

**Molly:** Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we have a ton of new patrons to thank. So, shoutout to Nicole, Sarah, Judith, Akhila, Genevieve, Nana, Rin, Lauren, Anna, and Sabrina. Thank you so much. Because of your support, we're finally able to start looking into new microphones for the pod, and we are so excited, and we couldn't be more grateful. And now, enjoy this week's episode covering Chapters 35 and 36 of *Sense and Sensibility*.

**[Pod and Prejudice theme]**

**Becca:** This is Becca.

**Molly:** This is Molly.

**Becca:** We're here to talk about Jane Austen.

**Molly:** We are here specifically to talk about *Sense and Sensibility*, Chapters 35 and 36 or Volume II Chapters 13 and 14, which also happens to be the end of Volume II, and I'm glad that we did two chapters instead of three chapters, because otherwise that would have been [00:01:00] awkward. [giggles]

**Becca:** That would have been. Especially, I don't have an addition with the different volumes in it, so I did not know this was the end of a volume.

**Molly:** So, very convenient. Good work, Becca.

**Becca:** So convenient. Thank you, Jane Austen. I'm pleased, I'm interested, because I know what happens next chapter, and I'm like, "That's the next volume."

**Molly:** Ooh.

**Becca:** Intriguing Molly for the lack of spoilers.

**Molly:** Very intriguing. So, listeners, in case you're new here, I, Molly, have never read any Jane Austen before doing this podcast.

**Becca:** I, Becca, I'm a Jane Austen fan, and have read many of her works. And if you want to hear Molly read through *Pride and Prejudice* for the first time, you can check out Season 1 of this podcast, but that is not what we're doing here today.

**Molly:** No. Today, we are talking about a set of chapters in which I think the narrator is the most savage that I have yet to see the narrator.

**Becca:** It's a combination of Jane Austen being super savage, and also, Elinor being at the end of her fucking rope.

**Molly:** Truly, I was about to say at the end of her rope, she is [00:02:00] like, "Nope, not handling this anymore. I'm just going to snap." I think we should just get into it.

**Becca:** I think that's a great idea.

**Molly:** Where did we leave off, Becca?

**Becca:** Well, we left off, Marianne now knows Willoughby is garbage, and we've now hung out with John Dashwood a bit, and he's gotten to know the Middletons with Fanny. They all love the Steeles except Elinor and Marianne, and John Dashwood's kind of like, "Oh, Colonel Brandon and Elinor should get married." Also, Marianne's looking ugly.

**Molly:** Yeah, that was weird.

**Becca:** We also met Mrs. Ferrars, Edwards's mother, and she was awful.

**Molly:** She sucks.

**Becca:** And she was nice to Lucy but mean to Elinor, because she suspected Elinor of having a thing with Edward.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm. And she liked Lucy simply because she was not Elinor.

**Becca:** Exactly. And Marianne had a little bit of a breakdown but Colonel Brandon is still crushing.

**Molly:** He is. He thinks that it's very sweet.

**Becca:** I really stand by this take, Colonel Brandon has a real thing for dramatic [00:03:00] women because he wishes he could be dramatic.

**Molly:** Hmm, I like that. I like that. He has a drama queen inside of him. There is a good drama queen inside of us all.

**Becca:** That's exactly-- Colonel Brandon is so misunderstood as stuffy and I'm like, "How can you possibly think this guy is stuffy when he pines the way he pines?"

**Molly:** One of our listeners did write to us. Actually, I'm not even sure if they were listener. They might just be like a Twitter follower, but they were talking about how Colonel Brandon is gross for-- I did go to bat. They were talking about how Colonel Brandon is gross for liking Marianne because she reminds him of his previous crush/love. I was like, "That's not--." He might just have a type, first of all. Second of all, don't come into my house and insult my son.

[laughter]

**Becca:** Don't talk to me or my son ever, again. I think there's a very valid critique of Colonel Brandon for going for such a younger woman in this part.

**Molly:** Yes, that was also part of their critique.

**Becca:** That like that I can get behind [00:04:00] as a critique. I kind of just pull myself out of it because it is the time period a little bit.

**Molly:** And that's what I said. I was like, "This is a different time period. It's not like someone today being that age difference. It's much more common back then."

**Becca:** But I do think I get it. I get why people are grossed out by it, which is why I brought it up upfront. That being said, it is not crazy to go for someone who reminds you of your ex.

**Molly:** Oh, not at all.

**Becca:** People are allowed to have types.

**Molly:** Correct.

**Becca:** Anyway, moving on.

**Molly:** So, that's where we're at now. We've met Mrs. Ferrars, and she's the worst. Elinor, now having seen how terrible she is, feels like she understands where Eddie's been coming from this all this time and he's been afraid of like, what his mother thinks. But also, she's a little bit like, "Thank goodness, I didn't marry into that family."

**Becca:** Yeah, every one of the Ferrars is garbage, except Eddie is a normal person who makes bad choices.

**Molly:** Yeah. I would say Eddie, I think they're all garbage, [00:05:00] but everyone, but Eddie is like hot garbage and he's like lukewarm garbage, you know? I feel like this is an unpopular opinion. I feel like a lot of our listeners probably like Eddie and I disagree.

**Molly:** I don't think it's that unpopular to shit on Eddie in this part of the book. I just think that I possibly am a bit of an Eddie apologist.

**Molly:** Sure, sure.

**Becca:** But hey, we should put that question to the listeners. Listeners, without spoiling Molly on the book, let us know if you think Eddie is garbage at this point in time.

**Molly:** Garbage or hot garbage? An Instagram poll.

**Becca:** Hot garbage as in Fanny Dashwood, but there's also garbage like good garbage like when-

**Molly:** Compost.

**Becca:** -you're drinking like three White Claws at 10 AM garbage.

**Molly:** Oh, sure. [laughs] I said compost instead of drinking White Claws at 10 AM.

**Becca:** [laughs] So, guys, is Eddie garbage or is he compost?

**Molly:** [laughs] Oh, my God, that should be a t-shirt. Well, I'm going to--

**Becca:** Garbage or [00:06:00] compost?

**Molly:** I really going on a spiral with the t-shirts and everything on a t-shirt.

**Becca:** Oh, I'm into it.

**Molly:** As we should, honestly. So, Elinor wonders how Lucy is buying into Mrs. Ferrars' BS, because it's so obvious to Elinor that Mrs. Ferrars is only being nice to Lucy because she's not Elinor, but Lucy is not the brightest, and I can't tell if she believes it or not, but--

**Becca:** We all have those people in our lives who read way into every interaction, and Lucy is reading so hard into this Mrs. Ferrars' interaction.

