

Molly: Hey, everyone, before we begin today, we want to give a huge shoutout to our newest patron, Kaitlyn. Welcome to the team. If you want access to bonus content like outtakes, our notes, and bonus episodes, where we talk about content we're consuming that isn't Jane Austen, head on over to patreon.com/podandprejudice. We also have new merch designed by our pal, Jess Petino available now at the link in the episode description. And now, enjoy this week's episode covering Chapters 4 and 5 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*.

Becca: *Emma*.

Molly: *Emma*, Chapters 4 and 5. And listeners, we already told our patrons this, but we just have to tell you. We finally got an interface, and we are recording together in the same room and it's great.

Becca: Yeah, to be fair, we have recorded in the same room together before, but it has always been a bit of a hullabaloo. We **[00:01:00]** always record in my apartment, because Molly lives over a bar. So, we're always in the back room, and we put pillows up, we put comforters up, we crouch on the floor rather Molly often crouches on the floor to get the right sound for you guys. But you know what's fantastic. We have this interface now, where we can sit face to face and not worry about talking over each other and just recorded episode of this podcast.

Molly: We're finally just going to be talking.

Becca: I know. I know it sounds like we're so natural, guys. But usually, we're contorted while we're talking. So, this is great.

Molly: It's unbelievable. We feel very professional.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: So, if you want to be a part of that, you can give us money@patreon.com.

Becca: Yes, and I should also point out that we have added new content at this point to our Patreon, where we are giving our recommendations on all things pop culture to our patrons. Our first episode was just recorded. And if I do say so myself, it's pretty cool. So, if you want access to those **[00:02:00]** little bonus episodes, where we give our pop culture recommendations, that is something you get as a \$7 patron. You can head on over to *patreon--*

Molly: *.com*.

Becca: */podandprejudice*.

Molly: Correct.

Becca: Yeah, there we go.

Molly: Becca was looking at me like, "Is that the URL?"

Becca: Yeah, it gives-- You guys don't know, Molly's so in charge of all of our marketing and she does such a fantastic job that I'm just useless on all of it.

Molly: [laughs] But Becca knows more about Jane Austen. And speaking of which--

Becca: Speaking of which, we have more chapters of this book to go through and boy, oh boy, do you learn more. We are talking about chapters 4 and 5 of *Emma*.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Molly, how are you doing so far?

Molly: Honestly, Emma is so unlikable as a character. I texted in the group chat today, listeners, and I was like, "So far, Emma, [the character sucks]." But I'm really excited to get into it, because I feel some plot points are starting to come out-

Becca: Indeed.

Molly: -and I have predictions.

Becca: Oh, I'm so excited. I have so many study questions at the end of this one. So, we should get to recording it.

Molly: Yeah, let's talk about it. **[00:03:00]** So, Chapter 4. Harriet Smith is coming around Hartfield more and more. And I have to say that the way they describe this friendship is very gay. It would just not be me if I didn't just point it out.

Becca: By they, you mean Jane Austen?

Molly: Yes, yes, yes. Of course. I do not think this book is going in any gay direction. I'll just put that on the record right now, but I will mention it every episode. It says things like, "As their acquaintance increased, so did their satisfaction in each other."

Becca: I read it more a little hero worshipping on Harriet's part.

Molly: Emma is very pleased to have a new walking companion since Mrs. Weston's "exercise has been too much confined" since she got married. Wink-wink.

Becca: Nudge-nudge.

Molly: Nudge-nudge. Basically, meaning that she just stays at her estate and not at all that she's banging Mr. Weston.

Becca: Oh, no, they're fucking.

Molly: Good, good, good. Just checking. Just making sure that that's what it meant.

Becca: I don't remember this off the top of my head and I should look it up, but it might be a nod to her getting possibly [00:04:00] pregger as soon.

Molly: Oh, yes, confined. Emma finds Harriet to be a very satisfactory friend, since she's impressionable, docile, and grateful. But "such a friend as Mrs. Weston was out of the question. Too such could not be granted. Too such she did not want." I really liked that.

Becca: It is very sweet. You get a real sense of the nuances of these different friendships and relationships for Emma. She really cares about the women in her life, and she doesn't have a desire to clique it up or replace anybody. She wants closeness with women in her life.

Molly: Yeah, I really like about this book so far that it is very focused on female friendship. And I know you told me that and I know that's a thing and we've had sister tales before.

Becca: It's a seaside tale, by the-- This one's not a seaside tale. It's like a garden tale. [chuckles]

Molly: It's like a garden tale about friends. But the absence of the main relationship in Emma's life being a man is really noticeable and I really liked that so far. However, this kind of friendship that she [00:05:00] has with Harriet is that she wants to be useful to her. So, she wants to guide her. And she starts by wanting to find out who Harriet's parents are. I didn't realize that Harriet didn't know herself who her parents were. I thought that nobody else knew and that she was keeping it a secret."

Becca: No, no, she's legit kind of an orphan.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: It's not clear. All we know is that she has somebody paying for her tuition.

Molly: Gotcha. Wow. And she just truly doesn't know, she just had a sugar daddy off somewhere just not revealing themselves.

Becca: Kind of. You could take the implication to mean that she's like a bastard child of someone wealthy who they keep hush.

Molly: Right? Because Emma does say like, "No one has any proof that you're not a gentleman's daughter. So, you might as well be a gentleman's daughter."

Becca: Yes, which is not exactly how the society works, but it's cute that Emma's going for it that way. [laughs]

Molly: Totally. Emma doesn't know a lot about-- [crosstalk]

Becca: The word[?]. [laughs]

Becca: Yes. [laughs] So, Harriet has nothing really to talk about except her schooling with Mrs. Goddard [00:06:00] and her two months with the Martins on Abbey Mill Farm. She talks of the farm with such admiration that Emma can only attribute to "youthful simplicity," because Emma is a snob.

Becca: Oh, endless snob. She is so snobby.

Molly: So snobby. She is very like, "Oh, my gosh, you're so cute that you loved the farm so much. That's adorable."

Becca: How quaint.

Molly: How quaint. Exactly. For a while, she thinks it's cute, but then she realizes that the young Mr. Martin that she keeps talking about is single and she's like, "Oh, shit, Harriet might fall for someone who's not suitable for her." However, the way that it's phrased, I have to point out, because again, it wouldn't be me. It sounds like Emma doesn't want her to have a crush on someone, because Emma has a crush on her. [laughs]

Becca: It's a way to interpret it. We're all about the modern interpretation here.

Molly: Yeah, you know what, I want is, I know everyone's like, "Have you not seen *Clueless*?" And I'm like, well, I have, but it's just been so long that all I have is an image in my head. So, I am picturing them in the Regency Era, but [00:07:00] wearing yellow plaid. I just want to throw that out there, but-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Just like an empire waist dress in yellow plaid.

Molly: Yes. Oh, my God, if you're an artist--

Becca: Someone draw that for us, please.

Molly: Please. We'll put it on a t shirt. I swear, I'll pay you. But what I want is a modern-day adaptation of Emma that is gay.

Becca: Yeah, that would be something I'd be interested in hearing about too. So, if there's any fanfiction out there, let us know, listeners.

Molly: Yeah, and maybe when I finished this book, I'll work on it myself. Who knows?

