

**Molly:** Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we want to thank our newest patrons, Chelsea, Daniela, Magdalena, and Alannah. Welcome to the team. If you want to be like them and get access to bonus content like our notes, out takes, and more, check out our Patreon at [patreon.com/podandprejudice](https://patreon.com/podandprejudice). And now, enjoy this week's episode covering Chapters 25 and 26 of *Emma*.

**Becca:** I'm going to take a quick moment here just to text Mike to order the food, because--

**Molly:** Good plan.

**Becca:** Yeah, I don't want it to be too late. [texting Mike] All right, we're good.

**Molly:** Okay. Let's talk about Jane Austen.

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

**Becca:** This is Becca.

**Molly:** This is Molly.

**Becca:** We are here to [00:01:00] talk about Jane Austen.

**Molly:** We are here specifically to talk about--

**Molly and Becca:** *Emma*.

**Becca:** Listeners, if you're new here, I, Becca, have read many Jane Austen books in my life.

**Molly:** And I, Molly, am reading Jane Austen for the first time vis-à-vis this podcast.

**Becca:** If you would like to hear Molly read through *Pride and Prejudice* or *Sense and Sensibility* for the first time, that's Seasons 1 and 2 of this podcast respectively. But that is not what we're doing here today.

**Molly:** No. Today, we are talking about Volume II, Chapters 7 and 8 of *Emma*. Or, if your book isn't broken up into Volumes, that is Chapters 25 and 26.

**Becca:** Yes, that's correct. So, to catch you up on where we were last time, we met a certain little genius, billionaire, playboy, philanthropist.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** Or, some of those things. In Frank Churchill, a dashing, handsome young man who Emma is a little taken with and who we have questions about.

**Molly:** Yeah, I don't trust him.

**Becca:** So, yeah, Harriet's still pining [00:02:00] for Mr. Elton, which is terrible because she's great and he's trash. And Mr. Knightley fucking hates Frank Churchill.

**Molly:** He really hates him.

**Becca:** And Emma fucking hates Jane Fairfax.

**Molly:** She really hates her.

**Becca:** And so, what we have here are a bunch of petty rich people with very few problems, kind of sniping at each other.

**Molly:** Yeah. It's really just gossip and pettiness--

**Becca:** And Emma.

**Molly:** -and Emma. I saw something. I was going to bring this up later, but people keep sending it to us. It's a tweet that's like, people say that the biggest problems in Jane Austen's books are in the title. So, like *Pride and Prejudice*, the problems were Lizzie's pride and Darcy's prejudice or vice versa.

**Becca:** *Sense and Sensibility*.

**Molly:** It's Elinor's sense and Marianne's sensibility. And so, that makes the biggest problem in *Emma* Emma. [laughs]

**Becca:** It's me.

**Molly:** Hi.

**Becca:** I don't want to pay for this song.

**Molly:** We're not going to pay for this song.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** So, where we are now? Starting **[00:03:00]** with Chapter 7. The next day, after Emma meets Frank for the first time, Frank goes back to London to get-- Drum roll, please.

**Becca:** [Imitates drum roll sound]

**Molly:** A haircut.

**Becca:** Yes. This always gives off to me the vibes of Ryan in *The Office* when he's like, "They don't even want to know how much I paid for my haircut. It was \$200."

**Molly:** [laughs] It's so funny, because for a man, I guess, that's a lot. But when a woman goes to get her hair cut and colored, it can be up to like \$400.

**Becca:** It absolutely can. First of all, those are New York City prices.

**Molly:** Totally.

**Becca:** Second of all, even nowadays, a woman getting a haircut and just a haircut is not \$200 usually. [chuckles]

**Molly:** No. Just a haircut. My haircuts are usually-- I don't know if this is exposing too much about my lifestyle, but my haircuts are usually around like \$80 to \$90.

**Becca:** I feel like that's the standard New York City rate. If you are not coming **[00:04:00]** to us from New York City, I'm so sorry. Don't come here. It's so expensive.

**Molly:** Yeah. When I get my hair cut back home, it's like \$45.

**Becca:** Yeah, that's the spread in most of New York, at least.

**Molly:** Oh, yeah. But in any event, another hair thing. So, he goes to get his hair cut. [laughs]

**Becca:** Okay. This is different though, because no one's using the hair.

**Molly:** Nobody's touching the hair and smelling it and keeping it on their body.

**Becca:** Or, pulling a Dominic Cooper and weirdly kissing it and then going, "Shh." [chuckles]

**Molly:** Yeah. And also, the person cutting his hair is being paid to do so.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** So, it says that he was seized by a sudden freak at breakfast and was like, "I have to go get my hair cut," which I just like as a way of saying like he freaked out, but he was seized by a freak. Emma cannot approve of his decision to go get his hair cut in London. She thinks it's foppery and nonsense and contradicts, everything that she's learned about him so far that she thinks she's learned about him so far. She says [00:05:00] that, "In terms of moderation and rationality, this is the opposite of what she thought about him. She thought he had an unselfish warmth of heart, and she thinks that this contradicts that. And to me, it shows that he's kind of vain, like he doesn't trust anyone in Highbury with his hair."

**Becca:** Absolutely. And it also shows, he's like a certain level of a fancy boy. 16 miles in one day is a long way to travel in this time period and he's only with his dad for, like, two weeks. And so, he's choosing to basically spend a whole day to go to London just to get his hair cut and come back, when he could just not get his hair cut and it would be fine.

**Molly:** Yeah. And isn't the Churchill's Estate in London or near London?

**Becca:** Enscombe.

**Molly:** Enscombe. Is it outside of London or--? I felt to me like he was just going back where he came from.

**Becca:** Well, Frank, as a young man around town does spend time in London. Remember, Leo DiCaprio party boy days, the 90s.

**Molly:** Right. So, in this [00:06:00] situation, it's not somewhere he's like, "Oh, I'm in Spain. I'm going to go to Barcelona." It's like, "I'm just going to go to this place that I go all the time and get my hair cut."

**Becca:** I guess. He's from Yorkshire.

**Molly:** But he has access to London all the time is what I'm saying.

**Becca:** He can go to London. Yes.

**Molly:** He could have gone to London a couple of days ago to get his haircut.

**Becca:** Yeah. This is like somebody who lives in, say, Vermont and is like, "I only trust the people in New York City with my hair."

**Molly:** Right.

**Becca:** Which, again, you heard the prices now, folks. You should not do.

**Molly:** Yeah, you can get your hair cut anywhere. I got a really great haircut out of Supercuts in Syracuse, and that was one of my favorite haircuts.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** 20 bucks.

**Becca:** Yes. Although, sometimes, if you let your mother cut your hair, there's bad things happen. I'm not speaking on my own behalf. I'm speaking on Mike's behalf.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** Anyway--

**Molly:** Anyway, yes. So, Mr. Weston is very lighthearted and joking about it. He's like, "Oh, yes, he's just such a coxcomb and doesn't seem to care. But Mrs. Weston, you can [00:07:00] tell, because she doesn't want to talk about it and she's like, "oh, yes, well, young people will have their little whims." You can tell that she's upset about it. Aside from this,

Emma still really likes Frank, and she thinks that he has proven himself in every other way, a good companion. When she's spoken to him about the Churchills, he's very kind and he has respect for them, which she thinks is very proper. Emma thinks he is worthy of the honor of being in love with her.

**Becca:** Which is perfect. She also says like, "He's lived up to that weird fantasy I built up in my head."

**Molly:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Becca:** But then she's like, "Of course, it has to be unrequited, because I don't want to get married."

**Molly:** Yeah, that comes up a lot in these chapters. She's like, "Hmm, I'm still not getting married. I have to throw in a little coldness every time I address him."