**Molly:** Oh, yeah, and she wants to believe that she loves her. I just don't know, does she believe it or is she just talking about it all the time?

**Becca:** I'm not going to tell you.

**Molly:** I guess who's to say?

**Becca:** Whomst?

**Molly:** Whomst If you will. One day, Lucy comes by hoping to find Elinor alone. I will say, it did say in the book that lady Middleton set her down at [00:07:00] Elinor's house or at the house that Elinor is staying. I like to picture lady Middleton dropping Lucy off, goodbye.

**Becca:** Like a playdate?

**Molly:** Yeah. Like a little playdate.

**Becca:** Oh.

**Molly:** Have fun at school. So, Lucy is like, "Glad, I found you alone." She starts going on about how much Mrs. Ferrars loved her, and Elinor is like, "Yeah, she was civil," and Lucy was like, "No, no, no, no. She and Fanny were both all sweetness and affability," which are two words that have never been used to describe Fanny Dashwood and never will again. Elinor starts to say that, "Yeah, it would have been really flattering if they knew that you were engaged, but they don't." But then, Lucy cuts her off. She cuts her off and immediately is like, "No, no, no. They love me. It's great."

**Becca:** Oh, man. She is trying so hard to pull one over on Elinor, and Elinor is trying so hard to stay polite here.

**Molly:** But the savage level just keeps climbing, it starts out very low grade, and it just gets more and more.

**Becca:** It's just girl mean. [00:08:00] I was discussing this the other day. Girl mean is a very specific and precise type of mean. Anyone can be girl mean of any gender, do you know what I'm talking about?

**Molly:** Like *Mean Girls*.

**Becca:** Oh, absolutely.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** But girl mean is like warfare exacted upon someone. So, I think girl mean should be used in only the smallest of circumstances. It can only be used when most deserved. Otherwise, you're bullying someone. But sometimes, like Elinor is deploying it here, it is well deserved and she's using it on the defense because Lucy is being girl mean on the offense.

**Molly:** Oh, yeah. It's time for Elinor to strike back. Episode 5: Elinor Strikes Back.

**Becca:** [scats *The Imperial March*]

**Molly:** [continues scatting *The Imperial March*]

**Becca:** You've got to stop or Graham's going to be like, "We're going to have to pay for the song."

**Molly:** So, Lucy asks Elinor why she's being so quiet. She's like, "Are you okay?" Elinor is like, "Yeah, I'm fine," and Lucy's like, "Would be so terrible if you fell [00:09:00] ill because you're my best friend in the whole wide world, and I don't know what I'd do without you." Elinor is like, "I can't even think of anything to say to that." So, she just sits there.

**Becca:** The amount of time in this chapter, Elinor just sits in silence to not say something mean.

**Molly:** Yeah, to just let Lucy just prattle on. Yeah, Lucy is then like, "Oh, this is so great because Lady Middleton and Mrs. Ferrars are going to visit each other now. So, I'm sure I'll be seeing more of Edward." Then, she says if Elinor ever tells her sister what Lucy thinks of her, she should give her the highest praise. Elinor is like, "I don't think I'm going to be telling her anything anytime soon." Sorry. Lucy is like, "Oh, if Mrs. Ferrars didn't like me, then I would notice, because she makes it really obvious when she doesn't like someone."

**Becca:** Cue her looking at Elinor and being like, "She doesn't like you."

**Molly:** A meaningful look.

**Becca:** "She doesn't like you." Ironically, I feel like Lucy's [00:10:00] missing the point. The reason Mrs. Ferrars doesn't like Elinor is because Fanny said that she might have a thing for Edward.

**Molly:** Yep, and they think that she's more of a threat.

**Becca:** Exactly.

**Molly:** Yeah. Ah, oh, Lucy. She's playing some kind of game here.

**Molly:** Yeah, she's playing, she's swinging, she's at bat. She's--

**Becca:** Scoring a touchdown?

**Molly:** I wouldn't say she's scored a touchdown. I'd say she's doing the [unintelligible 00:10:25] thing where she's swinging her bat around, but not actually thinking-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** I was making a joke about how little you understand sports.

**Molly:** Oh. [laughs]

**Becca:** Because up to bat and touchdown are two different sports.

**Molly:** Oh, I know. I know.

**Becca:** Yeah. You know she's just trying to get a walk off and call it a homerun.

**Molly:** Yep.

**Becca:** This is embarrassing for us both. Let's move on.

**Molly:** That's when you a ball, right? When you--

**Becca:** Sorry, what?

**Molly:** A ball. It's called a ball. When they throw it four times and you don't swing, and then you walk?

**Becca:** No. So, if you pitch the ball, there's a strike zone, and if the pitcher [00:11:00] throws a good pitch and the batter doesn't hit or doesn't swing at it, it's a strike.

**Molly:** Right.

**Becca:** But if it's a bad pitch, it's a ball.

**Molly:** Yeah, that's what I said, a ball.

**Becca:** Unless the batter swings in it.

**Molly:** Right. But I said, if they throw it, and you don't swing, and it's not in the strike zone four times, that's a ball.

**Becca:** And then, you have a walk-off.

**Molly:** And then, you walk.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** I used to play softball.

**Becca:** Oh, boy.

**Molly:** When I was seven.

**Becca:** Yeah. I'm not a very athletic person, but I do follow sports more closely than you do.

**Molly:** Yeah, I don't know anything. But I did know that, but I did know that. Let it be known, listeners, I did know that. So, Elinor is about to reply to what Lucy had just said when who should enter but the man himself Edward Ferrars.

**Becca:** This is one of my favorite scenes in the book, because it's so uncomfortable.

**Molly:** I'm so excited to see this because he walks in, and he freezes in the doorway, and everyone just looks at each other in the silence like, "Oh, no."