Becca: Who's to say?

Molly: Whomst even?

Becca: Ah, throwback to Season 2. Go on.

Molly: Yeah. [laughs] So, Emma starts asking Harriet more and more about Mr. Martin. And it's obvious from how she talks about him that she does like him. She says that one time he walked three miles just to bring her some walnuts.

Becca: Which like-- that whole description of him, it's really one of those things that's a brilliant writing moment from Jane Austen, because you really see her learning the showing not telling on the writing and she goes on to show all these things Harriet's describing Mr. Martin doing. And as she's [00:08:00] describing them, you really get the sense of warmth, and softness, gentleness, what's the word I'm looking for? Fondness.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: That's real fondness comes out. And the story of him getting her nuts, because she wanted deez nuts.

Molly: Oh, my God.

Becca: Because she was hungry, and she likes nuts.

Molly: She likes walnuts, everybody. She likes walnuts.

Becca: The whole story is very tinged with this. The way that people talk about their crushes, it's got that little like, hmm, this little spark to it.

Molly: She's definitely got a crush. A crush even.

Becca: A crush.

Molly: Mrs. Martin said at some point to Harriet that he's going to make a good husband one day, but she's in no hurry to bury him off. And then after Harriet left, Mrs. Martin sent Mrs. Goddard a goose and it was the best goose ever.

Becca: Yeah, it's great, because when I was first reading it, I was like, "H, it was a live goose or a dead goose?" And then I-- [crosstalk]

Molly: I thought it was a live goose and I was so confused, and they were like, she dressed [00:09:00] it and had everyone to dinner. I was like, "Is the goose hanging out with them?"

Becca: Spot the vegan, y'all.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: No, dressing is you fill it-- [crosstalk]

Molly: I figured it out.

Becca: Yeah, there you go. There you go. They ate the goose. That's what happened.

Molly: Yeah. Emma assumes that Mr. Martin doesn't read, and Harriet is like, "Oh, well, he reads. He reads agricultural reports, but not out loud, just to himself."

Becca: So, I should be clear. It's not clear that she doesn't know if he can actually read books in this moment. It's also possible she's saying, "He doesn't read. He's not cultured."

Molly: He's not cultured. Right. And Harriet is like, "I know he's at least read this one book and I recommended him two books, and he said he would get them."

Becca: Yeah, she describes that he's mostly reading *The Farmers Digest*, but also reads aloud, occasionally.

Molly: Yeah, she said that he read aloud to them, and it was very entertaining. Emma asks then if he's handsome, and Harriet's like, "No, but I thought him very plain at first, but I do not think him so plain now," which is very cute. The [00:10:00] more she got to know him, the more interesting he became to her.

Molly: We talked about that with Edward and Elinor a little bit.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Oh, Molly's making a shipping face.

Molly: I really like Mr. Martin. And in my mind, I'm just trying to picture how this plays out.

Becca: How will this [unintelligible 00:10:16]?

Molly: How will this [unintelligible 00:10:19]? I have ideas, but I don't think that any of them are right yet. There keeps being new characters introduced. God. So, Harriet then asks if Emma has seen him before, because he drives by or rides by on his horse every day. And Emma says, "A young farmer, whether on horseback or on foot, is the very last person to raise my curiosity." And I just have to say that I really hope she falls for a young farmer and learns to not make such snap judgments about people because of their status.

Becca: [laughs] Molly just wrote, "fucking rude."

Molly: She was fucking rude.

Becca: Rude. Yeah, Emma's [00:11:00] very rude as you can tell.

Molly: Actually, what I wrote was, "Honestly, I hope Emma falls for a young farmer. Damn. That would teach her to be so fucking rude."

Becca: Yeah, she's definitely not into the idea of her being with a farmer. There's something about the ring event that doesn't speak to her.

Molly: Right. And knowing that there is a movie based on this about high schoolers, it feels so high school like, "Oh, you cannot date him."

Becca: Oh, God, we're going to talk about this in the study questions, but there's so many ways in which Emma is your quintessential popular girl, but an interesting popular girl, because it's not like she's pure evil, say, Sarah Michelle Gellar's character in *Cruel Intentions*. There's like the Heather's kind of popular girl or there's an Emma, she's got good qualities too.

Molly: Yeah, I like her. I just hate her also.

Becca: There's a way in which popular girls are really brilliant and care a lot about their friends in a lot of pop [00:12:00] culture representations. And I think it taps into something very real about the lack of place for female intelligent to be placed. There's not very many outlets that are societally acceptable in this time for women who are as smart as Emma.

Molly: So, she's using it in these conniving ways to-- like, use the people around her as pawns.

Becca: Yes, she certainly seems just restless about her life and bored. And part of that boredom is cleverness and it's translating in ways that are not always flattering to her.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Molly's bug eyed. [laughs]

Molly: I'm loving it. After Emma says the thing about a young farmer would never catch her attention, Harriet's like, "Oh, yeah, no, of course, you wouldn't have noticed him." [chuckles] And in my notes, I wrote, "She's so impressionable. One might even say clueless."

Becca: Oh, bo, bo, bo.

Molly: That's where I guess that the title of that movie comes from is [00:13:00] Harriet being a little clueless as to not that necessarily the world around her. Maybe, Emma being a little clueless to the world around her or to people's actual feelings. And Harriet being clueless to society or like what Emma's doing.

Becca: I will neither confirm nor deny.

Molly: Cool. So, apparently, Mr. Martin knows exactly who Emma is and Emma likes that he knows exactly who she is, because she likes being perceived.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: She asks how old he is and Harriet says that he's 24, and that her birthday is 15 days after his. But she's not 24, right?

Becca: No, Harriet's 16 or 17.

Molly: Okay. So, their birthdays are just near each other.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Okay, cool. So, he's 24 and Emma is like, "Oh, well, that's too young to settle. He should wait six years and find someone of his same status who has a little money." And Harriet is shocked that she thinks that he should wait till he's 30 to get married.

[laughter] [00:14:00]

Becca: Oh, we're definitely just both laughing at the contemporary of it all.

Molly: Yeah. She's like, "That's old." And Emma's like, "That's as early as any man who isn't born to an independence can settle. He has to make his own money." And Harriet's like, "Well, they aren't poor poor. They might not have a servant, but they have a--" They're talking about "taking a boy another year," which I'm assuming means like a farmhand or something.

Becca: No, what they're saying is, basically, that they have someone to helping them outside, they just don't have someone helping them inside. So, the cooking and the cleaning for the home would fall to the mother and then later to Mr. Martin's wife. Remember when we were in *Pride and Prejudice* and how offended Mrs. Bennet was that Mr. Collins thought one of the daughters cooked meal?

Molly: Yes.

Becca: It's a societal thing to be able to not do anything in your own house. And the Martins, they're comfortable, they're not starving, they have a nice large farm [00:15:00] house that they leased from Mr. Knightley, a pretty lucrative farm. But they're not the type of people who would have a cook or a footman, the way that the Dashwoods downgraded and still had to servants, [laughs]

Molly: Totally. Then Emma says that when he does marry, but specifically, she's saying, "When he gets married to someone who's not you," which I think is pretty cunning. She says, "Harriet should not become friends with his wife." Even though his sisters are educated and they're fine, she imagines that he won't marry someone fit to be connected with Harriet. And she warns Harriet that her situation which with everything not knowing her parents are and everything could cause people to take pleasure in degrading her. This is where she says that, "Nobody can prove she's not a gentleman's daughter." So, she might as well act like a gentleman's daughter.