**Becca:** She's like, "Well, I have to be careful, because he'll think I want to marry him when I am a Woodhouse, will not marry you."

**Molly:** She's like, "I'm not going to marry, but if you want to be in love with me-"

**Becca:** That's totally fine.

**Molly:** That's great.

**Becca:** Chill.

**Molly:** So, Mr. Weston tells Emma that Frank really liked her and that she's [00:08:00] made a good impression, and he thought she was beautiful and charming. Because of this, she doesn't want to judge him too harshly for the whole haircut thing.

[laughter]

**Molly:** She might be willing to forgive him, but there is one person in the town who will never forgive him.

**Becca:** The way this is written in the book is exquisite.

**Molly:** Please read it.

**Becca:** Yes. "There was one person among his new acquaintance in Surry, not so leniently disposed. In general, he was judged, throughout the parishes of Donwell and Highbury, with great candour, liberal allowances were made for the little excesses of such a handsome young man, one who smiled so often and bowed so well, but there was one spirit among them not to be softened, from its power of censure, by bows or smiles, Mr. Knightley."

**Molly:** I think it's bows.

**Becca:** Oh, he probably doesn't have bows in his hair.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** Bows or smiles.

**Molly:** Nice.

**Becca:** So, yeah, it's just like Mr. Knightley sitting there being like, "A fucking pretty boy Piece of shit."

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** What is she doing over there?"

**Molly:** Knightley hates him.

**Becca:** I know. It's so delicious.

**Molly:** I love it. [00:09:00]

**Becca:** And we'll get to it later, but somebody later refers to Knightley as someone who's not easily irritated, which I thought was hilarious-- [laughs]

**Molly:** I know. When I was typing up my notes, when I read it the first time, I was like, "I totally buy that." But then the second time I was writing my notes, I was like, "Not irritated by most things."

**Becca:** Most is doing so much work there.

**Molly:** Yes. So, Knightley cannot forgive him. When he finds out about the haircut, he's like, "Mm." At first, he doesn't say anything and then later he starts muttering to himself. But Frank is exactly who he thought he was, basically what you said, stupid little party boy.

**Molly:** Grumble, grumble, grumble. And Emma is going to call him out for muttering about him, but she's like, "You know what, he's clearly just trying to make himself feel better. I'm not going to start anything with him." So, she does not. So, the Westons are visiting in the morning telling her about the haircut thing, and she needs their opinion on something. I really liked how this was written, because it said that, "It was lucky they were there, because [00:10:00] Emma wanted advice." And what was even better, she wanted exactly the advice that they gave her. Because Emma likes when she hears what she wants to hear.

**Becca:** Oh, absolutely.

**Molly:** This is the problem. The Coles, which I remember, Elton's friends, are a family of low origin. They made their money in trade, but recently, they've gained more income and have built up their house, so now they are second only to Hartfield in terms of size of their home.

**Becca:** Mm-hmm. #Newmoney.

**Molly:** New money. And they're throwing a party. Emma assumed they wouldn't invite any of the best families, which would be the residents of Hartfield, Randalls and Donwell, so Knightley and the Westons and herself, because why would they deign to invite people above them. She doesn't want them to think it's in their power to arrange the terms on which these families will meet with them, because they should be inviting the Coles places and not the other way around. And Randalls and Donwell, however, do get invited, but nothing for Hartfield. So, Emma's feeling a little butthurt.

**Becca:** [00:11:00] Yeah. The idea is, like, "Why don't they invite Emma and her father? Is it because they are invalids who do not leave the house?" which we hear a little bit more about here as well.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm.

**Becca:** They just do not keep a lot of society. And then on the other hand, you have the idea that the Woodhouses are above the Knightleys and the Westons, so they're too high to be invited.

**Molly:** Which is what Emma wants to think.

**Becca:** Exactly.

**Molly:** She's like, "Well, of course, they wouldn't deign to invite me, but I should have the power of refusal. I should be allowed to say no to their invitation, like they should have invited me." And then, she's like, "Plus, Mr. Knightley is going and the Westons are going,

and Harriet's going to be there. And now, I have FOMO." She's like, "Now, I wish I was invited-"

**Becca:** Exactly.

**Molly:** -which is hilarious.

**Becca:** Honestly, I don't think it was intentional, but the Coles played this so perfectly, the mind game here.

**Molly:** So good. She refers to it as being left in solitary grandeur, which they thought was like-- [00:12:00]

**Becca:** It's a good line from Jane Austen.

**Molly:** A great line from Jane Austen. I like Emma thinking of herself as being in grandeur, but, yeah, it is solitary grandeur type.

**Becca:** Yeah. The top of society is lonely.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Being at the top sucks.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** They wipe their tears with their money.

**Molly:** The other question is, do they maybe not like Emma? [giggles] Maybe they didn't invite her, because they don't want her there.

**Becca:** Well, I think you've learned this at this point in this story, but basically, who you enjoy as a person is almost secondary to your class status.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** You socialize with who it's proper for you to socialize with, not who you like. It's part of the little bit of revolution and rebellion in the friendship between Harriet and Emma.

**Molly:** Right. Yeah.

**Becca:** They just like each other.

**Molly:** Right. So, an invitation does come and she's immediately like, "Well, of course, I'm going to say no." But then the Westons are like, "Well, are you sure? You should come." And she's like, "Okay." [giggles]

**Becca:** She's like, "Well, they went to all that [00:13:00] trouble and they really kiss her ass--" [crosstalk]

**Molly:** They really do. So, they ordered a folding screen to put around her dad, so that he wouldn't catch a cold, like catch a breeze at the party. We just wanted to wait to invite you until the folding screen came, [Becca laughs] but Emma doesn't even let her dad go to the party.

**Becca:** Well, I think we are meant to take from this that Mr. Woodhouse would rather absolutely die than socialize. He has a whole monologue about it, about how he cannot possibly imagine going out to dinner. He's like, "Emma and I were early to bed, people," and I was like, "This resonates with me. I'm about to turn 30 and I've become 80 in that time period." And so, I'm like, "Ah, yes, instead of going out to dinner and grabbing drinks with people, I like, I could come home and cook pasta and lie down."

**Molly:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Becca:** So, that is what we're getting from [00:14:00] Mr. Woodhouse. So, I think Emma is more rescuing her father from having to leave the house, which she doesn't want to do.

**Molly:** Sure. Yes.

**Becca:** But she wants to go. She wants to go socialized.

**Molly:** She does want to go socialize. So, they make this whole plan for how she's going to go to the party. She tells her dad that they'll get Mr. Goddard or Mrs. Goddard or Miss Bates to come and hang out with him, and he agrees to this, and he's like, "I wish the Coles weren't having this party at night in the wintertime. It would be much better, if they came and had lunch with us in the summer, because the evening due of a summer day is not something I would expose anyone to." But he basically is just like salty, that is happening now. But he says, "Mr. Knightley will be there, and the Westons will be there, so you'll be in good hands."

He tells Emma that she's going to get tired and want to leave after tea, which I just think is funny, because she wants to go. He's like, "Yes, but you'll come home early," of course, like you're saying.

**Becca:** Well, he's projecting onto her, because he's [00:15:00] like, "You don't want to be out for a long time" and Emma was like, "I'm 20 years old. So, I will be out for a while."

**Molly:** I know. Emma's like, "Well, what if I'm not tired yet?" And he's like, "Oh, but you will be tired." And then Mr. Weston's like, "But that would be breaking up the party, if I'm left early, and that would be offensive to the Coles."

**Becca:** So, there's like a whole page in half that's just the Westons convincing Mr. Woodhouse that Emma will be perfectly fine to be at the party until everybody else leaves.

**Molly:** Right. And he finally is like, "Oh, yes, I wouldn't want to offend the Coles, like, go to the party." And she's like, "Okay, don't wait up for me though."

