

Molly: Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we want to thank our newest patrons, Helen, Hannah, Reagan, Katrina, and Linnea, and a huge shoutout to K, who upgraded their pledge. Just a reminder, we have recently revamped our Patreon, and we are super excited about it. Our new tiers include perks like a Discord community, the opportunity to submit a study question, and an exclusive Zoom hang with us. If any of that sounds interesting to you, check out our Patreon at patreon.com/podandprejudice. And now, enjoy this week's episode covering Chapters 47 and 48 of *Emma*.

Becca: So, did you see that they're making a *Zoey 101* movie?

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: I was skeptical, because I was like, "That sounds like a money grab, all these celebrities went nowhere," or whatever. But here's the thing. Without giving too much away, it seems that this reunion movie is going to occur at Logan and Quinn's wedding.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: Take a moment. [00:01:00]

Molly: I'm taking a moment. What I'm actually taking a moment for is to remember which person is which.

Becca: So, Logan was the mean surfer boy, and Quinn was the weird girl, and they got together in the last-- [crosstalk]

Molly: Quinn wasn't the one who was like, [slurps]

Becca: No. Not that one.

Molly: That's Stacey.

Becca: Yes, Stacey. She's going to be in the movie though.

Molly: Oh, my God.

Becca: No, Quinn was the one with the streaks in her hair and the glasses.

Molly: Okay.

Becca: She was the nerdy one that became hot as the show went on. She ended up in a secret relationship with Logan in the last season, and I shipped it so hard. So, I'm thrilled to know they're still together.

Molly: This is the best news. *Zoey 101* is such a comfort show for me. Becca's about to spit out her beer.

Becca: The best news.

Molly: Well, I'll tell you guys why Becca's spitting out her beer is because she tried to tell me this three times, and every time, I accidentally didn't hit record, so my reaction became less and less genuine each time. [laughs]

Becca: No, but the thing is, it didn't. That was what was even funnier about it, because [00:02:00] you clearly have a lot of emotions you're trying to hold in right now.

Molly: Yeah. [laughs]

Becca: And so, you let a little spurt out each time, and it actually just got more each time.

Molly: Yeah. The first time, I was like, [gasps] and then the second time, I was like, "[excited chirps]," and then the third time, I was like, [hyperventilates].

Becca: Yeah, exactly. So, you just looked like you were panicking.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: So good.

Molly: Oh, wow. I can't wait. That is the best news.

[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--

Molly and Becca: *Emma*.

Becca: Listeners. If you're new here, I, Becca, have read many Jane Austen books before.

Molly: And I, Molly, am reading her for the first time through this podcast.

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

Molly: No. Today, we are talking about *Emma*, Volume III, Chapters 11 and 12. Or, if your book isn't broken up into Volumes, that's Chapters 47 and 48.

Becca: AKA, shit is hitting the fan.

Molly: This is [00:03:00] where it really heats up. This was the chapter I was waiting for.

Becca: Yes. Ooh, okay, I can't wait. Let's just jump right in. Not only because I'm hungry--

Molly: Yes. So, okay, let's do it. Let's tell the listeners first where we left off.

Becca: So, Frank, Jane Fairfax secretly engaged this whole time, fuck boy energy. And Emma feeling bad that Jane is basically avoiding her.

Molly: Yes. So, here we go. Emma is just sitting feeling terrible that she encouraged Harriet's affections for Frank, that Harriet's heart is going to be broken because Emma encouraged Harriet's affections for Frank which is what Emma thinks happened.

Becca: Yes, that is what Emma thinks happened.

Molly: What no one else thinks has happened.

Becca: No, literally no one. But I do want to-- Well, we'll get it.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: We'll do it.

Molly: Yes, we'll later. [laughs] Okay. This is especially bad, because this is the second time that Emma has encouraged Harriet's [00:04:00] affections for someone and then that person has not actually been in love with Harriet.

Becca: Mm-hmm. Very humiliating.

Molly: Yes. She thinks at least that this time she didn't plant the idea in Harriet's mind. Harriet confessed her feelings for Frank to Emma before Emma even encouraged this affection, which, again, didn't happen.