And I think this whole speech is very cutting, because she's like, "I know what I want. I want to set her up with someone who is not [00:16:00] this man. So, I'm going to tell her not to befriend his wife, his future wife when he gets married to someone else," because that plants into her head that he is not going to marry her.

Becca: Yeah, and it's very subtly done. It's working off the assumption. She's planting in Harriet's brain the assumption that she couldn't possibly marry Mr. Martin. Because if Emma doesn't think that he's a viable option that puts the question in Harriet's brain of whether or not Mr. Martin is a viable option,

Molly: Right. And he's definitely not, because he's marrying someone else.

Becca: It wouldn't even occur to her to say, "Oh, not for you."

Molly: Right.

Becca: Yeah. So, it's definitely Emma at her most cunning. She's also making a lot of assumptions. She's also very classique on the Emma front. [laughs]

Molly: Yes. Harriet is like, "Well, I know that people could look down upon me. But as long as I'm with you, I don't think that anyone would say anything to me." And Emma says, "That's very sweet." But she wants her to be well connected on her own and so, she just doesn't want her to be friends with his future wife. [00:17:00] I think that there's the possibility that Emma is making all these assumptions about his future wife, who's been going to be poor, and uneducated, and not worth Harriet's time. I just think there's a possibility that Mr. Martin is going to marry someone rich. I just think that would be fun.

Becca: You know what I'm going to do?

Molly: Neither confirm nor deny.

Becca: Neither confirm nor deny.

Molly: [laughs] Harriet thinks that he's going to marry someone educated, but she doesn't want to contradict Emma. So, she backtracks after she says that, it's just like, "Ah, yeah, but I'll be very sorry to have to stop talking to his sisters if he marries a vulgar woman, because I'll absolutely cut them off." And Emma's watching this whole thing and deciding that there's no symptoms of love in her mannerisms. And therefore, Harriet won't oppose any "friendly arrangement" of her own. So, basically, Emma's going to set Harriet up with someone.

Becca: Oh, yeah. No, she's already defined herself as a matchmaker.

Molly: Yes. She has found her prey.

Becca: She is a matchmaker, she has found her prey, [00:18:00] she must just find another prey, and then just predate-- Predator predate the prey? I don't know.

Molly: Yes. Smoosh them together.

Becca: Smoosh them together. Yes.

Molly: The next day, they run into Mr. Martin on the road and Emma decides that while he's clean and sensible when put up next to a real gentleman, Harriet will quickly forget about him, because he has no proper manners. They only talk for a few minutes, because a "Miss Woodhouse must not be kept waiting." I really love the narrator, who just continually sasses Emma.

Becca: Yeah, it's Jane Austen in her chair just turning to you and being like, "Well, this little bitch again."

Molly: Yeah. So, Jane Austen in the rocking chair in the corner, a common theme from Season 1 of this podcast.

Becca: Mm-hmm. Yes. And you can see, she she's doing it again much more in this book, where she's winking at you a lot through her words.

Molly: Yeah. She's like, "Emma was nice." Wink, wink.

Becca: [laughs] God.

Molly: Harriet is so cute. She runs over to Emma and she's like, "Oh, he wasn't able to get the book that I recommended, but he's going back to town tomorrow. [00:19:00] And what did you think of him? Did you think he was playing?" And Emma just ripped him to shreds.

Becca: She's like, "His appearance might be bad, but that's the least of our problems."

Molly: It was terrible. She was like, "What are the other things did she say?" She says that, he completely lacks gentility and she calls him clownish. She's like that clown, really bad guy.

Becca: To be fair, when I want one of my friends to date someone, I will also call him a clown.

Molly: Fair enough. Yes, yes.

Becca: But You know-- [crosstalk]

Molly: But she also just met this girl.

Becca: Exactly and I also don't have this kind of influence over my friends, which I wouldn't want anyway,

Molly: Right.

Becca: But I do get the instinct to be like, "No, no, no, no, honey. No, no, no. Not that one. You want a better one."

Molly: Yeah. Harriet immediately changes her mind. She's like, "Yeah, you're right."

Becca: She's like, "Yeah, who would fall--?"

Molly: [crosstalk] that guy?

Becca: Yeah, "Who would fall deep into those brown eyes? They're swimming in a pool of chocolate. I don't. Not me."

Molly and Becca: "Not me." [00:20:00]

Becca: "Certainly, not me."

Molly: [laughs] Emma then points out that Harriet has now met lots of real gentlemen and she would be surprised if Harriet could see Mr. Martin again without perceiving him to be a very inferior creature, and rather wonder you yourself for having ever thought him at all agreeable before. She asks if Harriet has noticed how monotonous his voice was and how boring he is, basically. And Harriet is like, "Well, he's definitely no Mr. Knightley." And Emma says, "Yeah, well, nobody is Mr. Knightley. It's not fair to compare anyone with Mr. Knightley." Someone that has a little crush on Mr. Knightley. She doesn't know it yet, but she's very like--

It could be read two ways. Either she's like, "Yeah, well, no one can compare to Mr. Knightley," is like, "That guy?", because they have that kind of bantery relationship. Becca is so good at the stone face. I'm trying to get something out of her. It could either be like, "Oh, Mr. Knightley? Yeah, he's too gentlemanly. We can't compare." Or, it could be like, [00:21:00] "Yeah, Mr. Knightley is perfect." Either way, there's something going on there. Something is afoot.

Becca: Something's afoot?

Molly: I think something is afoot.

Becca: Well, I would also just add one more interpretation there as well is that Mr. Knightley, and I think this is important partially to the context, is by far the wealthiest man they're talking about and the most esteemed in terms of class.

Molly: Totally.

Becca: So, that's another part of it as well is that Mr. Knightley is really high up in the world.

Molly: She could just mean, he's too gentlemanly in that way.

Becca: She could just mean he's like, "Oh, well, you can't compare Robert Martin to Mr. Knightley, because Mr. Knightley got this giant mansion, and he leases the farmland to Mr. Martin." And like, "Mr. Knightley has been trained from day one to be the perfect gentleman."

Molly: Totally. That actually makes a lot more sense, because I feel she wouldn't so openly be saying things about Mr. Knightley being gentlemanly in his manners. She's just not that kind of person who-- Mr. Knightley on the other hand, we'll get into a next chapter, but he has no [00:22:00] problem talking about people's manners and how hot they are.

Becca: [laughs] Yeah, he's got some opinions.

Molly: Yeah. But meanwhile, I feel Emma wouldn't give herself away that easily.

Becca: Well, I think it's also just the fact, she knows Mr. Knightley quite well. And she's like, "Oh, yeah, it's Knightley."

Molly: Right. He's too high up. But she does say, "You should compare him either with Mr. Weston or Mr. Elton." Harriet's like, "Well, Mr. Weston is too old. He's almost 40 or 50." And Emma says, "That makes his manners even more valuable, because the older someone is the more glaring and disgusting their loudness or coarseness becomes."