**Becca:** My favorite part of this is like, "Ah, yes, you're right. It would be offensive to them. So, maybe you will just have to stay until you're a little tired, maybe a little past that."

**Molly:** Yeah/

**Becca:** She's like, "I'll survive."

**Molly:** Yeah. So, she tells him not to wait up for her and he's like, "I'll not wait up for you. If you promise that when you get home, if you're cold, you'll warm up, and if you're hungry, you'll have a snack." [laughs] She's like, "I can do that." [00:16:00] And that's the end of that chapter, which brings us to Chapter 8.

**Becca:** Which I would refer to as a doozy.

**Molly:** This one is a doozy. It's long and it's chaotic.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** So, it's the day of the party. Frank returns and it says, if he kept his father waiting for dinner, nobody lets Mr. Woodhouse know this, because they want to make sure that he doesn't have any negative feelings towards Frank, because the Westons are trying real hard to get Frank and Emma together. He seems totally unashamed of the whole haircut situation and Emma thinks, "silly things do cease to be silly if they are done by sensible people in an impudent way." And impudent means lacking respect and I'm trying to figure out what her logic here is. She's saying, "If he were silly, he would either be really proud of himself for this

haircut debacle or ashamed of himself for the haircut debacle, and he doesn't seem to have any feelings about it at all. So, he's just unaware. "

**Becca:** [00:17:00] I think the impudent[?] is not saying he's necessarily lacking respect. I think the idea is to him, he's just taking it in stride and he's like, "Yes, I did get my haircut in London today, and it happened, and we're moving on, basically, shamelessly."

**Molly:** So, it's not silly and he's not being hoity-toity about it. He's just like, "That's what happened."

**Becca:** Exactly. So, the fact that it's a matter of fact, and that he doesn't see the big deal with it, and that he's not excited about it, he's not ashamed of it, it's just how he lives.

**Molly:** Okay. And she's okay with that.

**Becca:** She seems to be justifying that. It's an interesting question from Jane Austen, because I'm not sure I agree with the idea that silly things cease to be silly when they're done by non-silly people. But I think it's like- Have you ever had the experience of someone doing something weird and they do it with such a rationality that you just take it in stride?

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Yeah. Someone who just does things with confidence makes you feel like, "Oh, yeah, that wasn't a big deal when they [00:18:00] did that thing," you know?

**Molly:** Right. I don't know why this is what I'm thinking of, but after I brush my teeth, I take my hand and I get some water and I use that and put it in my mouth, [crosstalk] up.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** To me, that's totally normal, because that's how I was taught to brush my teeth. But I brushed my teeth at my girlfriend's house with the door open, and her roommate and his boyfriend were all in the living room, and they all saw me do that, and they were like, "What did you just do?" I was like, "That's totally normal." They were like, "That's not how I brush my teeth." They all do something weird with their toothpaste after they brush their teeth.

**Becca:** Wait. What? I do what you do.

**Molly:** Thank you.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** Thank you. Yeah, I think it's normal.

**Becca:** You cup your hands, you get a little water, you swish it around your mouth, and you spit.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** I know some people take a cup of water.

**Molly:** No.

**Becca:** That's fine.

**Molly:** What they do is they wet their toothbrush again and then suck the water off of the toothbrush.

**Becca:** That is absolutely unhinged. But this is a perfect example, [Molly laughs] where you were made to feel like you were being the weird one.

[laughter]



**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** [00:19:00] Actually, Mel and her roommate and his boyfriend are the weird ones here.

**Molly:** Thank you. Now, I've converted. Mel and she does do a little rinse afterwards with her hand.

**Becca:** Yeah, you either cup your hands under the water and take a little water and take a sip, or you get a cup that's like your toothbrush cup, and you take some water in the cup and you take a sip and you spit.

**Molly:** I know. Okay. And then roommate's boyfriend has now informed me that you're not actually supposed to rinse your mouth after you brush your teeth, because you're supposed to let the fluoride sit in your mouth. But I need my coffee after I brush my teeth, so I don't know what you're talking about.

**Becca:** Mike brushes his teeth after he drinks his coffee in the morning, which I-- [crosstalk]

**Molly:** Some people do that.

**Becca:** Yeah, it helps with the stains and everything, but the fluoride doesn't leave your mouth permanently. Okay, listen, listeners, we have you here for a reason. [Molly laughs] You're not only just in our entertainment audience, you are also how we crowd source things generally. So, let us know. Do you cup and sip and spit? Do you leave the toothpaste [00:20:00] in your mouth? Do you use a cup? Do you suck the water off [Molly laughs] of a toothbrush like an insane person?

**Molly:** I don't know how multiple people in the same household have this weird way of doing the thing, but they also did it so confidently that I was like, "Have I been living incorrectly all these years, but now that you've told me, I feel a little bit better knowing I'm not alone in that?"

**Becca:** So, Frank Churchill sucked the water off of his toothbrush in front of Emma and he was like, "Yeah, that's how you brush your teeth." And she was like, "Okay, I guess, that's how you brush your teeth."

**Molly:** Right. Exactly. That's what happened.

**Becca:** Exactly.

[laughter]

**Molly:** Well, that's not the story I thought was going to make it into the episode.

**Becca:** [laughs] I'm reeling. I'm reeling.

**Molly:** Yeah. It was-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** I've also seen Mike brush his teeth. He actually has another one as well. He will sometimes stick his head under the tap and take some water in and then rinse and spit.

**Becca:** Yes. So, that's the first time that this happened with the toothbrush thing. That's what they all said that they did. But then the second time, they revealed [00:21:00] that's not what they always do and they all do the-- [crosstalk]

**Molly:** So, you know it's weird.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** Mel, I'm sorry. Love you to bits, but what the fuck?

[laughter]

**Becca:** Anyway, back to Jane Austen.

**Molly:** Yes. So, Frank does the weird toothbrush thing. Tuesday comes and it is the time of the party, and Emma is excited to see Frank Churchill again. She is excited to get to talk to him for a more extended period of time and to gauge how soon it might be necessary for her to throw some coldness into her air. Basically, she's like, "Can't have him wanting to marry me. Do you want him in love with me?"

**Becca:** It's also like, "I need to not be improper here. Society tells me I'm not supposed to flirt too heavily with this man."

**Molly:** Yeah, Becca did a cute little hair thing while she said flirt. [giggles]

**Becca:** Flirt too heavily with this man.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Graham, I know this is an audio medium, I promise.

**Molly:** [laughs] So, she can't get it out of her head that one of Mr. Elton's greatest failings was the fact that he was friends with the [00:22:00] Coles, because they were below him. But it's more the Coles that are at fault for being friends with Mr. Elton, because he sucks.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** But he's on the brain. And Mrs. Goddard and Mrs. Bates come over, and before Emma leaves for the party, she gives them big slices of cake and full glasses of wine, because she's not sure how much of their dinner they were allowed to eat around Mr. Woodhouse.

**Becca:** So much gruel.

**Molly:** Yeah. She was like, "I ordered them a hearty meal, but I think they were probably only allowed to eat the side dishes," like whatever.

**Becca:** Yep.

**Molly:** So, her carriage takes her, and it follows another carriage to the Coles, and when they arrive, she finds that the carriage in front of her was Mr. Knightley's carriage and he doesn't usually take a carriage. So, she pokes fun at him, being like, "It's so nice to see you traveling like a gentleman for once." And he's like, "Ha, ha, ha, yes." How does he normally get around?

**Becca:** He walks. She makes a whole big point about, "He doesn't keep horses and he doesn't use his income that way. [00:23:00] And he's young and athletic, and generally likes to walk places. So, Mr. Knightley is a huge walker a la Lizzie Bennet.

