a lot about. So, I think that's just something she's overlooking. But she sees-- We'll get into what she's choosing to overlook about the Churchills, but that's just something to think about as well.

Becca: Yeah. But anyway, were you shooketh?

Molly: I was shooketh. I was screaming.

Becca: Yeah. Wait, I want to hear what the surprise was like.

Molly: Well, our patrons will get to see what my book looks like, but there's just a lot of question marks and exclamation points. And I was surprised, because we've talked a lot about Emma's lack of desire for marriage and love in general. This doesn't sound like the way she's talking about. It doesn't sound like a love thing, it doesn't sound like a desire for romance or a marriage thing. It's just like, "If I were to marry, [00:28:00] it would be this guy." But just to think of that she's thinking about it at all was just a shock to me, because usually, she's just thinking about other people.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Yeah. So.

Becca: Yeah. Anyway, so, we learn even more about Frank Churchill here.

Molly: Yes. So, later at dinner, Emma sitting next to Mr. Weston, thank God for her and he brings it up again. He's like, "Frank wrote to us and he's planning to visit within a fortnight." And he says that Frank wanted to come since September, but his aunt wouldn't let him. She asked to be pleased all the time and she's only pleased with sacrifices is, what he says. And Emma thinks that him visiting must make Mr. Weston and Mrs. Weston so happy. He's like, "Well, Mrs. Weston doesn't actually believe he's going to come, but I know that he will, because there's a family that's supposed to visit Enscombe in January."

Mrs. Churchill doesn't particularly like the family and they always invite them out of just tradition and expectation of their two families. [00:29:00] But they always end up putting it off after once they come to it. So, he's pretty sure they're not going to come, Frank is going to be free, and he's going to come to visit then. He tells Emma that Mrs. Weston has so few vagaries, which is an unexpected an inexplicable change in situation or in someone's behavior that she just can't imagine that they would cancel their plans after having their plans, she can't depend on that for him coming. Though it is shitty that, he said, "I'll come as long as these other plans get cancelled." It makes them feel like a second choice.

Becca: Oh, for sure and that is something that is good to pick up on. But also, I think it's clear from these chapters that Frank Churchill does not have much control over his own life.

Molly: Totally.

Becca: There is a lot in his family history that points in that direction. Remember, he is the son of Mr. Weston, this guy who had to build his way up in the [00:30:00] world. And his mother, the Churchill mother that was married to Mr. Weston, she was a rebel that her family disowned. And so, we have Frank here whose choices sort of as a result of the fact that he comes from this weird rebellion of this girl from a very wealthy family, his life has been very regimented for him. This is a question we'll talk about later, but it's not fully clear how much he's blowing off his father and how much he's genuinely confined to the whims of his very cruel aunt.

Molly: Hmm. Yeah, it makes me feel for him.

Becca: You don't know what to feel yet, because you haven't been told enough to know whether or not it's one thing or the other thing.

Molly: Right. But I was annoyed at him for not having come since he was a kid and all of that, but definitely now I see that that's not necessarily his choice.

Becca: Not necessarily his choice.

Molly: Right. Or potentially his choice. Who [00:31:00] knows? Whomst to say?

Becca: Who's to say? Whomst, if you will.

Molly: Whomst? So, Emma's like, "Well, I think he's going to come," and he's like, "Mrs. Churchill is odd and I never really speak ill of her," except he does.

Becca: If I were Mr. Weston, I would speak ill of her. She [unintelligible [00:31:16]].

Molly: Oh, yeah. No, she's evil. I hate her.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: But he's like, "I really do believe she likes Frank even though she has a heart of stone and a devil of a temper to everyone else." After dinner, when the men and women separate, Emma brings it up to Mrs. Weston, who's like, "Well, I can't depend upon Frank's coming." And Emma's like, "It depends on Mrs. Churchill's ill humor, which seems to be the most certain thing in the world," which I thought was funny. Mrs. Weston then says to Emma and Isabella, she says, "To my two daughters," which was really sweet.