Becca: This is actually a very interesting piece of the story, just comparing to Weston and Elton, because we have Mr. Martin, who is a farmer, Mr. Weston, who was in the military and then made his way through trade to having a decent enough sum to buy an estate and then you have Mr. Elton, who's a recent member of the clergy. And you've learned a little bit about the Jane Austen world at this point in time and you can [00:23:00] tell me where those each fall within the hierarchy of class in the Jane Austen world as professions.

Molly: So, the clergy is like a good solid living, and I relate that to Edward or--

Molly and Becca: Mr. Collins.

Molly: So, doing well for themselves, depending on where your parish is, and I know that he's a vicar, and his vicarage is small, but he has some income. This is Mr. Elton. So, he has some good income and a good living, like he's steady. The military people, go into it poor, but come out very esteem.

Becca: Not necessarily. Sometimes--

Molly: I guess, some of them do, like Wickham.

Becca: Yeah. Because you look at Wickham, who enters like a foot soldier and pulls his way up. But then you also have a Colonel Brandon, who was very esteemed and comes from a high up family, but he was just the second son, so, he needed a profession. [00:24:00] But I think Mr. Weston was not just in the military, he was also a tradesman in his later life, and that is how he made his fortune, which puts them in the same vein as like a Mr. Gardiner.

Molly: Right. [crosstalk] looked down upon by gentleman.

Becca: Yes, but you can almost buy your way in, for example, by next generation, Mr. Bingley. So, you have these different levels of class playing in, but we have our first farmer here, who I think sufficiently falls below both Mr. Elton and Mr. Weston on that scale of class, but all of them fall below Mr. Knightley, who is inherited wealth.

Molly: Right. The Economics of Jane Austen, not dating and just in general.

Becca: Yeah. Economics of how men make their money in Jane Austen, which is weirdly and disconnected from whether or not they work.

Molly: Right. [laughs] So, I wanted to connect getting older, and loudness, and coarseness being less agreeable with Mrs. Jennings.

Becca: [00:25:00] Oh, yeah, very true. Oh, who's another good example?

Molly: Mrs. Bennet.

Becca: Mrs. Bennet. And there's a lot of old characters in Jane Austen, who have lost their shit in old days. Even Lady Catherine de Bourgh-- Catherine de Bourgh.

Molly: [giggles] Yeah. I can see where she's coming from with-- Can you imagine how Mr. Martin will be when he's that old, but I also don't think that Mr. Martin is as bad as she's making him out to be. Harriet is like, "Oh, my God, you're right. Yeah, he will be terrible when he's that age." Emma then says, "He's only going to think of profit and eventually, he will make his money, but then he won't have any time to read. And if he's illiterate, he won't be worth our time," which is very strange logic. She's like, "Yeah, he is going to make his money and he won't be poor forever, but then he's not going to be well read."

Becca: Well, that's the higher class looking down on having to work for your money.

Molly: Right.

Becca: Yeah, because Emma inherited her wealth as did her father. So, there's something in the classism of this time period, [00:26:00] where working hard is gauche, because if you've inherited your wealth, you don't need to work hard.

Molly: Right. That makes a lot of sense. Harriet, then says, "I wonder he does not remember the book." And the way that she says it, I can't tell if she's saying like, "I wonder why he didn't remember the book or no wonder he didn't remember the book."

Becca: I think she's saying to herself like, "Oh, you know what? That was weird."

Molly: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. Emma then says that Mr. Elton can actually be considered better than knightly or Western just as a model gentleman, because he is so gentle. Mr. Weston is too quick-witted. So, if anyone used him as a model and acted the way he did, it would come off badly. And Mr. Knightley is kind of blunt and commanding.

Becca: Yeah. [laughs]

Molly: He is just-- [crosstalk] He just says whatever he wants to.

Becca: And he's like a grump.

Molly: Yeah, he's an old grumpy. And if anyone else acted that way, it would be insufferable. But Mr. [00:27:00] Elton is the perfect model of a gentleman mainly because he's boring. He doesn't have too many personality traits. That's what I'm getting from this anyway. We don't know yet. We haven't met him.

Becca: No, we have met him, but we vaguely met him.

Molly: We haven't really gotten to know him.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: She says that he's been particularly gentle lately and thinks it must be to impress Harriet and Harriet blushes when she hears this and says, "Well, she's always found him agreeable." And so it is that Emma has decided to set up Mr. Elton and Harriet Smith.

Becca: And we have another match, [unintelligible [00:27:31]].

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Wait, we should have a sound effect for Emma making matches.

Molly: Ooh, yes, Graham. Let's have an Emma matchmaking sound effect.

Becca: Yes. Let's make it something like a cupid's arrow.

[Emma Matching Stinger debuts]

Molly: Oh, I was going to say like a matchbox being struck.

Becca: Ooh, like a matchmaker.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Like [match struck sound] Yes.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Graham, can you play with that please?

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: Give us something cool. Have some fun.

Molly: Yeah. So, she thinks to herself that it's almost too easy like, this is too likely [00:28:00] to happen and people are going to think that she had nothing to do with it. She can't really get credit for it. Like Mr. Knightley said, "She doesn't actually do anything."

Becca: [chuckles] And she's like, "No, I can't prove him right. I actually have to work at this."

Molly: Right. She's worried that everyone's going to be like, "We already knew that was going to happen." But she knows that she predicted it first, because she predicted at the first day that she met Harriet. And Mr. Elton is a gentleman, but not of a family that could fairly object to Harriet's doubtful birth. Who is Mr. Elton's family?

Becca: We don't know yet. It sounds he's from a family of the caliber of the Bennets, where they are like gentleman's family, but not so high up in the world that they can be that picky.

Molly: Right. He has made his own living, maybe, by joining the clergy.

Becca: Well, the clergy is something that second son's often do. And it's a common profession for a gentleman's son to do, if they're not going to end up inheriting their own estate or [00:29:00] in the time period before they inherited the state, if you say, Mr. Collins. Basically, he's from a gentleman's family, but just not anybody too impressive.

Molly: Emma already knows that Mr. Elton finds Harriet attractive, because Harriet is attractive. And she knows that, if Harriet thinks he likes her, she will also like him, because she likes being liked. And Mr. Elton is the man any woman not fastidious, which means very attentive to and concerned about accuracy in detail or basically, any woman not picky might like. Again, I think we're settling, because Emma doesn't even find him attractive.

Becca: Yes. But Emma's also fussy.

Molly: Emma's fussy, Emma's picky, but I feel she's just picked someone who's boring for someone who she's not giving enough credit to. That's just what I think.

Becca: That is a Molly opinion, everyone.

Molly: We've got our first opinion.

Becca: The first opinion.

Molly: No, it's not.

Becca: Have you ever had an opinion before? [laughs]

Molly: I have lots of opinions and original thoughts. Thank you. **[00:30:00]** But Emma thinks, "The girl who could be gratified by a Robert Martin's writing about the country to get walnuts for her might very well be conquered by Mr. Elton's admiration."

Becca: Maybe well. Who's to say?

Molly: Whomst?

Becca: Whomst, if you will.

Molly: Which brings us to Chapter 5.

Becca: Yes, we are.

Molly: 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.

[sound effect]

Molly: 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 AG1. 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, 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 **[00:31:00]** 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 for you, guys or 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/whomst. Again, that's athleticgreens.com/W-H-O-M-S-T 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.