**Becca:** "What's the sound effect for this moment?"

[uncomfortable silence stinger]

**Molly:** Then like [00:12:00] wha, wha, whaa.

**Molly:** Can you get that, Graham? All right, great. But there's something about the sheer panic in Edwards's face that's so palpable in the way Austen writes this scene.

**Molly:** Yeah, she said, he would rather turn around and leave again than stay.

**Becca:** Wait, what's the exact quote here? It's so good, it's so good, it's so funny.

**Molly:** It was a very awkward moment, and the countenance of each shoot that it was so. They all looked exceedingly foolish, and Edward seemed to have as great an inclination to walk out of the room again as to advance further into it.

**Becca:** Oh, boy.

**Molly:** Yeah. Basically, this is the worst possible scenario. All three of them together in a room with no fourth person to [crosstalk] attention. Yeah.

**Becca:** And then, Jane Austen makes a point there that Elinor ends up being the one to have to carry on the conversation.

**Molly:** Yeah, because Edward, he's just too uncomfortable.

**Becca:** Edward's lost words.

**Molly:** He's lost for words. Lucy is not trying to help [00:13:00] anybody.

**Becca:** Yeah, basically, Lucy doesn't give a shit of everyone feels uncomfortable, and Edward feels too guilty to say anything.

**Molly:** Yep.

**Becca:** So, Elinor's like, "So, I guess I'll say things."

**Molly:** Yeah, actually, what it said about him is that he's very tender unlike most men, and he actually knows that he's done something wrong here, and that's why he can't speak words, which is nice. I will give him that.

**Becca:** He's a disaster child.

**Molly:** He is. He is lukewarm garbage-compost.

**Becca:** Poor Eddie.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, Elinor is being really nice to him, which gives him a little bit of confidence. He sits down, but he's really in a pickle. Elinor, she's trying so hard to make it easy for everyone. She leaves. She says, "I'm going to go get Marianne," and then she goes in stands in the hallway for a little while to give them time alone together.

**Becca:** She also just is so uncomfortable, she has to go bring another party into the room.

**Molly:** That's fair. That's good. That's smart.

**Becca:** Although to Elinor, [00:14:00] bringing Marianne into the room is a huge risk.

**Molly:** Oh, yes, because Marianne doesn't know.

**Becca:** Yeah, she doesn't know anything.

**Molly:** So, that's going to hurt Elinor's little heart.

**Becca:** Not only that, it's also Marianne might say something.

**Molly:** About her and Eddie? Yeah, but okay. I get that Lucy is not the brightest bulb in the Home Depot?



**Becca:** Oh, no, no. That's not the problem. Elinor is playing a game of standoff with Lucy, and Lucy is trying to get her to break to show that she actually does care for Edward. Elinor is like, "Nope, don't care. No problems."

**Molly:** Why is she doing that?

**Becca:** Oh, because she's trying to preserve her dignity.

**Molly:** Would you say that she's proud?

**Becca:** It's not in the title, but yeah.

**Molly:** Okay. She's sensible?

**Becca:** This is actually not Elinor's most sensible moment.

**Molly:** No.

**Becca:** A sensible woman would do more to keep Lucy Steele away from her.

**Molly:** I, honestly, don't think that Elinor has a sense [00:15:00] of self-preservation.

**Becca:** Oh, none.

**Molly:** She and Eddie both have dug themselves little holes, and they just keep burrowing deeper and deeper.

**Becca:** And giving each other puppy eyes from the hole they've dug.

**Molly:** Argh. Yeah, argh. They make me so mad. [laughs]

**Becca:** Anyway, let's keep going.

**Molly:** Yes, we'll keep going, we'll keep going. So, Marianne comes in. She's so excited to see them both, and she's just like making puppy eyes of the both of them. The only thing that's ruining her moment is that Lucy is there.

**Becca:** Same.

**Molly:** Yeah, same. Yeah, this would be a good chapter if she wasn't there, but it's not. Then, Edward comments that Marianne looks unwell. Rude.

**Becca:** Well, I think out of concern like, "Are you okay?"

**Molly:** Sure, but the way it's presented, it made me laugh. Let me find it.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** Marianne's going on, she's speaking with tenderness, sometimes at Edward and sometimes at Elinor regretting only that their delight in each other should be checked by Lucy's unwelcome presence. Edward was the first to speak, and it was to notice Marianne's [00:16:00] altered looks, and expressed his fear of her not finding London agree with her. It's just out of the blue in any event.

**Becca:** Yeah, it's a little rude, I guess. But I think he's just being like, "You okay? You don't look so good."

**Molly:** Which to be fair, she doesn't. Sure.

**Becca:** Yeah. I mean, the implication through these chapters is that Marianne has let herself go a little bit.

**Molly:** Oh, yeah, and they talked about that at length in the next chapter. I relate.

**Becca:** Listen, before COVID, I was a girl who put on makeup most days. Now, I barely put makeup on to go to dinner.

**Molly:** Oh, my God. If our listeners could see me right this very instant. Marianne's response to this though was like, "Oh, don't worry about me. Elinor is in good health, and that should be good enough for us all."

**Becca:** This is why I said it was a risk. That's so awkward, and it says Lucy's head snaps right up.

**Molly:** She just looks up and then Edward is like, "Let me change the subject right now." So, he is very alert and he asks if she likes London, and Marianne's like, "Definitely not." She says she is happier [00:17:00] now that he's here and "Thank heaven you are what you always were." But in my opinion, he is not.

**Becca:** He is what he has always been, but Marianne doesn't have all the facts.

**Molly:** Right. He's not what he has always been to their family, because to Elinor now actually, as much as she's putting on a brave face, this is a source of pain.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah.

**Molly:** So, he can't be what he's always been. Then, nobody says anything. So, Marianne keeps talking, and she says that Eddie should come back with them to Barton in a week or two, and Edward mutters something unintelligible which Marianne takes as agreement.

**Becca:** This is like a sitcom scene.

**Molly:** Both chapters were so funny. Picking the funniest quote was very hard.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah.