**Molly:** I was going to say, it's proper when he walks places, but it's not proper when Lizzy Bennet walks places.

**Becca:** Patriarchy.

**Molly:** Right. Of course.

**Becca:** Yes. Mr. Knightley has the complete capacity to walk. You also get the sense that Lizzy trucks through a bunch of mud to get places where-- [crosstalk]

**Molly:** Right. She didn't take the path.

**Becca:** Yeah, Mr. Knightley's just walking down a whole lot of paths, but he's a svelte man, apparently. He's just very fit, because he goes to the Woodhouses, like every day.

**Molly:** How many miles is that?

**Becca:** He's pretty near the Woodhouses. It's within, like 2 miles, I think. He's very close to Randalls as well. Those three houses are very close to each other, but he walks everywhere.

**Molly:** Yeah. Okay, I was wondering about that.

**Becca:** Yeah, he's like a born and raised New Yorker.

**Molly:** Right.

**Becca:** If you have friends with anyone who is born and raised in New York City, they will straight up be like, "Oh, we're in Harlem. Let's just walk down to Chelsea."

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** You are like, "What?"

**Molly:** Yeah. [laughs] **[00:24:00]** So, he jokes back and he's like, "Oh, I'm really glad you saw me now arriving in my carriage, because if you had seen me in the drawing room later, you wouldn't have thought I was any more of a gentleman than normal." And she's like, "No, when you walk places, I can always tell because you have this air about you of trying to make sure that it seems like you arrived there the same way as everyone else. And right now, you're not trying to impress anyone. So, you definitely took a carriage here." They go in, and Emma gets a very warm welcome, and Frank immediately comes straight over to her and makes it very clear that she is his object, and he sits next to her at dinner.

Since the party is so large at dinner, there's a lot of conversations going on, and she's able to focus on her conversation with Frank, but then she hears Mrs. Cole telling something about Jane Fairfax, so she tunes into that side of the table. Apparently, Jane Fairfax received a surprise pianoforte, and she doesn't know who it's from, and everyone is like, "Well, it must be from Colonel Campbell." **[00:25:00]** Now, when I read this the first time, I thought they were talking about Mr. Dixon the whole time. So, I didn't think there was any confusion here. But my first thought is that this is from Mr. Dixon, not Mr. Campbell. That's just a thought.

**Becca:** I'm going to neither confirm nor deny that, obviously, but I also want to point out something that I think is really interesting here. Pianoforte. Tiny apartment.

**Molly:** Tiny apartment.

**Becca:** Tiny apartment. Pianoforte.

**Molly:** Someone who hasn't seen the tiny apartment?

**Becca:** Maybe. But also, I am thinking of it more from the perspective of, like, people around Jane Fairfax giving her little trinkets of a life that she's not living at home.

**Molly:** Yeah. And on the other side of that inconveniences, it's a surprise. So, she couldn't plan for this, and now there's a huge pianoforte in their tiny apartment.

**Becca:** Yep.

**Molly:** So, it's not the best thing. But Mrs. Cole says she is so thrilled that Jane has now gotten a piano, because **[00:26:00]** Jane plays so well and it's a shame when there are instruments that go to waste in great houses, like, for example, Emma's, or in her own

house. She has a pianoforte, but she can't play, and her kids are so young, so she's like, "Jane has nothing. So, now I'm so glad that she's going to get to play a pianoforte."

**Becca:** I will say probably Emma's piano does not go to waste. Emma does play the pianoforte. She's just not good like Jane is.

**Molly:** Sure.

**Becca:** She's fine.

**Molly:** Yeah. She doesn't practice enough.

**Becca:** She doesn't practice enough. She's not naturally as musically gifted, but she's passable. She can play *Wonderwall*.

**Molly:** Anyway, here's *Wonderwall*. [laughs] So, Miss Cole then turns to Emma and was like, "You'll have to play for us later." And Emma's like, "Okay. All right. Sure." So, then Emma turns to Frank, and they start discussing the gift, and Emma is wondering, "Why, if it's from the Colonel, it had taken him so long to send her a pianoforte, because he knows that she doesn't have one." Or, "Why he didn't just give her his own pianoforte, because it's probably sitting in London with no one using it right [00:27:00] now?"

Frank is thinking of rational excuses for all of these, but he can tell that Emma suspects something and he wants the hot goss. So, she then says, "Well, what do you think of the idea that Mrs. Dixon sent the instrument?" And Frank is like, "Oh, yes, that makes a lot more sense, like her friend sent her a piano."

**Becca:** Yes. I want to say here, we give him a lot of crap, but she is definitely picking up something here.

**Molly:** Oh, 100%. I agree with her for now.

**Becca:** Her logic is airtight on the Colonel Campbell thing.

**Molly:** Yes. It wouldn't make no sense for him to send a surprise pianoforte to who he's raised as his daughter, his ward. Yeah. When Frank agrees, Emma then says, "Well, then we must also suspect Mr. Dixon in our suspicions." And Frank then agrees, "Yes, it's probably a joint present from the Dixons." Then Emma explains her suspicions about everything. She explains that she thinks Mr. Dixon is in love with Jane, maybe Jane is a little in love with Mr. Dixon, and that's why she didn't go to Ireland. [00:28:00] She says that Jane's excuse of "taking her native air makes no sense because it's the middle of winter, so it's not like she's out enjoying the summer air. She's in by the fire shivering." So, another airtight logic--

**Becca:** From Emma.

**Molly:** Yeah. Frank agrees and he says, "It was pretty obvious back in Weymouth that Mr. Dixon preferred Jane's playing to Mrs. Dixon's playing." Emma then adds, "And he saved her life on the party boat," which it was a boat. I know we had some contention about whether it was a boat or just by the water. It said she was in a vessel. So, she fell overboard.

**Becca:** I was picturing like a yacht in this scene, which obviously it's not, but it was so funny.

**Molly:** [giggles] I was picturing on warm holidays, where people have a little motorboat and they go out on the water and they're drinking mimosas. I was picturing one of those, but this is like, I don't know what it is, but not that.

**Becca:** Something probably much simpler.

**Molly:** [00:29:00] Yes. So, basically, she fell, he caught her, and Frank is like, "Oh, well, like, I saw that happen. I was there and it didn't seem romantic to me, but I'm simple, so I probably missed something."

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** Then Emma says that this gift of the pianoforte confirms all of her suspicions of the romance. And Frank says, "If the Dixons deny that it was them, then they can assume that it was from the Campbells." And Emma was like, "Definitely not, because Jane would have guessed it if it was from the Campbells. First thing, she would have been like, 'Oh, this must be from the Campbells. But she didn't know who it was from.'" And Frank says, "He's perfectly convinced and she insults him to think that he's not" and he was convinced of everything, every step of the way that she had said. He was like, "First, I thought it was from the Campbells, but then you said it was from Mrs. Dixon." I said, "Yeah." Then you said it was from Mr. Dixon. I was like, "Definitely."

**Becca:** I will say this about Frank Churchill. He is such a good yes man. He's like yes ending the whole situation with Emma. They are like two little, like gremlins feeding [00:30:00] off each other's energy here.

**Molly:** Yes. And his energy is just hyping her up.

**Becca:** Like I said, he has that specific charisma, the charm of making other people feel charming and you can feel it with Emma right now.

**Molly:** Totally. After dinner, the ladies go to the drying room, and they are soon joined by the less important ladies who weren't invited to dinner, which would be Miss Bates, Miss Fairfax, and Miss Smith. Emma sees Harriet come in, and she is struck by how light and cheerful Harriet seems, and she's like, "Nobody would ever be able to tell that she was crying for the last two weeks," and she's very proud of her for that. Emma suspects that Jane Fairfax would gladly change places with Harriet and have loved Elton unrequitedly than to have been loved by her best friend's husband.