Becca: Oh.

Molly: She says that Mrs. Churchill rules at Enscombe and it depends on her being willing to let Frank leave. And Isabella is like, "Oh, yeah, Mrs. Churchill? Everyone knows Mrs. Churchill. I always feel bad for Frank [00:32:00] living with an ill-tempered person."

Becca: Savage as hell.

Molly: I died. This is my favorite funniest quote, because who else lives with an ill-tempered person?

Becca: It's a good question.

Molly: Now, we've discussed that we like John Knightley now, but I think in a way that we can poke fun at him.

Becca: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. And she does live with an ill-tempered person in that regard.

Molly: That's why it's funny to me is because she's like, "Oh, that must really suck living with someone who's ill tempered," [giggles] which she just doesn't see it at all.

Becca: Yeah, not at all. The other thing I was going to say is, you might remember that John Knightley and I asked you about this earlier was like, "Yeah, no one likes the Churchills anyway."

Molly: Right. And they would know, because they live in London. So, they know the Churchills.

Becca: Yes, but now you think you have a better picture at least partially as to why people don't like to Churchills.

Molly: Well, are they outwardly the worst?

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Okay.

Becca: They're hostile people.

Molly: Got it.

Becca: Yeah. You hear from Mr. Weston that she's mean to everyone except Frank.

Molly: I wasn't sure if he was saying that just because he hates her himself, but it seems she just really [00:33:00] is.

Becca: No, no, she's just spiteful and mean as a person.

Molly: Got it.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Emma knows that if Isabella hadn't been there at this time, she would have been able to get more out of Mrs. Weston, but as it is, there's nothing more to be said. And then Mr. Woodhouse comes in, because he was in there with the men, but he didn't really care to be talking to them. He wanted to come back where he's comfortable with his daughters and Mrs. Weston, so he comes out to sit with

them. And while he's talking to Isabella, Emma has a moment alone with Mrs. Weston and she's like, "I know this introduction, it must be unpleasant and I wish you could get it over with and then he would just come." Why will the introduction be unpleasant?

Becca: I think there's the possibility that he missed their wedding.

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: And that she's possibly pregnant with his sibling.

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: And we don't know at this point, whether Frank is blowing them off [00:34:00] or if he's genuinely combined.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, there is a way in which it could be unpleasant for a lot of reasons.

Molly: Yeah, that makes sense. Mrs. Weston thinks that even if the family that they don't like whose name is the Braithwaite or Braithwaite. Even if they are put off, Frank will find some other reason to disappoint them. Not necessarily intentionally, but the Churchills are jealous of his affection for his father and they try to keep him from them. This is what she is saying is her theory. And she wishes that Mr. Weston would get his hopes up. Emma thinks, he ought to come if only for a few days and she says, "A young woman can be confined like that, but she can't comprehend the man being restrained in the same way." It's just a commentary, I suppose, but it does hit different when she's like, "Yeah, it wouldn't be so unusual if he were a woman and his family was keeping him from the people that he wants to spend time with. But as a man, they should let him go about his [00:35:00] business."

Becca: Well, yeah, he's a young man of the world. He's a young gentleman who will inherit a great fortune. He should be gallivanting around, learning about things, making connections, learning about the property he will inherit, and then finding a wife. And whereas women are supposed to be paraded around for marriage but are most likely set to stay at home in most circumstances.

Molly: Sigh.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: Mrs. Weston tells Emma that Enscombe can't be judged by the rules of the rest of the world and Mrs. Churchill is just unreasonable. And Emma thinks that Mrs. Churchill must sometimes be overruled by Frank, because she's so fond of him. And Mrs. Weston tells Emma that she with her sweet temper can never understand someone like Mrs. Churchill. Emma says she won't be satisfied unless he comes.

Becca: Tough. Very tough moment. Tough moment for the 21st century.

Molly: I lost it.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Mrs. Weston says, [00:36:00] "Well, Frank may have some sway on other matters. His coming to visit them is not one of them."