**Molly:** He's like, "Oh, [mumbles]."

**Becca:** [laughs] [mumbles] Barton, obligations.

**Molly:** [laughs] Yeah. Then, Marianne goes on [00:18:00] to tell him that they had the worst day yesterday, but she can't say more about it now, obviously talking about how much she hated his mom and she wants to gossip with him, but she doesn't want to give Lucy that satisfaction. So, she won't do it here, but she asks them where he was yesterday, and he was like, "While I was engaged elsewhere," and Marianne's like, "You had something better to do than hang out with us?" Then, Lucy says, "Ahem. Perhaps, Miss Marianne, you think young men never stand upon engagements if they have no mind to keep them, little as well as great."

**Becca:** What a Willoughby slight.

**Molly:** Oh, yeah, oh, yeah. And Marianne doesn't get it but we all, and by we all, I mean the readers, and also Eddie, and Elinor freeze in our tracks. Actually, does Eddie know? Eddie doesn't know yet, does he?

**Becca:** I think, he might know as far as like everyone knows.

**Molly:** Okay, okay. Right. That makes sense as to why he would ask how she is. But everyone's like, "What?" [00:19:00] Marianne's like, "Oh, no. No, no, I just think that Eddie, he didn't come because he keeps his engagement, his conscience kept him away. He would never bail on any plans," which she's just-- now, she's digging a hole. Everyone's in their own little holes right now, and Marianne, first was making it uncomfortable for everyone. Then, Lucy tried to insult her, but she's just continuing on saying things about Eddie and Elinor, but Eddie would break plans because he broke Elinor's heart.

**Becca:** Well, he hasn't broken his engagement to Lucy which shows a pretty strong commitment to plans.

**Molly:** True, true, true, true. And what Lucy just said about you think that men never stand on engagements when they don't have in mind to keep them or whatever, she's talking about Willoughby like, "Breaking his commitment, but guess what? Eddie didn't break his commitment to me."

**Becca:** Exactly.

**Molly:** Ah.

**Becca:** Ooh.

**Molly:** Oh, my God, the double meanings. [00:20:00] All of this savagery.

**Becca:** Honestly, who needs *Real Housewives* of anything when you have Jane Austen.

**Molly:** *Real Housewives of the Regency Era*. I would watch that.

**Becca:** There's definitely a really badly done sketch somewhere.

**Molly:** Yes, it is. Actually, I think I saw on Instagram, someone posted an *SNL* sketch that had a few people from *SNL* with Regency wigs on. I'll find it.

**Becca:** All right.

**Molly:** So, Edward is so uncomfortable with all of this, that he just gets up and leaves. Well, he gets up to leave. and then Marianne's like, "No, no, no, don't go," and she stage whispers that Lucy is going to be leaving soon, you can stay, she's going to be gone soon. He goes anyway, and then Lucy leaves soon after, because why would she stay if he's gone? Marianne immediately turns to Elinor and is like, "Why is Lucy always here? Couldn't she see that we didn't want her here?" Ugh, Elinor is like, "Well, Lucy has known Edward a really long time, and so, it makes sense that he would want to see her, too." [00:21:00] Marianne's like, "Elinor, I know that you want me to assure you of the opposite right now and I'm not playing into your games."

**Becca:** Again, this goes to why I'm like, "Why do people think Elinor is perfect?" She's ruining her own life over and over again.

**Molly:** She truly is. She truly, truly is. Then, Elinor sits in the room by herself thinking about how she's in such a pickle because she promised Lucy that she wouldn't say anything. So, she can't tell Marianne and just I'm really done. I'm done with Elinor and her bullshit because you can. Your promise to Lucy doesn't mean anything because Lucy is a trash bag.

**Becca:** Also, just Marianne's going through absolute hell and so are you, and you could help each other.

**Molly:** Yeah, I'm done with her bullshit. Done with it. Done. I just can't see her side like--

**Becca:** Her side? Oh, her side is the lake she wants to keep her word. She's embarrassed. She doesn't know how to talk about her feelings.

**Molly:** I don't know. I don't always know how to talk about my [00:22:00] feelings, but I just can't relate with the fact that she is putting her promise to this girl she just met and who has been nothing but awful to her over her relationship with her sister.

**Becca:** Well, I think she takes her word super seriously as a lady or whatever, but I think--

**Molly:** I know. I don't get that.

**Becca:** I think really this is why you're a Marianne and I'm an Elinor. I get where she's coming from.

**Molly:** Sure.

**Becca:** Sometimes, it's really hard to talk about being humiliated and having your heart broken when you're not the type of person who's good at talking about those things. She's using Lucy and the promise to Lucy as an excuse to not really be forthright with her sister about all this.

**Molly:** Yeah, but I don't get it.

**Becca:** You're not an Elinor.

**Molly:** No. I get where Marianne is coming from.

**Becca:** But this is also like it's a fault in Elinor. She doesn't know how to actually express her own feelings enough, which is, sometimes this part of the book is read as sort of a chastisement of Marianne and her behavior, but I think it's also a chastisement of Elinor and her lack of capacity to express herself.

**Molly:** Yeah, I agree.

**Becca:** [00:23:00] Yeah.

**Molly:** Well, that is the end of that chapter which brings us to Chapter 36 or the end of Volume II. Mrs. Palmer has her baby. Yay!

**Becca:** Yay! Ooh. We knew that earlier because it said Mrs. Jennings got called away to Mrs. Palmer.

**Molly:** Oh, right.

**Becca:** Yeah, but, you know, little baby's born.

**Molly:** Little baby's born. Mrs. Jennings is always away with Charlotte now. So, the Middletons simply insist that Elinor and Marianne stay with them during the days, which is just all formalities. Nobody wants to be there. Elinor doesn't want to be there, Marianne doesn't want to be there. Lady Middleton doesn't want them there. Lucy doesn't want them there. It's all bad.

**Becca:** I love the part where Jane Austen goes on to be, they're making Lucy a little bit less active and they're making Lady Middleton way more active because Lady Middleton feels awkward about how little she has to do with her day.

**Molly:** [00:24:00] Do you think that perhaps they're intimidated by the Dashwoods?

**Becca:** Oh, yeah, absolutely.

**Molly:** Which is so satisfying. Mrs. Dashwood, and then, what's her name? Lady Middleton is sitting there like, "I can't be caught not having anything to do," and Lucy's like, "Are they going to see through my guise of being so flattering all the time? Should I turn it back?"