I want to just say that I love a chapter that starts with someone [00:32:00] talking mid conversation.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: So, it starts with Mr. Knightley talking with Mrs. Weston and him just saying, "I don't know about you, but I think this friendship between Emma and Harriet is not so good." And Mrs. Weston was like, "What are you talking about? They're both going to do each other a lot of good." And it turns out they argue about Emma a lot.

Becca: Yes. And I love this, because first of all, we rarely get whole chapters without our leading ladies in them in Jane Austen books. And this is an entire chapter, where even though Emma is the hot topic of conversation, it is just two people who care about her, talking to each other, and they have very different opinions on who she is.

Molly: Yes, very different.

Becca: What she does.

Molly: Knightley says, "She must think he came out on purpose while Mr. Weston was out, because then, Mrs. Weston would have to fight her own battles and defend her own opinions." But Mrs. Weston is like, "No, he would definitely agree with me, because we were just talking last night about how good this friendship is for Emma." She says, "Mr. Knightley could never understand, because he's so used to living alone that he doesn't know the value of having a companion," [00:33:00] which I think is a sad life and explains a little bit why he's curmudgeonly.

Becca: Oh, yeah. In some ways, Mr. Knightley is like the Ron Swanson of this town.

Molly: Yeah. Yeah, it's coming from someone who doesn't watch that show.

Becca: Everyone loves and respects Mr. Knightley and he cares for everyone. But he's also just like, "I also like my space and I hate everyone."

Molly: Yeah. I'm trying to think who else is like that. I know enough about Parks and Rec to know Ron Swanson and his vibe, but I feel there's a lot of characters like that. I'm trying to think of another one. I don't need another one. That's a good reference. Then, Mrs. Weston says, "Perhaps, no man can be a good judge of the comfort a woman feels in the society of one of her own sex after being used to it all her life," which reinforces that this book is really about female friendship and I love that.

She says, "Maybe, Harriet isn't the perfect companion for Emma. But if Emma wants to see her better educated, then they'll probably read together." And Mr. Knightley says, "Emma has been meaning [00:34:00] to read more ever since she was 12 years old." I find the history between them very interesting, because he talks about her growing up and he says that he's been watching her make lists of books that she's been meaning to read all her life. He even kept one she wrote when she was 14, which is a little weird.

Becca: He is one of those people who go very far for the principle of the matter.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: He's very stubborn. And you can tell him it was one of those people who is set to offer a hot day after reading a slate article about a movie instead of actually seeing the movie.

Molly: Totally.

Becca: Yeah. And Knightley is someone who's very pissed off by that. So, he's basically documented in his brain all these instances, when she's pretended to have been well read on something, but not been well read on something.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And so, he's like, "No, it's the principle of the matter I'm documenting that she's full of shit."

Molly: I find it fascinating, because she is so concerned with other people being well read and then she's sitting there making lists of books she's going to read and being like, "Never mind."

Becca: It's still [00:35:00] really common in society. I'm sure people like this. I know people like this.

Molly: Absolutely.

Becca: One point in time in college, I had a conversation with a man who was trying to talk to me about Shakespeare and it became very clear very early in the conversation I knew more than him about Shakespeare. And he had to admit halfway through the conversation where he was trying to be pretentious about plays I liked that he had read almost none of them. And I was like, "Well, okay, but then you can't have this intellectual conversation with me." Emma's basically the type of person to have the intellectual conversation without doing the reading beforehand, which is half the people we went to college with.

Molly: Totally, and it's so annoying.

Becca: It's very annoying, which is why Mr. Knightley is like, "No, I will document this. You have not actually read this book."

Molly: Then Mr. Knightley says that Mrs. Weston couldn't ever persuade her to read as much as she wanted her to and Mrs. Weston's like, "Well, yes, at the time, I felt that too. But now, I can't remember Emma ever not doing it she was told. Basically, she's only remembering the fond memories with Emma." And [00:36:00] Mr. Knightley says, "There's hardly any desiring to refresh such a memory as that." But I think he's saying there is like, "I wouldn't try to make you remember all of the bad parts of Emma, but I have no problem doing so. So, let me just talk about it."

Becca: Basically, yeah. Basically, yeah, you wipe this from your brain. It's just fine and I don't want you to have those memories again, but I still have them. So, I'm going to bitch about it.

Molly: Yeah. So, he complains about Emma some more. He says that, "She's been spoiled by always being the cleverest in her family. And at 14, she was able to answer questions that stumped her older sister at 17." I'm wondering why that's a bad thing.

Becca: Well, we talked about this just a little bit before, which is that she's an incredibly entitled privileged girl who's not-- [crosstalk]

Molly: Mm-hmm. Makes too highly of herself.

Becca: Yes. And she's in a position in society, where she has a lot of influences, a lot of power. She also doesn't have a lot to do. She's a woman in 19th century England, who is way too clever to be really entertained by the goings on [00:37:00] of everything around her. So, essentially, she's just too smart for her own good and she has to create stuff to do for herself to entertain her own brain. Have you watched *Abbott Elementary* yet?

Molly: No.

Becca: Okay. Can I give you a spoiler? Spoilers for the first Season of *Abbott Elementary*. It is not really a spoilery show, but it's a great example. So, I'm just going to throw it out there. There's a plotline surrounding a second grader, who's really a troublemaker and she's really vicious with the other kids, really horrible for the teachers, a total handful in there. She's like a nightmare and they're trying to figure out why she's such a nightmare, and they realize that she's also, while being class clown and terrorizing the other children getting all of her work done really early. And they're like, "She's bored. That's why." So, they ever skip a grade up and that solves a lot of her behavioral issues. Basically, Emma is an understimulated young woman who needs stimulation and is reaching out in all these different ways to try to find it.

Molly: [00:38:00] That's fascinating that Mr. Knightley has figured that out, because he has been concerned about her being bored, and being too full of herself, or being too not having enough to do or whatever. He's been concerned about that the last four chapters. But I guess, he's known her her whole life.

Becca: Yeah, he knows her better than anyone except maybe her father. But her father's obviously very blinded to who she actually is as a person, whereas Knightley sees her very clearly, and can point out all the bad things about her, and basically be like, "This is why this is a problem."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: "And this is why it's going to be destructive for her and others."

Molly: Right. He says that her mother was the only person who could cope with her. And her mom died when she was 12. So, she's just been running rampant. And Mrs. Weston is like, "You never thought I was very good at my job, did you?" Because he thinks that nobody else was able to cope with Emma and he's like, "Well, you're a much better wife than a governess. While you were no help to Emma, [00:39:00] you weren't getting good education from Emma "on the very material matrimonial point of submitting your own will and doing as you were bid."

Becca: Big yikes for Mr. Knightley there.

Molly: Savage.

Becca: Yeah. Very big yikes for Mr. Knightley there. But what I also love is then, she basically is like, "It takes no effort to be Mr. Weston's wife." And he's like, "You're such an amenable person."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And that quality is wasted on a person, who's also a minimal so together, like, you don't have anything to do for each other.

Molly: Right. He's like, "You could do so much more, but you don't have to."