Becca: And that's the end of these two chapters. We're leaving halfway through a party and that's not something I often do to you.

Molly: True.

Becca: Yes. But we are on the study questions now. First of all, Molly was right.

Molly: Yay.

Becca: We have confirmation of some form that Elton has some sort of draw towards Emma and some appeal towards Emma in some regard. We don't know much about it at this point, but we know that someone else picked up on it. Why do you think Elton has anything for Emma and what do you think that is?

Molly: Well, Emma's hot, Emma's rich, Emma is a wit, she's smart, and she is showing him a lot of attention, not for the reasons that he thinks. I don't know if he knows how much she's been trying to get him together with Harriet. I don't know if he's smart enough to have picked up on it. It was pretty obvious [00:37:00] but I think that he just was happy to have her spending time with him. She's good at art. He likes that. She read his poem and wanted to put it in the book. There's lots of reasons that he could like Emma.

Becca: Okay. I'm not going to react to any of that, because I think I want to save those conversations for a later date.

Molly: Great.

Becca: But I wanted to put on the record why you think he might like Emma.

Molly: Okay.

Becca: Why don't you think Emma saw it?

Molly: Now, that's a good question, because she prides herself on being an understander of humans. She's not really. She sees whatever she wants to see. I guess that's it. She sees what she wants to see. So, that's why she didn't see it because she wasn't paying attention to that.

Becca: Okay. Again, we're going to have a conversation about this at a later date, but I want to put these on the record, so that when I talk about them later, you can come back to your thoughts on this.

Molly: [00:38:00] Great.

Becca: Okay.

Becca: Why did John Knightley see it?

Molly: Why did John Knightley see it? Well, John Knightley, for all that he is a curmudgeon, he sees things and he knows Emma pretty well, same as Mr. George Knightley. He's a man. He's a man. So, maybe he understands the signs of a man having a crush better than Emma who might be gay or-

Becca: Gay.

Molly: -gay. But yeah, I think that he was looking for it, maybe.

Becca: Yes. I also think this is one of the benefits of adding new faces to the book. At this point, you get fresh eyes on the situation and the fresh eyes have not seen this build up where Emma's so obviously trying to get him and Harriet together. He just sees Emma and Elton interact-

Molly: Without Harriet there.

Becca: -without Harriet there. And [00:39:00] on top of that, John Knightley sees through a lot of Emma's bullshit, as does his brother George Knightley, but that combo I think allows him to look at the situation and be like, "Yeah, that guy wants you."

Molly: Yeah, I was going to say, he's not one to have to be biased by affection for someone. He very much will tell it how it is. He reminds me of Mr. Palmer a little bit and we love Mr. Palmer. But I think that he just-- Yeah, he's not going to be taking anyone's side of things. He even is pretty impartial in this. He's like, "I'm not saying this is how it is, but I think you're leading him on." And I think that he just is going to tell it how it is.

Becca: How will this fadge?

Molly: I don't know. I think Emma's going to increasingly notice what Elton is doing and she's going to become more and more irritated with him. I also think she's probably going to try to distance herself from him or make it more [00:40:00] obvious that she does not like him. I'm worried that will also drag him away from Harriet, because she's just caught up in this. She didn't have any choice in the matter. Emma was like, "You like Elton" and she was like, "Okay." And now, she does and she's stuck.

Becca: All right, we're going to switch to Frank Churchill. We touched on some of these questions I'm asking already, but we're going to talk about them, again, and we're going to expand on them. Why do you think Emma thinks he's your man?

Molly: It seems very practical. She's like, "Our families are connected, he comes from a wealthy family or he lives with a wealthy family rather." I also liked what you said about it would keep her close to the Westons and her family. I disagree that I think that there's a possibility it would actually separate her from them. But he's also mysterious and hot and she knows that the Westons want them to get together and she loves the Westons. And so, I think it feels like a done deal in her mind. It's just weird, because [00:41:00] she has always said she doesn't want to marry. So, I don't understand why she's trying to talk about it now, halfway through the book.