**Becca:** Simpering ass kisser?

**Molly:** [laughs] Yeah, I like that they're intimidated by them because the Dashwoods rock and they suck.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah, for sure. The only person who's not intimidated is Anne and she doesn't know any better.

**Molly:** Yeah. and meanwhile, she's like, "Oh, man, I would be so happy if they would just gossip with me," and she's trying to find out about Willoughby and nobody's giving her anything, and she's like, "I want them to talk about the doctor, and make fun of me, and they won't," and so, they just go out. Actually, my funniest quote was in this section. So, we'll get there.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** But meanwhile, Miss Jennings thinks it's delightful **[00:25:00]** that all the family is hanging out together. The only gripe that she has is that she's spending her time with the baby and everything, and Mr. Palmer doesn't think that his baby is the cutest baby in the whole world. He thinks that all babies are the same.

**Becca:** I just pictured the conversation where she's like, "Is this not the most beautiful baby you've ever seen?" He's like, "It looks like a baby."

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** "It looks like a baby."

**Molly:** Exactly.

**Becca:** I cannot wait for you to see who plays Mr. Palmer in the 1995--

**Molly:** I can't wait either. I have no idea.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** I want it to be Bill Nighy or something.

**Becca:** I will neither confirm nor deny.

**Molly:** Excellent. Then, Jane Austen in her rocking chair makes a reappearance with the first person. It's like, "I must tell you now about the misfortune that befell Fanny Dashwood." Now, I didn't really want to hear about Fanny again, but we get to for the rest of the chapter.

**Becca:** Yeah, this is a hell of a Fanny heavy chapter **[00:26:00]** because, fuck Fanny.

**Molly:** Fuck Fanny Dashwood. It turns out when Marianne and Elinor were visiting Fanny, another friend of hers stopped by and made the assumption that Elinor and Marianne were staying with her. So, when she was having a party, she invited them too. Now, Fanny has to take them, and also, what's worse the narrator says is that, they might expect her to take them out again, and that would suck.

**Becca:** We haven't done one of these in a while, but fuck Fanny!

**Molly:** Fuck Fanny!

**Becca:** Absolutely fuck Fanny. She still sucks as much as she did at the beginning of this book. She's just been supplanted as the most evil person in this book.

**Molly:** Exactly.

**Becca:** But even Willoughby it's charming, and he's just awful and annoying.

**Molly:** I was never charmed by Will-- Was I charmed by Willoughby? Listeners, you can tell me. I don't remember.

**Becca:** Briefly. You liked him, but you were like, "Hmm, something's afoot."

**Molly:** I knew he had a cute dog.

**Becca:** He does have a cute dog.

**Molly:** That was it. But we haven't heard about that dog since, so.

**Becca:** [00:27:00] Well, wasn't John Middleton's response to him fucking up being like, "But he has such a cute dog."

**Molly:** "He's got such a good dog." Yeah, it was. [giggles] So, it's the day of the party, Marianne at this point is like, "Whatever, I'll do whatever you want. I'll go wherever you tell me to." She gets dressed, and she doesn't give her outfit half as much attention as Lucy gets it within five minutes of seeing it. Lucy is asking how much each item of clothing costs. She knows how many gowns Marianne has more than Marianne even knows. She used to know how much Marianne spends on washing each week, she scrutinizes every little part of her, and then she adds a little compliment on the end. The word they used was a *douceur* or a bribe which I googled. Marianne doesn't really, one, buy it or two, care.

**Becca:** Yeah. Also, it goes into detail about how Marianne used to put way more effort into her appearance, and she just doesn't anymore.

**Molly:** Yes. Now, Marianne is like [00:28:00] grab something, throw it on.

**Becca:** Yeah, we all have that dress that is just passable enough to wear to a fancy event, but is really comfortable, and if you pair it with brushing your hair and putting on mascara, and you're like, "I'm done, I'm ready," that's where we're at. [laughs]

**Molly:** Yeah, I was kind of picturing Marianne-- [giggles] I was kind of picturing Marianne and just the slip, but I know she puts something on. I know.

**Becca:** No, she needs to put on real clothes or she'll get an even worse reputation.

**Molly:** But she didn't do her hair.

**Becca:** No, no, she just didn't put all that effort in. Remember, we watched the 2005 *Pride and Prejudice* and Lizzie had all those pearls in her hair which were so 2000?

**Molly:** So, 2000, yeah.

**Becca:** Yeah, none of that.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, they're already five minutes after Fanny's carriage arrives for them, which annoys Fanny, because she was hoping that they would be late so she would have a reason to gripe with them, which I thought was funny. The party is not remarkable. The music is fine, the people are fine, **[00:29:00]** and Elinor is kind of bored. So, she's looking around, when who should she see, but the man from the bar-- or not the bar, you know, the place where I thought was a bar.

**Becca:** The garments store or whatever?

**Molly:** I remember the garment store. The man with the toothpaste case.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** And turns out that guy is Robert Ferrars, which we were talking about in the last episode because you said that they referred to him as a coxcomb, and I was like, "Yes, they also referred to Robert Ferrars as a coxcomb."

**Becca:** I thought you were immediately going to be like, "That was Robert Ferrars" after I said that, but you called it.

**Molly:** No, yeah. For a little bit, I did name him. I didn't know his name. I said Eddie's brother.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah.

**Molly:** So, it's Robert Ferrars, and he is not great. I don't like him.

**Becca:** Now, we know coxcomb is Regency era for fuckboy.

**Molly:** He is such a fuckboy.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** He's like a flouncy fuckboy. He's like [makes flouncy fuckboy noises]

**Becca:** Yeah, what's the modern-day equivalent here?

**Molly:** Like an acapella boy?

**Becca:** **[00:30:00]** You dare put that in the ears of our own sweet, dear acapella boy, Graham?

**Molly:** Oh, no, what have I done? What have I done?



**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** Listen, I've got to say I love-

**Becca:** Leave it in!

**Molly:** I love the Skidmore Bandersnatchers. When I was a senior, some of my best friends were in the Skidmore Bandersnatchers, and I continue to this day to love the Skidmore Bandersnatchers, but you can't deny that they are flouncy.