Becca: Yeah. [giggles]

Molly: But she's thinking she should have shut it down immediately. She's angry at herself, she's angry at Frank, but at least she doesn't have to worry about Jane, because Jane's going to be fine, and now she understands why Jane has been avoiding her. It says that she acknowledged that Jane Fairfax would have neither elevation nor happiness beyond her dessert. She thinks that Jane's not going to be happy in this marriage?

Becca: Yeah, that does mean Jane deserves what she's getting.

Molly: So, is she being kind of sassy with this?

Becca: No, she's like, "Well, no, that makes sense. Good for Jane."

Molly: Okay. Oh, she deserves the elevation she's going to end up with-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Yeah, [00:05:00] she doesn't-- Beyond her dessert, she will not have anything less than she deserves.

Molly: Got it.

Becca: Or more than she deserves.

Molly: Okay. Emma, in this moment, can't really bring herself to feel bad for anyone but Harriet. That's just overwhelming for her right now. And while Mr. Weston has sworn her to secrecy on this, Emma is like, "I have to tell Harriet."

Becca: I mean, good thing it's Mr. Weston.

Molly: Yeah. [laughs] There are so many moments in these two chapters where Mr. Weston-- [crosstalk]

Becca: This very secret engagement. Everyone knows about this very secret engagement.

Molly: He's like, "Can't tell anyone, but everyone knows."

Becca: Exactly.

Molly: She's thinking to herself before Harriet arrives that it's ridiculous that she is now doing with Harriet exactly what Mrs. Weston just did with her, because if you'll recall, listeners, Mrs. Weston was very nervous to tell her about this engagement, because she thought that Emma was in love with Frank, and now Emma has to do the same with Harriet, and she's like, "But the outcome can't possibly be the same."

Becca: I love that everyone's just like, "Everyone is in love with Frank [00:06:00] Churchill and no one is in love with Frank Churchill except Jane Fairfax."

Molly: Which we'll get to it, but I do not understand for the life of me.

Becca: We'll get there.

Molly: Yes. So, Harriet comes in, and the first thing she says, "Isn't this the oddest news you've ever heard?"

Becca: I mean, she's ready to dish.

Molly: She is. Emma's like, "What news?" And Harriet says, "Well, Mr. Weston just told me about Frank and Jane."

Becca: Emma's like, [surprised sound]

Molly: She's like, "What do you mean? Frank and Jane, what did he tell you?" She says that she found out about the engagement. Emma's just confused about Harriet's tone, and Harriet goes on to ask if Emma knew that he was in love with Jane. She says, " You (blushing as she spoke) who can see into everybody's heart." Gay.

Becca: Gay. Pour one out for Emma and Harriet as a ship. It's a tough chapter for that.

Molly: Mm-hmm. It really is. Anyway, yeah. Emma says she's beginning to think she has no talent for seeing into anyone's heart.

Becca: Beginning to think?

Molly: [laughs] Emma hasn't [00:07:00] thought much.

Becca: Yeah. Clearly, if we want to talk about someone who's gone literally everything wrong through the entire book.

Molly: She's so dumb. I love her.

Becca: Lesser. Low key himbo behavior from Emma Woodhouse.

Molly: Emma is a himbo.

Becca: Technically, that would make her a bimbo, but-- No, she's a lady himbo. It's different.

Molly: Yeah. No, bimbo and himbo are completely different vibes.

Becca: Well, that's the origin of a himbo. It's bimbo, but male is like the way the slang came to being.

Molly: Why does a bimbo have such negative connotations while a himbo is like lovable?

Becca: [in a singsong voice] Misogyny.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: That's why.

Molly: That was a nice song.

Becca: [in a singsong voice] Misogyny.

Molly: Maybe we can get like that layered on top of itself.

Becca: Graham, just clip that and we'll use it whenever misogyny comes up in the books.

Molly: Oh, perfect. A misogyny sound effect.

Becca: [in a singsong voice] Misogyny.

Molly and Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Do it again once for the sound effect.

Becca: [in a singsong voice] Misogyny.

Molly: Perfect. Okay.

Becca: Perfect. Yeah, but that's why. So, we're going to call [00:08:00] her a lady himbo because we love her, but she's still fucking dumb.

Molly: Yeah. [giggles] She asks if Harriet seriously thinks she could have known about Frank and Jane when she was so obviously encouraging Harriet to give way to her own feelings for him.