**Becca:** I will also say, this comes in the context of Emma basically being like, "Harriet looks so cute. She looks so pretty. Oh, my God, you can't even tell she's upset. She's having a ball." And then she looks at Jane and she's like, "Oh, God, Jane looks so morose right now, [Molly [giggles] [00:31:00] like My God, she is not keeping it together at all like Harriet." And then she was like, "Well, if I think about it, Harriet's not going through the shit that Jane is growing through right now." [laughs]

**Molly:** Probably, if Emma's right about everything.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** Yeah. She's like, "Jane could use a little unrequited love." So, Emma doesn't want to go up and talk to Jane, but--

**Becca:** She literally is like, "The party is big enough that I don't have to talk to Jane." My God.

**Molly:** Yes. So, she's like, "I will take advantage of that and I will stay over here."

**Becca:** Except for the fact that she's literally standing near enough to hear everything that happening .

**Molly:** Yeah. So, she's like, "Jane is standing right there and Emma just turns away, but still listens."

**Becca:** And picturing Emma leaning in and being like, "Mm, mm."

**Molly:** Yeah. So, she hears what they're saying, and she hears people asking Jane about the pianoforte, and she watches Jane blush as she assumes with guilt and say, "Oh, my excellent friend, Colonel Campbell." Mrs. Weston is then asking her all these questions about the piano. She's like, "Oh, how's the tone? [00:32:00] How's the pedal?" She doesn't notice that Jane clearly doesn't want to talk about it.

The men then come in, and Frank comes straight to Emma, which Emma again thinks that it makes it very clear to everyone that he is trying to get with her. She then introduces him to Harriet, he later tells Emma how lovely Harriet is, and Harriet later tells Emma that he looks like Mr. Elton.

**Becca:** Which is spectacular.

**Molly:** Emma is like [sighs] and turns away. She does not even think-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** She's like, "I'm not even going to dignify that with a response." It's like when you get a really intense text from somebody and hear, she's like, "I don't know how to respond to this. So, I simply will not."

**Molly:** Yes. It's like turns the phone back over.

**Becca:** [laughs] She's like, "Oh, I am at work. I'm going just not--"

**Molly:** [laughs] Exactly. Frank tells Emma that he found the men in the dinner sensible and gentlemen like, and he speaks very highly of all the families of Highbury in general, which makes Emma think that maybe she is too harsh on them usually. She's like, "Maybe I hate this place too much." He then tells her that he gets very little society at Enscombe, [00:33:00] then that Mrs. Churchill very rarely wants to go out and it is with great difficulty at times that he is able to get away.

He really makes it clear that it's only at times that he's able to get away. He later says that he has more sway over his aunt than his uncle does and with time, he can persuade her to do anything. But his influence fails in certain situations, one of which being when he wants to go abroad.

**Becca:** This is another piece of the puzzle which we have talked about a little bit, and I think it's also going to be in the study questions that will talk about it. But this is another window into Frank Churchill's experience with the Churchill family and what they're like, because we have all these experiences of Frank Churchill being party boy extraordinaire, but you see him get psyched to be interacting in Highbury, and it tells you a little bit about, maybe the limitations he feels at home in this company.

**Molly:** I think so. [00:34:00] I think it does. I still can't tell if I believe him or not. Becca is doing her great stone face impression.

**Becca:** I do a great stone face impression. It's part of the magic of this podcast.

**Molly:** [giggles] So, Emma guesses that the other time when he's unable to sway his aunt is when he wants to show honorable behavior towards his father. He then says that he's had a terrible realization. He has already been in Highbury a week and he is leaving in another week. Emma says, "Maybe now you'll regret spending a whole day in London getting your hair cut" and he's like, "No, I don't regret it. I don't want to be seen by my friends unless I look good," which I guess fair.

**Becca:** Yep.

**Molly:** Emma then turns and talks to Mr. Cole for a bit and then she turns back to Frank and sees that he is staring at Jane and she's like, "What's wrong?" And he says, "Jane has done her hair really weird." And he says that the style is [00:35:00] outré, which the closest

definition that I could find was that in French, it means outraged. So, potentially outrageous, like her hair is outrageous. And he is like, "What is that style? I have to go ask her about it."

**Becca:** Outré also in French means like unusual or startling.

**Molly:** Yeah, something like that. So, she's done her hair in some odd way, and he says he's like those curls. I'm picturing like the doughnut hairstyle of Fanny Dashwood.

**Becca:** Ah, yes, the infamous doughnut Fanny hair.

**Molly:** Yeah. Or bagels. Actually, I think it was.

**Becca:** Or little ass holes.

**Molly:** Yeah, it could be little ass holes. All right. Terrible image.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** So, he goes to ask Jane if it's an Irish fashion. And he goes and he stands right in between Emma and Jane, so she can't see Jane's reaction to his question. I think he did this on purpose, but Emma thinks that he did this improvidently, which means **[00:36:00]** thoughtlessly. But I think that he's purposefully blocking Jane, so that Emma can't see, because he's not actually asking her about her hair and I don't know what he's asking her about.

**Becca:** That's a great idea.

**Molly:** Thank you. I also wrote here that I can't tell he's being mean about her hair, if he has a crush on her. So, there's that. Mrs. Weston then swoops in to Emma and says, "She has been forming plans just like Emma" and she's like, "Emma, I have the hot goss. Do you know how Miss Bates and Jane got to this party?" And Emma's like, "I assume they walked." And Miss Weston is like, "Yeah, I thought so too, but I just went to go offer Miss Bates in my carriage for the ride home and she said there was no need, because she took Mr. Knightley's carriage here and they're going to be taking Mr. Knightley's carriage back."

**Becca:** We have a fact Emma did not know.

**Molly:** [laughs] Yeah. And Emma's like, "What?" She feels fairly certain that the only reason Mr. Knightley took his carriage at all was, **[00:37:00]** so that he could offer it to Miss Bates and Miss Fairfax. Emma considers this and she agrees. She says, "Mr. Knightley is very good natured, useful, considerate, benevolent. He's not gallant, but he is humane, and this is something he would do." Mrs. Weston laughs and says Emma is giving him more credit for "disinterested benevolence" than she would, because she thinks he did this because he likes Jane Fairfax.

**Becca:** We need a record scratch here. [sound] [laughs] Give it to me, girl.

**Molly:** Well, okay, so, my first thought is no way. But as the chapter progressed, I started to think about it and I was like, "Wait, maybe why else would he want Emma and Jane to be friends?" You keep asking me why he wants Emma and Jane to be friends. And he is best friends with Emma, so of course, he's going to want her to approve of the person that he likes. I think there is a real possibility that he favors **[00:38:00]** Jane and he might like her.

He's known her for a long time. I don't know, there's lots of thoughts and there's going to be more as it goes along. But my first thought was, no way, and then the more I thought about it, I was like, "Actually, this could work." So, that's where I stand now.

**Becca:** Okay.

**Molly:** So, Emma immediately is like, "No, absolutely not. Mr. Knightley cannot get married. I cannot consent to that. Then little Henry won't inherit Donwell." Henry being Isabella's son.

**Becca:** That's correct.

**Molly:** So, Emma has it in her mind that Mr. Knightley just was never going to get married. Mrs. Weston is like, "Well, it's not that I want the match, but if Knightley really loves Jane, would you really object to it and offer a six-year-old boy?" And Emma's like, "Yes, I would." And Jane Fairfax, two of all women, is how she ends it. [chuckles] Now I think she doesn't want him to get married-- She won't marry him, but she doesn't want him to get married to anyone else and she especially doesn't want him to get married to Jane Fairfax.

**Becca:** [00:39:00] She doesn't want Jane Fairfax in any portion of her life.

**Molly:** Right. She's thinking like, "Oh, my God, if he gets married to Jane Fairfax, and I'm going to have to see her all the time, and she's going to be telling me what to do? No way." But the way that I'm seeing this or the way that it comes off to me is, again, very high school. This is all very high school petty drama of like, "He's her best friend and everyone wants them to get together," at least I do.