**Becca:** I'm not denying. You said that. I plead the fifth, your Honor.

**Molly:** When I got to college, this acapella group was the ultimate fuckboy acapella group. So, this is where it's coming.

**Becca:** Wait, watch it because I have friends who were in there too.

**Molly:** So, the way that they changed over the years though, was when I got there it was like they were so hot and I don't know if it was, because I was young--

**Becca:** It's because you were young. [laughs]

**Molly:** Yeah, I thought they were so hot. As I got older and I started to know more people in it, I was like, "Oh, they're goofy." Graham's [00:31:00] going to have things to say.

**Becca:** Leave it all in. Leave it all in.

**Molly:** I'm leaving it all in. I love every single member of this acapella group that I have ever known and loved, obviously, because I just said I love them.

**Becca:** See, I wasn't going to name my ex, but I was going to describe my ex, like finance bro with full pomade in his hair that costs \$200, like really perfectly quaffed beard, sneaker collection.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** Obsessed with things like Elon Musk.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm.

**Becca:** That's who we're talking about here.

**Molly:** Yes, yes. Was your ex in those Skidmore Bandersnatchers?

**Becca:** No, he was too cool for things like acapella groups.

**Molly:** Singing that soul song.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** I really thought they were so cool when I was a freshman, but here's Robert Ferrars and he sucks. Elinor finds herself wishing that her feelings for Edward were more dependent on who his family was, because that would make it much easier to get over him, because they suck, all of them. Then, Robert starts explaining why Edward is so different from the rest of them, and it turns out that Edward is basically just a weird homeschooled kid.

**Becca:** Oh yeah, Edward has no social skills.

**Molly:** No social skills. Robert, he refers to Eddie's gaucherie, which means his awkward, embarrassing, or unsophisticated ways. He attributes it to the fact that Edward had a private education instead of public schooling. Weird homeschooled kid, doesn't know how to make friends. Listen, I know a lot of really great homeschool people. I'm saying this is a trope that Jane Austen has written.

**Becca:** Oh, yes. Yes. She invented the weird homeschooled kid.

**Molly:** She did. Robert says that he often tells his mother if she'd sent him to public school instead of sending him to Mr. Pratt, all this would have been prevented and Elinor and I both thought to ourselves, "Oh, oh, oh, if only you knew."

**Becca:** Oh, Robbie boy.

**Molly:** Oh, Robbie-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** [crosstalk] right you are.

**Molly:** [laughs] So, then he goes on to talk about [00:33:00] cottages. He's like, "I heard your cottage is great," and he just goes on and on about how if he had the money to spare, he would build himself a nice country cottage. He's just so ridiculous.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah, absolutely.

**Molly:** He's the most over-the-top person. I mean not the most because we've got John Middleton and Mrs. Jennings, but he is so over the top.

**Becca:** Yeah, he just reminds me of guys who say things like, "You know we're never going to fix Earth. It's time to go to space."

**Molly:** Yes, he would absolutely say that. He tells this story about how his friend came to him with three plans for a new house that he wanted to build, and he threw them all in the fire, and was like, "Build a cottage!" Then, he tells another story and starts mansplaining. He's such a mansplainer also.

**Becca:** Oh, my God, such a mansplainer.

**Molly:** We saw him from the jump at the store because of everything, and the way he was looking at them, but he tells them the story. He's like, "Oh, I know you can throw a great party in a cottage. This is how I told my one lady friend to divvy up her room so she could throw a great party." [00:34:00] Elinor, this quote was so good. Elinor agreed to it all for she did not think he deserved the compliment of rational opposition.

**Becca:** Girl, we've all been there.

**Molly:** Yep, smile and nod.

**Becca:** Yeah. Jane Austen girls know how to smile and nod through men like this. It's so wild.

**Molly:** That reminds me that someone sent us, wait, let me show you. Someone sent us this on Twitter today. Jane Austen really said, "I respect that I can fix him movement, but that's just not me. He'll fix himself if he knows what's good for him, and that's why her works are still calling the shots today." Anyway, Jane Austen was a woman out of her time.

**Becca:** She was. I saw a meme today that has gone viral that was like, "Jane Austen is timeless because she understood there are no two greater horrors in life than having to listen to an unintelligent man, and having people show up at your house uninvited."

**Molly:** Yes. Meanwhile at the party, John Dashwood is also pretty bored because he also doesn't really like music and he's just sitting around thinking, and he [00:35:00] gets an idea, and it's almost a good one.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** But he gets home. [giggles] He says to Fanny, "Maybe the fact that your friend thought that they were staying with us means that we should invite them to stay with us." Fanny's like, "Oh, no, no, no, no. That would offend lady Middleton so much. We can't do that. No, I would ask them but also I was just thinking of inviting the Steeles to spend a few days" which random, what the fuck, why? Where did she get that idea?

**Becca:** She likes Lucy Steele, and was literally like, "Oh shit, what can I do to get out of having the Dashwoods over?"

**Molly:** They are replacing them.

**Becca:** Literally. That's the thing is that like, the Steeles are in this book really parallel to the Dashwoods except for the fact that they're worse than them in every way, because they're worse than them, they're inoffensive, whereas the Dashwoods are just on the cusp of being threatening [00:36:00] because they're beautiful, young, very well bred, and penniless, but not desperate.

**Molly:** Yeah. They're like the dark side of the Dashwoods.

**Becca:** Yeah, exactly. They're like alternate timeline Dashwoods.

**Molly:** They're the darkest timeline Dashwoods. *Community* reference we got there. She says that they can invite the Dashwoods the next year, and Mr. Dashwood is obviously easily convinced to have the Steeles come instead. He's comforted by the fact that they have plans to invite them next year, and even more comforted that he won't have to, because by then, Elinor will be married to Brandon, and they'll be living together and can invite Marianne to be their own guest and just have their own little party over there, which is classic, classic John Dashwood by the way.

**Becca:** Yeah, John Dashwood really repping for the Elinor-Brandon ship over there.

**Molly:** He is very predictable, and yes, that. So, Fanny invites the Steeles, they are thrilled. I really hope that they are secretly kleptomaniacs and steal stuff from [00:37:00] them because they are so power hungry, and money thirsty, and I know that's maybe a stereotype that I'm putting onto them, but just they're so evil that I want them to do something bad.