Becca: To which Harriet says, record scratch, "What?"

Molly: Yeah. Harriet's like, "My feelings for him?" [giggles] And Emma says, "Well, you can't deny that there was a time when you gave me reason to think that you liked him." And Harriet says, "Him? Never. How could you so mistake me?"

Becca: Theme of this chapter is just Harriet out to play.

Molly: She really is.

Becca: She's coming out swinging.

Molly: Yeah, it's very upsetting, just because there's so much happening here. So, I think Emma might be starting to realize what's happening here, which we all realized a couple of chapters ago. She says, "Good Heaven! What do you mean? Am I to suppose then?" And she is speechless. [00:09:00]

Becca: And then, Emma comes to a conclusion. But maybe it's a conclusion that you came to immediately.

Molly: Yes. Harriet says, "Well, I know we said weren't going to name him, but I thought it was pretty obvious by the way I was talking about how superior he is." And Emma's like, "Oh."

Becca: You don't mean--

Molly: You couldn't possibly-- It's not Knightley-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Is it our boy, George Knightley?

Molly: She's like, "You couldn't possibly mean that." And Harriet says, "Yeah."

Becca: Whoo. So, first of all, I want to congratulate you for officially graduating to Jane Austen scholar, because you saw that coming from eight miles away.

Molly: Thank you so much. I did have an initial note in my notes that said, was it supposed to be as obvious as it was to me, or am I really smart?

Becca: Even if it's supposed to be obvious, you called it immediately. I'm very proud. [00:10:00] Jane Austen is not one for a huge plot twist, just generally. I want to commend you for getting way better predicting these books in the last few chapters. Not in the last few chapters, every book you get better at predicting what's going to happen, and I want to commend you for that.

Molly: Thank you so much. I want to just call our attention back to Season 1 me just not understanding at all that Caroline Bingley had a crush on Mr. Darcy.

Becca: Not to mention loving Wickham.

Molly: I did love Wickham. I sure did.

Becca: You sure did.

Molly: I don't know, I've been clueless on all the books so far. [laughs]

Becca: I was sipping my beer, but I pointed at Molly, and I want everyone to know that.

Molly: I have been clueless on all of the books so far, but I was the most clueless about *Pride and Prejudice*. I simply had no idea.

Becca: Well, that's because it was your first.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: But just putting it out there so proud.

Molly: Thank you. So, I called it. Harriet's like, "Yes, obviously, I thought that I had made it pretty clear." And Emma's like, "No, you [00:11:00] didn't. Everything you said made me think you were talking about Frank Churchill. You talked about the service he rendered you." And Harriet's like, "I think you're not remembering it right." And Emma's like, "No, I remember everything perfectly."

Becca: [giggles] Emma's like, "No, no, no. No, no, no." Her blood pressure is rising through the dialogue, and Jane Austen writes it so well.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: She's like, "Emma tried to keep her cool." But--

Molly: [giggles] She remembers everything. Emma said that Harriet's crush made sense considering the service he did her, and Harriet had said she remembered how she felt seeing him come to her rescue, and Harriet's like, "Oh, I see how you could have misinterpreted that." [laughs]

Becca: She's like, "I can see the source of your confusion."

Molly: She's like, "But what I was talking about was when Knightley asked me to dance at the party, when Mr. Elton slighted me." And Emma's like, "Fuck, this is very bad. What is to be done?" She thinks this is the worst thing that could possibly happen. [00:12:00] And Harriet's like, "Okay, I see that you wouldn't have encouraged my affections if you had known who I was actually talking about. But I think I'm better off in this situation than I would have been if I actually was in love with Frank Churchill, because at least now there's still a chance."

Becca: To which Emma says, "What?"

Molly: She says, "Do you think that he--"

Becca: Might which Harriet says-- What's the quote there? The way it's written is very clearly telling us something. She says, "Have you any idea of Mr. Knightley's returning your affection?" "Yes," replied Harriet modestly, but not fearfully "I must say that I have."

Molly: Can I read this next part?

Becca: Yes.