**Becca:** [laughs] Everyone in the 21st century really wants them to get together.

**Molly:** Yes. They're best friends. Maybe he liked her at some point, I don't know. He's known her since she was in diapers, so maybe not. But anyway, their best friends. It makes sense for Emma and Knightley to be together, but they are just friends, and they always will just be friends, but he cannot have anyone else either. He has to stay just her as just her friend. No one else is and definitely no one else's husband.

**Becca:** Especially not Jane Fairfax.

**Molly:** Especially not Jane Fairfax.

**Becca:** The bane of Emma's entire existence.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, this is all a lot.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** So, [00:40:00] Mrs. Weston says, "Well, Knightley has always liked Jane." And Emma's like, "But the match would be so imprudent." And Mrs. Weston says, "I am not speaking of its prudence. I am speaking of its probability," which then I wrote *Prudence and Probability*, the alternate title of this book.

**Becca:** Jane Austen apparently just got sick of doing the titles. What are they? The--

**Molly:** Ah, alliterative.

**Becca:** The alliterative titles.

**Molly:** Yes, [chuckles] but she could have had one right there. So, Emma says, "Well, I don't think it's probable at all. He just ordered his carriage out of goodwill and "Mrs. Weston, you should have refrained from matchmaking."

**Becca:** I mean, Emma.

**Molly:** Are you one to talk?

**Becca:** Pot, kettle-

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** -come on. [laughs]



**Molly:** Exactly.

**Becca:** She's sitting here being like, "I am picking up vibes that Jane was in love with her best friend's husband." And then, Mrs. Weston is like, "Oh, I could see her and Knightley getting together," and Emma's like, "How dare you interfere with other people's business?" [00:41:00]

**Molly:** [laughs] She's like, "You're talking about things you don't know anything about."

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** And then she says, "Mr. Knightley doesn't want to get married, that he is happy by himself with his farm and his sheep and his library," someone's projecting.

**Becca:** But also, that does sound spectacular.

**Molly:** It sounds great, but [Becca laughs] Emma thinks that just because she's sitting alone in her house in her solitary grandeur that everyone else who has that sort of situation wants to be alone too. And Knightley just might not want to be alone. Emma thinks that she knows him so well, but they don't talk about this sort of thing.

**Becca:** They haven't really.

**Molly:** They haven't. I feel like they don't talk about love, at least not yet. We'll see.

**Becca:** Yes. There hasn't been much to talk about.

**Molly:** So, Mrs. Weston goes, "But Emma, if he really loves Jane--" and Emma's like, "He doesn't love Jane."

**Becca:** She's fighting the hypothetical here. On the hypothetical, Emma, that he does impossible. He doesn't, so we're not dealing with it.

**Molly:** She's like, "We're not dealing with this." She says she's sure that he would do any good for Jane and [00:42:00] her family that he could, and Mrs. Weston is like, "Well, the most good he could do would be to give Jane a respectable home." And Emma's like, "Yeah, but that would be shameful and degrading to himself." And then Miss Bates would be around all the time and then she starts mocking Miss Bates and she's pretending that she's Miss Bates around the house like, "Oh, my God, thank you so much for marrying Jane." Miss Bates is in the room and she's just making fun of her.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah.

**Molly:** I think that Frank brings out the worst in Emma. He's like the friend. He's like the Willoughby that-- Not saying that Frank is like Willoughby, because I don't think he's nearly as bad. He seems like a nice guy overall so far. I don't know. But the way that Marianne was with Willoughby, where she would talk shit about people, I feel like that's how Emma is with Frank. So, she's falling into that a little bit here, because normally, she talks shit about people in the comfort of her own home. It seems unusual that she's talking shit about someone who's right there. Mrs. Weston is like, "Mr. Knightley wouldn't be so bothered by Miss Bates, because he doesn't really get irritated." This is the thing.

**Becca:** Mrs. Weston, the idea that Mr. Knightley [00:43:00] does not get irritated by things is the most ridiculous thing anyone has said in a Jane Austen novel.

**Molly:** It's so silly.

**Becca:** Here's the thing. Mr. Knightley has a lot of patience for Miss Bates, because I think he has a lot of compassion for her. But to say, Mr. Knightley does not get irritated by anything is incorrect.

**Molly:** Yeah, he's not the most patient man.

**Becca:** He actually is patient, but not for everything.

**Molly:** He's patient, but he's not unirritable, as in he will let you prattle on and then he'll be like-- Anyway, moving on to another-- He will never answer you.

**Becca:** Exactly. If you look at how he is with Mr. Woodhouse, he's clearly better than his brother at that. And so, you might get the sense that he's not easily irritated, but then you see him interact with Emma for five minutes and you're like, "How can you say he's not easily irritated?"

**Molly:** Well, I wonder if he is normally not very easily irritated, but Emma pushes his buttons.

**Becca:** Something to think about.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm. So, she says that, and she says, "Anyway, it's not about whether it would be a [00:44:00] bad connection for him, but whether he wants it. And Mrs. Weston thinks he wants it. Now, I had trouble with this, because I was like, "Well, it would be a step down for him." At first, I was like, "He wouldn't marry down like that." But then I was thinking, he said Mr. Elton wouldn't marry down, but he never said anything about his own preferences.

**Becca:** Well, Mr. Knightley comes from a little bit higher up than Mr. Elton.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm.

**Becca:** Mr. Elton is still trying to climb, and Knightley has his own estate. It's almost like Darcy. Having an imprudent match for Darcy is a different thing than having an imprudent match for Bingley, which is how you get to the cognitive dissonance of Darcy being like, "Don't marry Jane Bennet," and then proposing to Elizabeth Bennet. [laughs]

**Molly:** I hadn't thought of that before, but, yeah, that makes a lot of sense.

**Becca:** Yeah, it's still absolutely batch it that it happens as it does. But he does say to Bingley, "You can't marry Jane Bennet," and then he goes and is like, "Elizabeth Bennet, I cannot be without you."

**Molly:** [00:45:00] Right.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** That makes a lot of sense, because he's got more money and more status than Bingley to start with. So, he doesn't need to do well for himself.

**Becca:** Exactly. You can get to a point in society where you can marry who you want to, but then there's doing a prudent match. Hello, Economics of Dating in Jane Austen. But if you don't need it for your income like Knightley does, then you have the freedom to choose against consolidating more wealth under you and you can instead choose to marry someone of a little bit lower stature, say, a Jane Fairfax. If, for example, you're into her and you don't want her feet to get cold as she walks to a party.

**Molly:** Yeah, that makes sense. So, this is my theory. If I were writing this book, this is what I would write.

**Becca:** Okay, give it to us.

**Molly:** Knightley had a crush on Emma a while ago, but they are too close, and he knows her too well to know and knows that she does not have any inclination to marry at all. So, he has moved on and he is like, "Let me find someone [00:46:00] else." He likes Jane Fairfax.

He thinks, I like Jane Fairfax. He starts making moves on Jane Fairfax when she moves back home.

Now, Emma is going to be like, "But Knightley never wanted to get married and Knightley was never going to get married and we had a friendship pact. We were just going to be best pals forever and what's he doing?" And Knightley is going to be like, "Well, I don't want to be alone." And Emma's like, "I thought you wanted to be alone." And he's like, "No, I just told you that, because I was secretly in love with you and I didn't want you to catch on." And Emma's going to be like, "Oh, let me stay with that for a minute." And then Emma's going to be like, "Fuck, I love my best friend." That's my thought.