**Becca:** I don't think that's a stereotype you're putting onto them. I think that's a stereotype Jane Austen is putting onto them.

**Molly:** Yes. So, I think it could happen. So, yeah. But also, I'm reading a book right now where someone stole something innocuous, and then it turned out to be super valuable, and now, there's like a whole chase going on. So, maybe that's where that is coming from. But--

**Becca:** What book?

**Molly:** Oh, *The Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue*. It also takes place in this time period.

**Becca:** That book sounds super familiar. I might have read it years ago.

**Molly:** It is very bisexual and very British.

**Becca:** So ideal for you.

**Molly:** Yeah, very, very ideal for me. That's my trope that I like to read. Anyway, Elinor sees the invitation, and for the first time, she thinks maybe Fanny actually likes Lucy not just because she's not Elinor. [00:38:00] I am not so sure, but we'll see. Then, Sir John reports back to them all that Fanny is absolutely enamored with the Steeles, and he doesn't know how she'll ever part with them. That is the end of Volume II.

**Becca:** Ooh, we made it through that the way Elinor just made it through that.

**Molly:** Yep.

**Becca:** And that brings us to Becca study question.

**Molly:** Ooh-ooh!

**Becca:** So, what do you make of how Lucy's doing on the London society? We've talked about it a little bit, but she's really made an impression on everyone who's not Elinor or Marianne?

**Molly:** Yeah, I think, she's a con artist.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** Yeah. The way I'm picturing it is, she is taking notes on each person, and how to best slide into their pocketbook, and the friending them in a way that suits them. We don't actually know who she is necessarily, because she just, I mean, [00:39:00] we do from her interactions with Elinor.

**Becca:** Well, most of what we know about her is that she's all about them self-preservation, and the capacity to make her way through the entire season in London without paying a cent.

**Molly:** Right.

**Becca:** And getting her sister to come along with her who's significantly less desirable.

**Molly:** Yes, and who's just there.

**Becca:** Yep. Lucy Steele is her own sort of brand in this book, but I think she's interesting because she really is the first significant character in the book of not much money or class. I mean Wickham, but he's well bred.

**Molly:** Right.

**Becca:** So, it's interesting. First of all, how Austen characterizes her because I think, it's both with empathy and a little bit of stereotyping.

**Molly:** What makes you say empathy?

**Becca:** I think, Austen is quite clever and satirical about situations that women get themselves into, and I don't think she does let us forget the situation Lucy and her sister are in, and I think part of that stems from [00:40:00] Edwards's reactions to everything about his life right now.

**Molly:** Yeah, that makes sense.

**Becca:** That being said, Jane Austen definitely had some classist instincts, and they do come out in the character of Lucy Steele.

**Molly:** Oh, yeah, and I can feel myself when I'm talking about her, and I'm saying like, "Oh, she's going to steal something." I'm like, "Maybe examine that."

**Molly:** Yes, she sucks particularly because it's not as though we're rooting for a super wealthy, well-adjusted person. On the other side, Elinor has no money either. Elinor is just well bred.

**Molly:** True.

**Becca:** But I don't know. I don't want to say anything else, if that makes sense.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** What do you make of Lucy's whole interaction with Edward and Elinor?

**Molly:** The fact that she didn't try so hard to do anything-- it was interesting, because the only time she snapped at anyone was Marianne.

**Becca:** Well, part of it is that Lucy has Edward and Elinor under her control.

**Molly:** She does. Oh, you're right.

**Becca:** And she doesn't have Marianne under her control. [00:41:00]

**Molly:** If she hadn't been there, Edward and Elinor could have had their own conversation, and same with if Elinor hadn't been there, or if Edward hadn't been there, but the fact that they were all three together, Lucy knew she was in control of that situation, because she knows both of their secrets. Edward doesn't know that Elinor knows about Lucy and him. Marianne doesn't know that Elinor knows, and she also doesn't know about Lucy and him. And Lucy knows everything.

**Becca:** But also, just Lucy's particular brand of genius isn't as effective on someone like Marianne who's not going to give a shit what she thinks of her or what anybody thinks of her. Her power over Elinor stems from the fact that Elinor is saving face.

**Molly:** And she's a little self-conscious.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** Yeah. I also think the interaction in general shows Lucy to be aware of what she's doing to Elinor and to Edward.

**Molly:** Yes, especially when put against when Elinor and Marianne move or [00:42:00] go over to the Middletons, because when Lucy and Lady Middleton were both being intimidated by Elinor into acting differently than they normally act, like when Elinor is with Marianne, she feels less in control of the situation than when Elinor is alone.

**Becca:** All good observations. Number three, we've met Robert Ferrars. Good old Robbie.

**Molly:** Robbie Rob.

**Becca:** The little brother of Eddie. How does his persona and self relate to others we've met in the book?

**Molly:** He reminds me of John Dashwood mixed with John Middleton.

**Becca:** It's not a bad comparison.

**Molly:** He's the worst parts of both.

**Becca:** He's also very much a Ferrars.

**Molly:** Oh, yeah, he's female Fanny.

**Becca:** He is a product of the same family.

**Molly:** Yes, he is, and the thing is he's not doing anything evil. I don't hate him. I just am [00:43:00] irritated by him. But he is very much that family. He's so Mrs. Ferrars, he's so Fanny, and it makes sense that Eddie is nervous the way he is because of the family that he has. They're very into money.

**Becca:** Absolutely. They are very, very into money, and I want to draw attention to two characters, and how they relate to Robert Ferrars. The first one is Colonel Brandon. Hear me out.

**Molly:** Okay.

**Becca:** We now have a second example of a character in this book that you actually get to know a little who is a second son of a wealthy family.

**Molly:** Oh, uh-huh.

**Becca:** You have Colonel Brandon who had the weight of the world and the tragedy of his life because he was the second son in the family as opposed to the first son in the family, and it really ruined him. On the other hand, and this brings me to my second person, Edward Ferrars is a first son, and his life is all pressure, his life is all [00:44:00] obligation and expectation, and he hates it. He doesn't relate to it. He doesn't like the family he's from. He doesn't like his place in society. But he feels very greatly that he will inherit this massive estate and it comes with responsibilities fiscally that get really into his personal life.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm.