Becca: Well, what does it say about Emma's perception of love that she's doing it now?

Molly: Oh, that she's thinking about it right now. One, her perception of love is about practicality. Harkening back to the potential that Emma's just ace and is looking forward to she knows, "Well, I'm a woman, I know that I said I would rather just stay living with my dad. I have a perfect life as it is. I know that I'm expected to marry. This guy is a good match for me. I might as well. He's there. We could probably stay at my house." Her perception of love is rooted in just like expectation and practicality for herself. For other people, she's like, "This is the greatest romance of all time." But I think for herself, it's what I said.

Becca: That is a really good interpretation of it and I [00:42:00] think it's one that works especially, if you were someone who sees representation for yourself and Emma, I think that's a really fair reading of it. I'm going to offer another interpretation as well not counter to it, but just in complement to it. Frank to Emma looks like a fantasy. He's not a fully realized person. He is a mystery person about her age, who is supposed to be rich, dashing, smart, kind, would be connected to her family already. And she can see herself in that regard with him.

To me, this strikes me also as some of that immature energy you get around some people who really fixate on celebrity crushes. Not in a bad way. It's just like, when I was a teenager, a lot of the most intense feelings I had were for fictional characters, and for television show characters, and actors. That's, I think, completely [00:43:00] normal. It just shows that you're not ready to face the realities of what it means to really love someone. It means you want to play a little fantasy in your head. I don't mean that to sound as condescending as it does.

Molly: It doesn't sound condescending. I totally get what you're saying. She's not in a place where she wants romance for herself in real life, but she's able to have a crush on Frank Churchill, because he has something removed from her real life.

Becca: Absolutely.

Molly: That makes sense.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: She's a fanfic girl.

Becca: Yes, she's a fanfic girl. Yes, and we are all fanfic girls, which is why we love Jane Austen books so much.

Molly: Exactly. Yeah, to make it clear, Becca and I both have been this and see this in ourselves.

Becca: Yeah, this is like a really relatable queen moment for Emma, in my opinion.

Molly: Yes, I agree.

Becca: So, I think that also is consistent with how she perceives herself as a matchmaker as well, because those are also fantasies, they're just for other people.

Molly: Mm.

Becca: It's great fancies of love and part of [00:44:00] her anti-marriage strain in her is also this idea that nothing could live up to it.

Molly: Yeah, I am really relating to me right now, because I might cut this. But before I met Mel, I like had crushes on so many fictional-- I had a crush on Emily Hampshire. I was like, "Oh, my God, one day, I'm going to meet Emily Hampshire. We're going to fall in love and that's going to be it for me." I was just like, "That was recent." And then I met someone, I was like, "Oh, shit, this is what it's in real life." And so, I get that and I like maybe if she will meet someone who just changes that for her. Who knows? And maybe I'll cut that. Who knows?

Becca: Who's to say?

Molly: Whomst?

Becca: Yes. All right. We learned a bit more about Mrs. Churchill here. What does it tell us in the story where we are?

Molly: We understand that Mrs. Churchill is the worst, still curious about Mr. Churchill as in Mr. Churchill senior. But it tells us-- What does it tell us? **[00:45:00]** It gives us more context for Frank for sure that he might be stuck where he is and might not have a great life where he is. What else does it say about where we are?

Becca: It's just a story obstacle at this point. We don't know much about Frank. The reason we don't know much about Frank at this point is because there's a wall around him and that wall is partially mystery. But at this point, it seems very heavily influenced by the fact that his aunt will not let him come. And that is part of the reason that we have this great town mystery around him.

Molly: Mm. He's like the princess locked in his tower.

Becca: Exactly.

Molly: Hmm.

Becca: Again, adds to the romance of him as a figure.

Molly: Yeah, definitely.