**Becca:** Move over, Jane Austen.

**Molly:** So, that's what would happen if I was writing this book. Anyway, either our listeners are screaming, because I just got everything right or they are laughing their heads off, because I sound like an idiot, one or the other.

**Becca:** Well, I am personally neither confirming nor denying.

**Molly:** Of course. Right. So, Mrs. Weston thinks that [00:47:00] Knightley might have sent the pianoforte and Emma's like, "No, Knightley doesn't do things mysteriously." He would never surprise something like that.

**Becca:** [laughs] The idea of Mr. Knightley is like, "I love it." Emma's just like, "No, Knightley doesn't do that. He doesn't know how to be a mysterious romantic. He's just too blunt."

**Molly:** But we've talked about this. Knightley is kind of a romantic. I've brought that up twice now and this is my third time. Knightley might be a romantic. We don't know. He's a secret romantic. She doesn't catch on to the secret. So, Mrs. Weston says, "Well, I've always heard him lamenting that Jane didn't have an instrument." And Emma is like, "So, he would have told Jane, if he was going to buy her one."

Mrs. Weston thinks that maybe he wanted to keep it under wraps for reasons of delicacy and Emma's like, "You're doing the thing you always yell at me for doing. You're meddling where you shouldn't be meddling." They continue arguing like this for a while until Mr. Cole asks Emma to play for the room. So, subject change. She goes on to play the piano and Frank jumps in and starts singing with her.

**Becca:** I love this, because apparently, he doesn't have a lot of musical talent, but he's just like, "Oh, I'm in." And he's just like, "I'm going to join."

**Molly:** He just joins everyone. So, he jumps in. He starts singing. It says that it was passable and everyone was like, "Oh, good job." And he was like, "No, no, I can't sing at all. Don't make me sing. Don't make me sing."

**Becca:** Are you doing Kristen Wiig dinner, saying--

**Molly and Becca:** Don't make me sing. Don't make me sing.

**Becca:** But you get the sense that Frank is just like a blessed to have at a party.

**Molly:** Yeah, he's having a good time at the party and he's like, "oh, we're playing the piano now. All right." So, he comes and sings with Emma, and they do a couple of songs. And then Jane sits down to take her place and Emma is like, "Yes, Jane can play a lot better than me. So, that's fine." Jane and Frank do a little duet and it appears that they've sung together before at Weymouth. So, that's interesting. Emma is thinking about it for a minute, but then she notices Knightley looking and raptured. So, she's like, "Fuck." [00:49:00] She's like, "Why is he so interested?"

**Becca:** Like, "No, you're not allowed to care about this. You're supposed to be grumbling about Frank Churchill." [chuckles]

**Molly:** Yeah. She's like, "Are you doing this? What's happening?" She starts getting stressed because she's like, "If he gets married, then it's going to be a disappointment to John and Isabella and to baby Henry." She's freaking out and then Knightley sees her and he comes over and Emma's like, "It was very kind of you to lend your carriage to Miss Bates and Miss Fairfax." And he's like, "Oh, no, it was nothing." She takes this as him being humble and not wanting to talk about his own kindness, but it could be him evading the subject. Then she brings up the pianoforte and he's like, "Surprises are dumb."

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** He's like, "The Campbell should have known better than to send her a piano like that."

**Becca:** Who would just send one out of the blue? That doesn't make sense. It's a small apartment.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, now he's angry.

[laughter]

**Molly:** Emma's like, "Thank God." This makes Emma feel better. She's like, Okay, he didn't send the piano, but it's still possible that he may like her." Because Jane gets to her [00:50:00] second song and her voice starts to sound a little hoarse towards the end of it and Knightley is like, "She should stop singing now. She's going to sing herself hoarse." But Frank Churchill is like, "Another one. Another one. The melody is easy on this one. I'll just take the hard part. Let's do another one." So, this makes Mr. Knightley angry and he's like, "Miss Bates, are you going to allow your niece to sing herself hoarse like this?"

**Becca:** Miss Bates is like, "Absolutely not."

**Molly:** "No way, no way, no way."

**Becca:** Jane's health? Oh, God.

**Molly:** [laughs] Yeah. Knightley is grumbling about how Frank is such a douchebag for making her sing. She's like, "She's going to hurt herself."

**Becca:** In considerate fuck a party boy didn't know shit.

**Molly:** Yeah, exactly. So, the singing stops, and we move on to the dancing portion of the evening. Emma and Frank go to dance together. While they're dancing, Emma looks around looking for Knightley, because he doesn't usually dance. So, if he's dancing and if he's dancing with Jane specifically, [00:51:00] that's a telltale sign that he likes her, because normally he would not be spotted on the dance floor. Luckily, he is just talking to Mrs. Cole and Emma keeps dancing, turns around a couple of times. She turns around again, still talking to Mrs. Cole and she thinks, "Okay, we're safe. I'm going to enjoy my dance with Mr. Frank Churchill. Everything's good." They do two dances and then the party starts breaking up and Frank turns to Emma and he's like, "I'm glad the party's ending now, because otherwise I would have had to dance with Jane Fairfax." [imitates sound]

**Becca:** That would have sucked.

**Molly:** And that would have sucked and that's the end of that chapter.

**Becca:** Which brings us to Becca's study questions. Let's start briefly with Emma's monologue on the Coles, what do we learn a little bit there.

**Molly:** Where she's talking about how they are new money and coming up.

**Becca:** Well, we see a little-- We get another new window into society. Here, we have Emma talking from the top, basically saying it's rude of the Coles to invite her to a party, because she's above them. She should only invite them to parties. And then as she's talking about it, she's like, "They're ridiculous human [00:52:00] beings. They don't know what they're talking about. They're new money. This is gross." Then she finds that she didn't get an invitation from them and she was like, "Oh, my God, am I this pathetic loner person who's at the top? Obviously, it's that they can't invite me. But also, did they just think that my dad and I never leave the house?"

Then when the invitation comes later, it's so persuadable and they're really such great people and, "Ooh, they did this nice thing for my father, so he could come as well." You see the Coles' class change as Emma's perception changes, because again, she's our unreliable narrator. You have her talking about people, because again, she's decided Harriet's high class, because she likes her. You see her fluctuate on the Coles depending on her feeling about them as people.

**Molly:** Yeah. I think that it shows that at least for Emma, [00:53:00] people's status is determined a little bit by how much she likes them. It makes me think that maybe if she gets to know someone better, she could place them higher in society than they are, like Harriet and like the Coles, who are actually high up enough that she was just being classified, because they were new money. But it makes me think that maybe she could have her mind changed about the Martins as well, maybe.

**Becca:** It's a good insight. It's also, I think, a nice little tweak from Jane Austen. I haven't brought this up in a bit, but obviously throughout all these books, we have our class commentary from Jane Austen. I think this is a nice little roast from Jane Austen of the upper classes and how they perceive the people beneath them, because you see her go from like, "Oh, these people, I'm not interacting with them. They're beneath me too. Oh, my God, they don't want to interact with me. Do they understand how much they're beneath me? But then all my friends are going."

**Molly:** Right. It's like, "Jane to [00:54:00] invite all of my friends, so, like, why not me?"

**Becca:** Then when she does get the invitation and it's so sweet and they tried so hard, she's like, "Oh, well, they're actually really nice people and this could be a really fun societal event for me. They really persuaded me from being so nice to my father." You see their class fluctuate as she's justifying wanting to go to their party.

**Molly:** Well, right. And she also really enjoys being sucked up to.

**Becca:** Exactly.

**Molly:** So, their invitation was perfect for her. Yeah, it's definitely interesting. It shows that a lot of things are arbitrary and subjective.

**Becca:** I think you can also see Jane Austen thinks a lot of these things are a bit arbitrary herself.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm. Yeah.

**Becca:** All right. We learned more about the Churchills in the chapter. And Enscombe and Frank, what does it tell us about our story?