**Becca:** And class-wise as well, Robert Ferrars keeps talking about how he doesn't fit in on the class level, but that's because Edward is uncomfortable with people of high class, which he said many times before. And then, you get Robert Ferrars, who has nary a care in the world, and literally just gets to coast as a trust fund kid. granted, he doesn't get to marry quite as well as Edward would, but he's wealthy, he's chilling, he gets to just walk around and have parties in his friends' cottages. So, I guess in Colonel Brandon and Robert Ferrars, you see the dark side and the light side of being the second son in the Austen era.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** And Eddie really shows the pressures on men in this time period to provide, [00:45:00] to marry well, to inherit an estate and advance the class of their families. Edward wears that mantle so uncomfortably, which is how he ended up engaged to someone like Lucy Steele.

**Molly:** I don't understand how one leads to the other. I get that he's uncomfortable in this world, but how does that lead to absolutely doing the opposite thing that you know you're supposed to do and getting engaged to someone who is the absolute opposite of the person that you're supposed to get engaged to?

**Becca:** Really?

**Molly:** Like, is he having a rebellious streak?

**Becca:** He had a rebellious streak and he deeply regrets it now.

**Molly:** Ah.

**Becca:** So, he's bound not only by his familial obligations, but also by his moral code.

**Molly:** And it was four years ago.

**Becca:** Exactly. He was a teenager.

**Molly:** Right, right. Yes, I do see, I do see.

**Becca:** Not to say any of that's fair to Lucy.

**Molly:** No, it's not fair to Lucy.

**Becca:** But that's how this all transpired.

**Molly:** Right. That makes sense. [00:46:00] Grimace emoji.

**Becca:** I think Robert Ferrars' place in this book is very interesting though, because he does really show why the weight of the world is on Colonel Brandon and Edward Ferrars through having no weight on his shoulders whatsoever.

**Molly:** Right. Well, and then if he died--

**Becca:** If Edward died, God forbid.

**Molly:** Edward died, then Robert would be in Colonel Brandon's position.

**Becca:** Exactly. Robert would be exactly Colonel Brandon.

**Molly:** Yeah. Okay. I got it.

**Becca:** We know a complete picture of Edward's family. What does that teach us about him? We kind of already talked about this, but now we have all three members.



**Molly:** Right. Now, it just makes sense why he's so meek, and his family is three people who are loud and rude. I mean not rude. They're mean. They're loud, mean, and very comfortable in their station, and he is the opposite of all three of those things.

**Becca:** Yes, exactly. So, you have Edward in a pickle, because Edward just isn't [00:47:00] who his family wants him to be, and that's clear from every single member of that family, and he's in a pickle.

**Molly:** Eddie is in a pickle. We should get a pickle with Eddie's face on it on a t-shirt.

**Becca:** Whatever you want to do, hon.

[laughter]

**Becca:** All right, I said Lucy is staying with Fanny, what do you make of how she's being treated by Fanny, we kind of touched on this, and by the rest of the Edwards family?

**Molly:** Well, I've had trouble because I can't tell, one, if Fanny really likes her or if she's just trying to get out of having the Dashwoods there, and also because she's not the Dashwoods, etc. Two, I can't tell if Lucy believes that they like her but it serves to show that they don't like Elinor, that's for sure.

**Becca:** No, they don't. I think what's interesting about Lucy is she's reading so deeply into all these interactions, and Elinor is seeing it from the perspective of [00:48:00] they're treating her well to snub me.

**Molly:** Yep.

**Becca:** What do you think is going to be the interaction between Fanny and Lucy living in the same house?

**Molly:** I really hope something blows up in their faces. I really, really, really hope something goes bad and wrong. I hope, ooh, you know what can happen? I feel like I always make these predictions I think they're so smart, and then I listen back to them as I edit after having read the next set of chapters and I'm like, "That was so off." But maybe Lucy's going to think, "Oh, we've gotten so comfortable with each other. I can tell her my true feelings and secrets, and tell Fanny about her and Edward, and then Fanny is going to like blow shit up." That's what I really hope happens.

**Becca:** I will neither confirm nor deny that.

**Molly:** All right.

**Becca:** That brings us to the standbys. Funniest quote?

**Molly:** Okay, this is about when the Dashwoods are staying at the Middletons with the Steeles and this is about Anne. Would they have only laughed at her about the doctor, [00:49:00] but so little were they any more than the others inclined to oblige her that if sir John dined from home, she might spend a whole day without hearing any other raillery on the subject than what she was kind enough to bestow on herself?

**Becca:** God bless Anne Steele. She's such a mess. Questions moving forward?

**Molly:** So, what's going to happen with this Steeles staying with Fanny? Is Eddie going to grow a goddamn spine? I'm so sorry, Edward Ferrars, but are you going to grow a spine? I haven't seen Colonel Brandon in a couple of chapters and I'm upset about it. So, I'd like him to come back please. I think that's the main ones that I'm thinking about right now.

**Becca:** Who wins the chapters?

**Molly:** Oh, man. Who wins the chapters? These were funny. Elinor wins these chapters. She was really--

**Becca:** Really?

**Molly:** She was funny this chapter.

**Becca:** She was.

**Molly:** What were you going to say?

**Becca:** I was going to say Lucy Steele. She got herself a quite good gig.

**Molly:** All right, to be fair, she did win [00:50:00] in terms of what comes out on top. She did come out on top this chapter. She controlled that situation.

**Becca:** All right, that brings us to the end of this episode of Pod and Prejudice. Listeners, for next week, we're going to read the next two chapters. That's Chapters 37 and 38, and the first two chapters of Volume III.

**Molly:** Ooh, listeners, next time, Becca and I are going to be recording in the same place.

**Becca:** Yes, listeners there is going to be a stint where Molly and I are not only in the same place, but for a while the same apartment. It's going to be really fun.

**Molly:** Well, listeners, that concludes this episode. Until next time, stay proper--

**Becca:** --and find yourself in the middle of an awkward triangle where the guy wants to leave the room.

**Molly:** Yeah, or don't.

**Becca:** Or, don't do that.

**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

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