Molly: "Emma's eyes were instantly withdrawn; and she sat silently meditating, in a fixed attitude, for a few minutes. A few minutes were sufficient for making her acquainted with her own heart. A mind like hers, once opening to suspicion, made rapid progress, she touched, [00:13:00] she admitted, she acknowledged the whole truth. Why was it so much worse that Harriet should be in love with Mr. Knightley than with Frank Churchill? Why was the evil so dreadfully increased by Harriet's having some hope of a return? It darted through her with the speed of an arrow that Mr. Knightley must marry no one but herself!"

Becca: Whoo. Sorry, Graham. Sorry, Graham. Molly, are you okay?

Molly: No.

Becca: Emma Loves Knightley.

Molly: Emma's smitten.

Becca: So in love. First of all, aren't we all?

Molly: Yes.

Becca: But clearly, the entirety of this situation crashes upon her. In this moment, she is in love with Knightley, and has been the whole time.

Molly: The whole time. And we're going to get into her dissecting her feelings bit by bit, which-

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Molly: -is a classic Jane Austin scene.

Becca: And relatable content, which is generally.

Molly: And relatable content, of course. But the fact that it's [00:14:00] just like, all of a sudden, she's like, "Now, this is the path that I'm taking." She's like, "Snap. Oh, I know why I'm jealous."

Becca: Has that ever happened to you, where someone tells you they're into someone and that your heart just drops to the pit of your stomach, and then you learn something about yourself?

Molly: You know what? I was going to say that I thought she was pretty ignorant of her own feelings and blah, blah, blah to not have realized this sooner. But I think you're right. Sometimes, it doesn't happen until you find out your friend has a crush on them.

Becca: Well, okay, listen. First of all, Emma's stupid as fuck.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: We love her. She's our lady himbo.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: But this part I find to be really relatable and very universal, not realizing how you feel about someone until the moment you have to.

Molly: Until you realize that there's a probability or at least a possibility that someone else is going to get them.

Becca: Yeah. Or just even [00:15:00] the notion of somebody else possibly-- Yeah.

Molly: Feeling the way that you feel about them.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: You're like, "Wait, that's mine."

Becca: It's just so well done here, because this whole book, the character you are drawn to from Emma is Knightley, the entire time. And then the moment that she realizes it, it all just makes sense.

Molly: Mm-hmm. Oh, man. Wow.

Becca: Wow. Also, I'm going to say it some real Lorelei-Luke energy coming off these two. Oh, my God, Molly is not okay, listeners. Molly is not okay.

Molly: I know we've talked a lot about Knightly being Luke.

Becca: Did it occur to you that Mo was Lorelai?

Molly: It didn't until just now.

Becca: Brilliant, but also ditzy. Talks way too much.

Molly: Wants to be best friends with this guy, but--

Becca: Secretly wants to [00:16:00] bang.

Molly: Right. But she doesn't realize it until it's right in front of her face.

Molly: The perky, clever, bubbly, annoying one falls for the grump, who takes care of her--

Molly: Everyone love her.

Becca: She rolls the town.

Molly: Wow.

Becca: Are you okay?

Molly: Mind blown. I love it so much.

Becca: Are you okay? [laughs]

Molly: No, I'm not. Oh, my God.

Becca: Okay.

Molly: All right, listeners, this is the moment we've all been waiting for.

Becca: Yeah, this is really it. Oh, my God.

Molly: So, she is simply in love with him. She starts recollecting about how terrible her actions have been to Harriet. Does that just mean, because she encouraged her to love someone who she thinks can never love her back?

Becca: Take a moment. I highlighted a portion of this paragraph, and I'm happy to read it out loud.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: "How inconsiderate, how indelicate, how irrational, how unfeeling had been her conduct! [00:17:00] What blindness, what madness, had led her on! It struck her with dreadful force, and she was ready to give it every bad name in the world. Some portion of respect for herself, however, in spite of all these demerits-- some concern for her own appearance, and a strong sense of justice by Harriet-- (there would be no need of compassion to the girl who believed herself loved by Mr. Knightley-- but justice required that she should not be made unhappy by any coldness now,) gave Emma the resolution to sit and endure farther with calmness, with even apparent kindness."

Molly: And then it says, "For her own advantage indeed, it was fit that the utmost extent of Harriet's hopes should be enquired into." When she says her own advantage, is she trying to just find out how much of what Harriet thinks is actually true, so that she can see what the vibe is for her in Knightley? Is she going to try to sabotage this relationship?