**Molly:** Well, I still don't know if I believe Frank on everything that he's saying, but it tells us that we think [00:55:00] the Churchills are one way, maybe from before. We think that they're high class, they're uppity. I just associate that with a lot of society. But apparently, they're also kind of insular and don't go out much and don't like to see people, because the

top is lonely, like we've said with Emma. So, we've learned that they don't go out and don't let Frank go out very much, at least, we think they don't.

**Becca:** They're snotty in a more rigid way than Emma is, because Frank says, "They have people over, but they only invite people who are really high status. And therefore, those people live far away because they have to get their friends to come to them from far away, because there's nobody high up enough near them to be friends with."

**Molly:** And they don't travel to their friends.

**Becca:** And they don't travel. We also learn, Mrs. Churchill's not in perfect health either. So, you have that aspect of it, which I do want to lightly draw a comparison here between Emma and Frank, because you just pointed it out they're both [00:56:00] lonely at the top, and they both have parents who don't favor going out places. That's part of how they interact with the high society around them. That would also point out you are correct to be questioning whether or not Frank is being honest about these things, because that's part of the intrigue of Frank Churchill. You never know how genuine he's being at any given moment. But I think you learn a little bit about the insular Enscombe area being similar in some ways to the insular Hartfield area.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** So, that does make Frank and Emma, in a little bit of a way, kindred.

**Molly:** Yeah. It makes sense that she has wanted to meet him so badly and feels connected to him.

**Becca:** Yeah. Because Emma interacts in this way, where-- We learn that she hasn't [00:57:00] traveled much and everything. And so, Highbury's her little fiefdom. And Frank has traveled a lot more than Emma, but he comes at it from the angle of similarly having a parent making him come home.

**Molly:** Right.

**Becca:** Something to think about. Also, I would note that he says he persuades his mother on a lot, but not on everything. I only encourage you to speculate about what he's unable to persuade her on generally. You don't have to speculate openly now. I'm just saying hold that kernel in your brain.

**Molly:** Okay. I'll think about it.

**Becca:** Okay.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** All right. What do we think of the dynamic between Frank and Emma? We're talking love, lust-- [crosstalk]

**Molly:** Not lust yet. What was the third option?

**Becca:** Hypesmanship?

**Molly:** [chuckles] Right now, they are giving off bros, not to the extent of Emma and Knightley who are best bros, but they're giving off bros, they're giving [00:58:00] off sexual tension. You've only met one person in the group, but you feel like you don't actually need to meet anyone else in the group. So, they just only talk to each other. They definitely have chemistry.

**Becca:** Are you team-- Which one did we say, Woodhill?

**Molly:** Churchhouse.

**Becca:** Churchhouse.

**Molly:** I'm not anti-Churchhouse, but I'm more shipping on a Knightley recently.

**Becca:** Have we given a name to them? Knighthouse?

**Molly:** Knighthouse.

**Becca:** Oh, that sounds fucking cool.

**Molly:** Churchhouse and Knighthouse. I like it.

**Becca:** Churchhouse versus Knighthouse, I think.

**Molly:** Yeah. I don't think that the book has hinted at all at Knighthouse being a thing. But just because they're best friends and I'm pro like best friends to lovers-

**Becca:** Tropes.

**Molly:** - tropes, I'm shipping it, but I'm not anti-Churchhouse yet.

**Becca:** Okay. What do you make of the Frank and Jane tension? What does he know about her?

**Molly:** I have no idea. Something happened. I don't know what he went to talk to [00:59:00] her about when he wanted to talk to her about her doughnut hair.

**Becca:** [laughs] Ass hole hair.

**Molly:** Yeah. I don't know what [laughs] that was about. I don't think he was asking her about her hair. I don't know what happened between them, but something did because they know each other. They've sung together. He seems to hate her for some reason, but not enough to not talk to her at all. He must know something. He's going along with everything that Emma said about Mr. Dixon, which makes me think that's not it, because he would have said like, "Oh, yeah, that's true. I've noticed it." He said, "I've noticed that he likes her playing, and he saved her life that one time, but it was not a big deal." But there's something else that he knows.

**Becca:** Okay. Who sent the pianoforte?

**Molly:** Mr. Dixon. Mr. Dixon sent the pianoforte, unless-- [01:00:00] This just occurred to me. This just in, because there are so many potential pairings right now and the timing works out. Frank went to London the day before the pianoforte arrived or on the day that the pianoforte arrived. That's weird. So, I wonder if Frank sent the pianoforte and nobody has hinted at that, but it's possible that Frank-- You know what? I'm now team Frank sent the pianoforte and is starting drama.

**Becca:** Okay. And last question. What do you think of this Knightley-Jane idea? Are you team Jightley?

**Molly:** I actually am Team Jightly or Knightfax.

**Becca:** Knightfax. Ooh, okay.

**Molly:** Ooh. Or Fairley. I think Knightfax. Knightfax has to win. I actually, as much as I am shipping the best friends to lovers, whatever. Yes, I am Team Knightfax, because I think that Knightley deserves happiness, and I think that Jane deserves happiness, and I actually think that they would probably make a really good match, because she's sweet and quiet and he's [01:01:00] aloof and, not aloof, but he's like a-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** A grumpy hermit.

**Molly:** Yeah. He does his own thing. [Becca laughs] He does his own thing. So, they could stay home, and she could read her books, and he could read his books, and she could play the piano, and he can drink his coffee, and I could see a good partnership between them. So, I'm Team Knightfax.

**Becca:** Okay. I guess, that brings us to our standbys. What do you think of Emma?

**Molly:** [giggles] What do I think of Emma? She is projecting a little bit. She really thinks that everyone's brains work the way that hers works.

**Becca:** Okay. Funniest quote? You picked an iconic one this time.

**Molly:** Thank you so much. So, this is after Emma introduces Frank Churchill to Harriet, and Harriet is telling her what she thinks. "Only to be sure it was paying him too great a compliment, but she did think there were some looks a little like Mr. Elton." Emma restrained her indignation, and only turned from her in silence.

**Becca:** Incredible.

**Molly:** [chuckles]

**Becca:** Questions moving forward. [01:02:00]

**Molly:** Does Knightley like Jane? Did Frank send the piano? Does Frank like Jane? Does Frank know something about Jane? Who sent the pianoforte? There's a lot of cliffhangers on this one.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah. There's a lot to discuss. Who wins the chapters?

**Molly:** Mrs. Weston.

**Becca:** Ooh, great pick.

**Molly:** Yeah, she really threw me for a loop on this one. I gasped when [Becca laughs] she told me that she thinks that Knightley likes Jane. I was like, "I was not expecting that."

**Becca:** So, Mrs. Weston for bringing the drama.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** I'll give an honorable mention to Jane for getting a pianoforte. Good for her.

**Molly:** Totally. Yeah, good for her. She has a secret admirer. Lucille Bluth holding a cupcake, "Good for her."

**Molly:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Becca:** All right, that concludes this episode of Pod and Prejudice. So, for next week, we're going to read Chapters 9 and 10 of Volume II, or if you don't have Volumes in your book, 27 and 28. All right, so, Molly, are feeling good about this whole thing?

**Molly:** Yeah, the drama seems to be heating up. [01:03:00] So, I'm excited.

**Becca:** Then until next time, stay proper-

**Molly:** -and send someone a secret pianoforte.

**Becca:** A very secret pianoforte.

**Molly:** Surprise them.



**Becca:** Yes. [laughs]

**Molly:** Pod and Prejudice is edited by Molly Burdick and audio produced by Graham Cook. Our show art is designed by Torrance Browne. Our show is transcribed by SpeechDocs Podcast Transcription. For transcripts and to learn more about our team, check out our website at [podandprejudice.com](http://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.

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