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Yeah. He thinks maybe though that Mr. Weston will start getting grumpy with being too comfortable or maybe his son will come in plague him. And Mrs. Weston says, "Well, that'll never happen," which I think is foreshadowing.

Becca: Is it?

Molly: I think so.

Becca: I will neither confirm nor deny.

Molly: I'll never win a staring contest with Becca.

Becca: I try to keep my face as stone as possible, listeners. It's all for your benefit, because if I spoil things for Molly, then this podcast is over.

Molly: Exactly. Then, Mr. Knightley jumps back to Harriet, because **[00:40:00]** he says, "I'm not done yet." He says he thinks she's bad news, because she thinks the sun shines out of Emma's butthole, basically, but she's a flatterer, but not in a conniving way. It's not calculated. She just completely thinks that Emma is the shit and therefore, Emma will continue to think herself the shit.

Becca: Yes. And also, have you ever known anybody who only wants to be friends with people who flatter them?

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Yeah. It's a very specific type of people and doesn't lead to a lot of growth. And basically, what he's saying is that all Harriet can do is worship Emma, and that means that she's not challenging Emma, and that means Emma's not growing as a person.

Molly: Right. Emma needs to be challenged.

Becca: Otherwise, she regresses.

Molly: Exactly. So, he also thinks that Harriet will become a little bit refined by hanging out with Emma, but only enough to become uncomfortable around her own society like the people that she's been with this whole time. He says that, "Emma's doctrines only give a little polish." Mrs. Weston **[00:41:00]** still can't agree with him and she's like, "Emma looked so great last night. She looked so well." And Mr. Knightley is like, "Okay."

Becca: You caught me. She's hot. Stop twisting my arm about it.

Molly: He's like, "You'd rather talk of her person than her mind? Sure. Let's talk about her. I can't deny that she's pretty." And Mrs. Weston's like, "She's not just pretty. She's the most beautiful person alive." Then, Mr. Knightley is like, "Well, I guess, that's true."

Becca: First of all, this is the first book I really think they do a job of actually describing how people look at all, and we get little hints of it. So, for Harriet, we know she's blond haired, she's blue eyed, she's

curvy. For Emma, we know she has hazel eyes and that she's full figured, but well built and tall. And that tells you something. It gives you pictures of how these people actually look and we haven't gotten that in the books yet. But I love this part because Knightley is like, "Fine. Fine."

Molly: He's like, "Yes, I've never seen anyone more handsome."

Becca: Yes, yes. "She might aggravate me, but yes, I'll admit she's hot. She's really [00:42:00] hot. What do you want from me?"

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: Mrs. Western is basically just like, "Oh, yeah, she looked--." He was like, "Yes, I know. She's hot. She's beautiful. I get it."

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: This is the exact quote from Mrs. Weston. "Such an eye, a true hazel eye and so brilliant. Regular features, open countenance with a complexion. Oh, what a bloom of full health and such a pretty height and size. Such a firm and upright figure. There is health not merely in her bloom, but in her air, her head, her glance. One hears sometimes of a child being "the picture of health," but now, Emma always gives me the idea of being the complete picture of grown-up health. She is loveliness itself, Mr. Knightley, is not she?" And then, he just responds. "I have not a fault to find with her person," which is basically like, "Yeah, no, you're right." [laughs]

Molly: Yeah, oh, I love him. I do. I love him. I think I love him.

Becca: [laughs] Okay, good to know.

Molly: Then, Mrs. Weston goes on and on some more about how beautiful she is and Mr. Knightley is like, "Well, yeah, and I don't find [00:43:00] her personally vain," to which I was like, "Really?" But then he clarifies that she's not vain about her appearance. She's vain about a lot of other things.

Becca: She's basically more obsessed with her own brain than her own face, which is nice.

Molly: Yeah, I like [crosstalk] person.

Becca: [chuckles]

Molly: Finally, they just agree to disagree on the relationship between Emma and Harriet. And Mrs. Weston says that, "Emma might have some little faults, but really, she's the best daughter, the kindest sister, the truest friend, and she will never intentionally lead anyone wrong." Mr. Knightley says he will keep his thoughts to himself until John--. John, another John, and Isabella come home for Christmas because John loves Emma with a reasonable and therefore, not a blind affection." And Isabella always thinks as he does, except when he is not quite frightened enough about the children.

Becca: Oh, you're getting a little insight already. You have John Knightley already sensible in a certain way like his brother and you have Isabella already a little more [00:44:00] like her father.

Molly: Yes, exactly. Hmm, interesting. Mrs. Weston says, "She thinks no good will come of talking to them about the friendship between Emma and Harriet, because Emma won't stop being friends with Harriet as long as it's a source of pleasure for her." And she's like, "I'm sorry for giving you advice, but

I've dealt with him for a long time." And he's like, "Actually, this advice will see a better fate than usual. I'll actually follow it." and Mrs. Weston says that, "Isabella is easily alarmed and it might upset her to hear that her sister might be in a not so great friendship." So, he says, "He won't say anything."

He says, "I have a very sincere interest in Emma and that Emma feels more like a sister to him than Isabella even does." And he feels an anxiety and curiosity for what will become of Emma. He is very concerned about her. He then says, "Emma always says she will never marry," but he thinks she just hasn't met a man that she could possibly love yet. He says, "It would not be a bad thing for her to be very much in love with a proper object. I should like to [00:45:00] see Emma in love and in some doubt of a return. It would do her good." Basically, the moral of the whole story is that he just wants to see Emma knock down a few pegs.

Becca: Absolutely. He wants to see her be vulnerable in some manner, because she really thinks herself invulnerable.

Molly: Yeah, exactly. Mrs. Weston replies to that saying, she doesn't think Emma should get married yet, but she won't reveal hers and Mr. Weston's real thoughts on the subject, because apparently, they have some secret hopes and dreams for Emma, but they don't want anyone to know.

On my first reading, I was like, "What don't they want anyone to know? What are their hopes and dreams for Emma?" On my second skim through as I was typing my notes, I realized, "They want Emma to get together with Mr. Weston's son," whose name I forgotten.

Becca: Frank?

Molly: Frank. That's my prediction.

Becca: I will neither confirm nor deny that.

Molly: I really think that's what it is. So, that's the end of that chapter.

Becca: Which brings us to Becca's study questions.

Molly: [00:46:00] [imitates instrument sound]

Becca: Listeners, we are tired tonight. So, we are going to do these rapid-fire. We talked about this a little bit, but much is said in these two chapters about the friendship between Harriet and Emma, both from Jane Austen herself. Emma, Harriet, herself. And also Mr. Knightley, and Mrs. Weston. Who do you think's right? What do you think the dynamics of this relationship are, the benefits, the dangers, and so on?

Molly: I think I agree with Mr. Knightley. I also think I agree with Mrs. Weston. And I think that if Harriet and Emma are happy, that's great. But I don't agree with Emma in that, like, I don't think a friendship should just be to help someone or-- You have to think really highly of yourself to think that your friendship is benefiting someone else. The friendship goes two ways and usually, you're not thinking about the benefits of a friendship. You're thinking about the joys of it. So, I don't agree with Emma. I think I agree with everyone else. I think Harriet [00:47:00] is just happy to have a new friend, unless she not, unless she's sneaky, but I don't think she is. I think she's truly innocent. Though, I don't know yet.