Becca: Yes. Churchill versus Weston, where do you think Frank falls? What do you think he's going to be as a person? Is he more **[00:46:00]** Western or is he more Churchill in his sensibility?

Molly: Gosh, I truly have no idea, because I did start these chapters being annoyed at him for never visiting, for saying he's going to visit. He never comes. I was like, "He's wishy washy though Churchill's have rubbed off on him" based on what I know about them. But then knowing that he's actually being kept from coming, maybe he's more Weston. Maybe he loves his dad just as much as he says he does and really wants to come see him. Maybe he's just a pushover. I don't know. I don't know. I want to say Weston, but I'm worried about when we meet him, I'm not sure he's going to live up to expectations.

Becca: Last question before the standbys. Will Frank come?

Molly: God, I don't know. I don't know. He better. If he doesn't, then where's the drama?

Becca: The drama.

Molly: Yeah. But then also, I guess, the more they delay the visit-- It's going to get delayed. It's not going to be in January. It's not going to be in two weeks from now. It's going to be **[00:47:00]** down the line, maybe March or April. He's going to show up one day unannounced. He's going to be like, "I've made it." They're going to be like, "What the fuck?" Maybe, I don't know.

Becca: What do you think of Emma?

Molly: I relate to her more and more each episode. We've just talked about how she either is viewing love as just a practical thing. Marriage is practical. It doesn't have to be romantic and for herself, but we've also discussed her having these romantic notions that she feels are not for her. Maybe she's

afraid of them, maybe she's just doesn't feel they are for her, but she likes to have them one step removed from her either in other people or in fantasy men that she thinks she'll never meet or one day might meet, but they are removed. So, I relate to her on these things. She is more and more human each chapter.

Becca: Funniest quote?

Molly: [00:48:00] Okay. So, it's when Isabella, and Mrs. Weston, and Emma are talking about Frank. And Isabella says, "I am sure I never think of that poor young man without the greatest compassion. To be constantly living with an ill-tempered person must be dreadful. It is what we happily have never known anything of."

Becca: Oh, she lives with Michelle.

Molly: Michelle.

Becca: [laughs] Questions moving forward.

Molly: Will Frank visit? Will Emma actually like him when she meets him? My guess is no. I'm feeling like he's going to come and she's going to be like, "Oh," and feel let down and be like, "Okay, actually, expectations don't live up to reality. Back to my fantasy world and my matchmaking." That's my prediction. But that's a question I have is will he come? When will he come? When will Harriet feel better? What's going to happen with Elton?

Becca: How will this fadge?

Molly: How will fadge essentially.

Becca: Who wins the chapters?

Molly: I think I will give this [00:49:00] one to John Knightley.

Becca: I agree.

Molly: [laughs] So, that makes up for any shit we talked about him last episode.

Becca: Oh, I will continue to talk shit about John Knightley. He is not very nice to his father-in-law.

Molly: Or, to his wife honestly, sometimes. But we still find ways to laugh at and with him.

Becca: Yes, indeed. All right, listeners, that concludes this episode of Pod and Prejudice. For next time, if you want to read Chapters 15 and 16 of *Emma*, Volume I, you will be reading along with some interesting parts for me and Molly.

Molly: I am so excited. Oh, my God.

Becca: So, until next time, stay proper-

Molly: -and stay home, if it's snowing outside, honestly.

Becca: Yeah, sounds good.

Molly: Pod and Prejudice is edited by Molly Burdick and audio produced by Graham Cook. Our show art is designed by Torrance Browne. Our show is transcribed by SpeechDocs Podcast Transcription. For transcripts and to learn more about our team, check out our website **[00:50:00]** at podandprejudice.com. To keep up with the show, you can follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, [@podandprejudice](https://www.instagram.com/podandprejudice). If you love what you hear, check out our Patreon at [patreon.com/podandprejudice](https://www.patreon.com/podandprejudice) to see how you can support us or just drop us a rating and a review wherever you listen to podcasts. Thanks for listening.

[Transcript provided by SpeechDocs Podcast Transcription]