I think that Emma is definitely too lonely for her own good. It is good that she has a person there. I just don't like her own motives in it, but I hope she has fun, I guess. But I do agree with Mrs. Weston in that Emma needs someone there, because otherwise, she's going to drive herself. She's just going to run herself into the ground, just walking in circles, I guess. And I agree with Mr. Knightley in that Emma needs someone to match her, not someone who she could just drag along, because as you said, that doesn't lead to any personal growth and Emma is getting to the point, where she needs to have someone challenge her. So, I agree with everyone, but mostly with Mr. Knightley.

Becca: Yeah, I think everyone does really make nuanced points, but I think Knightley touches on something quite important there. **[00:48:00]** And I think one thing that we haven't talked about a little bit and we're going to talk about now would be, The Economics of Friendship in Jane Austen.

Molly: Ooh, a new sound effect.

Becca: Graham, a sound effect?

[The Economics of Friendship in Jane Austen stinger debuts]

Becca: So, one dynamic of the relationship we touched on last week, but I want to bring up again today is to say that Harriet is of a much lower class than Emma. Emma is a gentleman's daughter, and her father is extraordinarily wealthy to the point where Emma is secure for life and Harriet is not. So, part of the reason Emma feels this superiority over Harriet is because despite what Emma says about her possibly being a gentleman's daughter, which is stuff that Emma's pulling out of her ass, Harriet is not very well connected, and Harriet does not have good birth. And so, she's taking an interest in this young girl, who really doesn't have much going for her, in terms of the marriage market, in terms of societal connections, **[00:49:00]** all things we've learned over our time reading Jane Austen that are really important.

Emma, taking this specific interest in her, is giving Harriet a look into a social class that has not been available to her as of yet. And Emma is partially so willing to shape Harriet to her own place, because she does sense that Harriet is beneath her. But on the other hand, Emma is reaching across a class while. What Mr. Knightley is partially picking up on is not just that Emma must be challenged by someone. It's also this danger and he voices it about Harriet getting a polish on her that there are ways in which the classes in England don't mesh well, because of the way the society is structured.

And there's benefits to that in this friendship, and there's weaknesses to that in the friendship, and one of the big weaknesses **[00:50:00]** is this idea that Harriet's entering a world that's a bit alien to her. So, this is part of the dynamic that's hard to capture and be like that today, because you would think, "Yeah, we've learned about The Economics of Dating in Jane Austen, but The Economics of your Connections, Economics of your Friendships are also very important. So, it's a weird space.

That being said, also, you can see there's genuine affection between the two of them. So, it's Jane Austen asking some interesting, tough questions about class in this time period. Does that make sense?

Molly: Yeah, it does. It opens up a whole new can of worms really, because we've only thought about it in terms of dating and marriage.

Becca: Yes. No, you are right. This book is already focused on other aspects of relationships and connections. And one of those relationships/connections is this friendship between Emma and Harriet,

which on one hand is filled with lots of love and admiration. And on the other hand has [00:51:00] got a class dynamic to it, which makes the friendship itself pretty problematic. And Knightley is picking up on the fact that it means that Emma has a power over Harriet and that Harriet's very susceptible to being taught how to do things the exact Emma way, because Emma is the only person she's interacting with from that class.

Molly: What's interesting is that it doesn't seem anyone's concerned about the possibility of Harriet being a gold digger.

Becca: Well, how is she going to get Emma's money?

Molly: Well, if Emma starts buying her stuff or taking her to balls and things like places, where she wouldn't have access before, it's not I'm not saying that that's going to happen. I'm just saying, it's interesting that that's not on anyone's mind, because I feel, at least today, if there was a story about someone dating or becoming friends with someone who was super rich, I feel the rich person is always like, "Are you trying to steal my money?" Not to say that all rich people are finicky with their money, but just in media, I guess.

Becca: Well, Emma's pretty generous as a person with her [00:52:00] wealth and everything. But I think what it is right now and there's obviously more story to go. Right now, people aren't concerned about that, because all that's happening is they're walking together and Emma's giving Harriet, an earful on how to live life.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, right now, everyone's more concerned that Emma will get up her own ass so far that she can't see anymore, and that Harriet will just imbue and imbibe everything Emma has taught her for her own sake.

Molly: Yeah, I guess-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Which doesn't work when you're at Harriet's class level, necessarily.

Molly: Right. And I guess, what I meant more was that nobody's concerned about her being a Lucy Steele.

Becca: Yes, yes. Part of that is that no one expected Lucy Steele to do any of that either.

Molly: So true.

Becca: So, we'll get farther into the story, and I don't want to give things away. But as of right now, she's not in a place where she's set to steal any of Emma's money.

Molly: Totally.

Becca: But I am not going to say what happens later on [00:53:00] in the story.

Molly: And I don't think she's going to steal Emma's money, but more social climbing, potentially. Maybe she becomes, I don't know. Well, we'll see.

Becca: What do you make of Robert Martin and his thirst for Harriet?

Molly: I really like him. He's really sweet. And I think that Emma's making so many snap judgments about him that she has no right to be making. He works hard. He's not super-duper smart, but he's smart enough. I don't know, I really like him and I think that Harriet really likes him too, and she's so easily influenced that she could be told, "You don't like him" and then she'll be like, "Oh, right. Sorry. I've forgotten."

Becca: I wondered that he didn't have the book.

Molly: Right, exactly.

Becca: It's very clear. It's borderline cruel how Emma is to Robert Martin in these chapters. And it's clear from her read on the situation that again, she and Harriet come from very different worlds. And in Harriet's world, Robert Martin is an impressive guy. And in Emma's world, Emma's just so far above all of that that you can't fathom that **[00:54:00]** anyone would want to date him. So, you really get the lens of each woman on this man based on where they fall in relation to him and class. But that being said, he just seems a total little mensch, doesn't he?

Molly: I really liked him. Yeah.

Becca: [unintelligible **[00:54:13]** So, then next question is, is there a charitable explanation for the way Emma talks about Robert Martin?

Molly: That she doesn't know any better?

Becca: That is a charitable way of looking at it.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: But I think that you could make an argument and I'm not saying this is the correct argument that when you look at *The Economics of Dating in Jane Austen*, [*The Economics of Dating in Jane Austen stinger*] she is looking to make a more advantageous connection for Harriet, who does not have a lot of connections. And so, in some ways, she's trying to help Harriet secure a future that's better for her. Now, Emma's flighty and privileged. So, it's more of a thought experiment than in concrete knowledge of what she's thinking. But we grow up in this society, we **[00:55:00]** grow up in and Emma's society, people marry for money. She doesn't need to, but most people do.

Molly: Right. I think that you're correct in that and that is what I thought was happening. I think she was being more mean about Robert than she needed to, because she wanted to plant the idea in Harriet's head that he's not good enough for her, but he doesn't deserve that. But I totally see what you're saying.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I think it's accurate.

Becca: And we're going to get more into this as the book goes on. But what do you think of Jane Austen's take on all this? What's her class take here so far?

Molly: I don't know, because she's definitely made it clear that Emma is flawed and the narration hints at that. And it also hints that Robert being a good guy, but at the same time Emma's likable. Like, Mr.

Knightley is likable. So, Emma is flawed, Mr. Knightley can see through [00:56:00] everything. It's interesting. But I think that she is saying that this is flawed.

Becca: All right, we're going to stick a pin into it and come back to it later.

Molly: Okay.

Becca: But I want to just plant the seeds as we go on. So, thoughts on Knightley's perception of Emma? We learn a lot about it and we also learn a lot about Mr. Knightley for the first time in this chapter, this last one at least.

Molly: Mr. Knightley knows Emma so well, like, better than she knows herself clearly. She is clueless about a lot of things, about herself and he can see through these things. I think it's interesting that he says that he sees her more as a sister than he sees Isabella, who married his brother.

Becca: I think he just means he's invested in her life.

Molly: Yeah. He cares more about her. He cares about her like his own family, and they fight all the time, and he is irritated by her, but still [00:57:00] super invested in her life. So, that's interesting. How old is he?

Becca: He's in his 30s.

Molly: And how old is Emma?

Molly: She's 21.

Molly: Right.

Becca: 20.

Molly: Right, right, right.

Becca: 20, 21.

Molly: 21, I think. I think she's 21.

Becca: Yes, she's 21. Yeah, it's the first time we've had this sort of friendship showcased right away in a Jane Austen novel, but we've dropped in the middle of it in a way that we haven't seen in other novels necessarily. And therefore, there's a lot of context that we're supposed to pick up on. And one of the things this chapter accomplishes is showing how deep this connection and this friendship goes over the years. So, you get really a sense of how integral Knightley has been to the Woodhouses and their life up until this point.

Molly: Totally. This isn't related, but I just realized that Emma's a lot older than Harriet too.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: And [crosstalk] realize that.

Becca: Not shockingly.

Molly: But like a couple of years.

Becca: Like four or five, yeah?

Molly: Yeah, [00:58:00] I hadn't thought of that.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: That just adds to Harriet worshiping her.

Becca: Yeah. Everything about the dynamic is very lopsided between the two of them. Emma's more educated, Emma has so much more money, Emma has so much more class training, and Emma is cleverer, Emma is older, and therefore, there's just nothing in this friendship for Emma to be challenged by or taken down by. It's just Harriet adores her and is feeling so flattered to be singled out by her. And Emma loves being flattered and thanks, Harriet's, a wonderful young woman and like that part is genuine. But there is this weirdness to their friendship, where it's really out of balance. There's really not a lot of mitigating factors in there to pull them down to the same level.

Molly: Right.

Becca: So, thoughts on Elton the thot. He's the thot. I don't know if people are still saying that.

Molly: Do you mean, "That girl over there," like that thot?

Becca: [00:59:00] Yeah. [laughs]

Molly: [laughs] Haven't thought of him like that.

Becca: Yeah, thot of him like that.

Molly: Ha, ha, ha, ha.

Becca: Thot.

Molly: I guess. I think we're settling with him. Just based on the descriptions of him so far, he's not as haughty as Knightley and he's not as clever as Mr. Weston. He's just nice, which is great. But as Little Red says in *Into the Woods*, nice is different than good.

Becca: I thought that was the witch.

Molly: No, it's Little Red.

Becca: Oh, maybe both of them, actually.

Molly: Because nice is different than good.

Becca: Oh because that goes to-- [crosstalk]

Molly: It's different from good.

Becca: Because that's, "You're not good, you're not bad, you're just nice."

Molly: Yes.

Becca: "I'm not good, I'm not nice, I'm just right."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Oh, yeah. Well-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Yeah, good stuff. Copyright.

Molly: Yeah. But anyway, yeah, I just think that he's so far nondescript.

Becca: [01:00:00] Yes.

Molly: We'll find out more.

Becca: So, right now, it's--

Molly: I hope we don't settle. I don't want us to settle.

Becca: Okay.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Okay, okay, okay. We're not settling. We're not settling, listeners. It's not happening.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: Why won't Emma marry and what designs do the Westons have?

Molly: Emma won't marry, because she doesn't have to. So, she's just never thought about it. That's what I think. And maybe she's opposed to marriage. She doesn't want someone to have any power over her. And at this point, this point in time, I feel marriage is very much like a man and a woman, and the man is in charge, and the woman is also there. And there are some really good marriages that we've seen. The Gardiners have a good marriage. But then you have other marriages who are not good like Wickham and Lydia, or I don't know.

Becca: Oh, shoot. It's the Hugh Laurie character's name.

Molly: Yes, like the Palmers.

Becca: Yes, yes.

Molly: Yeah. You see where the man is so irritated by the woman. [01:01:00] And I think that Emma just doesn't want to be underneath someone else. She doesn't want to be financially or emotionally dependent on anyone.

Becca: Yeah. And you see her so embedded in this world that she's in and happy in this world, where she's in there nothing needs to change for her. She's not in any serious danger of being impoverished.

Molly: So, why would she?

Becca: Instead, she's just walking around, flitting about love and life.

Molly: Yeah, exactly. And I think that the Westons want her to marry their son.

Becca: I will neither confirm or deny. Anyway, sure that brings us to our standbys, because we have a new standby. Remember? What do you think of Emma?

Molly: Right. I still am annoyed by her, but I can't not like her. Yeah, I'm still annoyed by her. I think she's a snob.

Becca: She is certainly a snob. That is correct.

Molly: Yeah. That's where I stand right now. [01:02:00]

Becca: Yes. And that's a fair place to stand. We will continue to ask these questions and I will continue to ask, what do you think of this character? Because as we've already seen in these first five chapters, she's so layered as a character. There's so much to talk about with the character of Emma.

Molly: Yeah. She's like, as Mary Berry would say, [unintelligible [01:02:18]

Becca: Yes. She's a cake or an onion.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: Emmas are like onions.

Molly: Emmas are like onions.

Becca: Emmas are like onions. All right, funniest quote?

Molly: I think it might be after this entire conversation they're having about Emma, and her mind, and her situation with Harriet, Mrs. Weston being like, "But isn't she hot though?" And Mr. Knightley goes, "Oh, you would rather talk with her person than her mind, would you? Very well. I shall not attempt to deny Emma is being pretty."

Becca: Great stuff.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Fine. Fine. I admit it. She's hot, she's a thot.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Questions moving forward.

Molly: I want to know the Westons designs [01:03:00] for Emma? I want to know what they're thinking. I want to know more about Mr. Elton. I want to know who his family is. I want to know what his deal is. I think those are my questions.

Becca: Who wins the chapters?

Molly: I think I have to give it to Mr. Knightley for one, having the best opinions and two, being-- Oh, I figured out who he reminds me of. He reminds me of Luke, because he's just grumpy, but hot.

Becca: Okay, yeah. [laughs]

Molly: Yeah. Just right now, that's who he reminds me of. But he's just for being a lovable grump, I give it to Mr. Knightley.

Becca: I am so on board with that. All right, listeners, that concludes this episode of Pod and Prejudice. For next time, we're going to be reading Chapters 6-8. It's a bit of a long one. So, it might be a longer record sesh, but I didn't want to split these chapters. So, we're not going to split them up.

Molly: So, that's all we've got for you today. And until next time, **[01:04:00]** stay proper.

Becca: And find a farmer, who will collect walnuts in the woods for you.

Molly: Yeah.

[music]

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. 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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