Becca: You tell me. We learn a lot about what Emma's thinking about how she feels in these chapters.

Molly: At the end of these chapters, Emma [00:18:00] hates Harriet.

Becca: Okay. We'll talk about this a little bit, but there's a lot of layers to this moment. What Emma's realizing here, some of them are very deeply personal to Emma, and some of them are not so personal, and some of them are grander commentary on the whole. We can come into it now, we can come back to it in the study question.

Molly: Let's come back to it in the study questions, because we've got a lot of ground to cover.

Becca: Yes, we do. You can see why this was a two-chapter endeavor.

Molly: Oh, yes. Emma's just super salty about the whole thing.

Becca: Yeah. She's absolutely livid, but she's trying to keep her chill. The part where she's like, "No, compassion. Just justice."

Molly: Yeah. She's like, "I can't feel bad for the person who thinks that Knightley loves her."

Becca: Yeah. She's just immediately become so vicious.

Molly: Yes. So, she goes to ask Harriet about it, and Harriet immediately starts talking about it with trembling delight, and then it says, Emma's tremblings were better concealed, but they were not less.

Becca: Emma's just sitting there shaking, because she's in love and furious.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: [00:19:00] Harriet's rambling, but despite the tautology, which means the saying of the same thing twice in different words, generally considered to be a fault of style. So, Emma's now immediately back to criticizing Harriet.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Emma is able to parse out the substance of what Harriet's saying, and it sinks her spirits because she starts to think that what Harriet is saying about Knightley's feelings for her is true. Just letting that-

Becca: Sink in.

Molly: -sink in. Harriet first noticed his shift in behavior towards her at the dance, and Emma knows that that's true. At the dance, he talked to her afterwards and was like, "Harriet's actually quite a good conversationalist," and blah, blah, blah. Since then, or at least since Emma first encouraged Harriet's feelings for him, Harriet's noticed he's been talking to her more, very sweet, being very kind to her, and he would often come and walk next to her, which Emma has also noticed. Harriet repeats all these compliments that he's been giving her, [00:20:00] and there are things that he has said to Emma about Harriet, so she knows that that's true as well. And then, it says that a lot of the things Harriet's latched onto, Emma didn't notice because she wasn't looking for them, but there are two things that she did notice, and these are the two things that Harriet has been most-

Becca: Latched onto.

Molly: -latched onto, like these are the things giving her hope and it is these two things. He walked alone with her at the lime walk in Donwell, which I knew was going to be important. And before Emma came up to them, he was talking to her about whether or not her affections were engaged. And then as soon as Emma appeared, he changed the subject. Part two is that he sat with her for half an hour before Emma came back from visiting the

Bates' when he originally said he could only stay five minutes and he was telling her all about how he didn't want to go to London at all.

Now, about the second part, I thought like, "Oh, that's so cute. He waited for Emma for half an hour." But the fact that he was telling her about how he didn't want to go to London, Emma's like, "Oh, shit, he has more confidence in [00:21:00] Harriet than me. He never told me any of that."

Becca: Do you agree with Emma and Harriet here?

Molly: I thought he was waiting for Emma. I don't know.

Becca: Whomst?

Molly: Whomst?

Becca: oh.

Molly: So, Emma asks if maybe he was asking about her affections being engaged, because he was trying to figure out if she still had feelings for Mr. Martin and maybe he was acting on his friend's behalf. And Harriet says, "No way. I hope I know better now than to care for Mr. Martin or to be suspected of it."

Becca: Our poor boy, Robbie. Poor one out for our homie.

Molly: I have really held on to hope.

Becca: Poor Robert Martin.

Molly: Rest in peace.

Becca: Rest in pieces.

Molly: Rest in the pieces.

Becca: Rest in the pieces of our hearts.

Molly: In the pieces of our hearts. I think based on this-- It's hard because this is-- I'm sure we're going to talk about in the study questions, but Emma's perception of Harriet is that she has grown too vain. I'm picturing this in the context of *Clueless*, which, again, I saw years ago. I don't [00:22:00] remember what happens in it, but I can see a modern-day high school drama where someone takes the-- It's *Mean Girls*. Is Harriet, Cady Heron, and is she becoming the mean girl? And has she outgrown Robert Martin because she has become the mean girl? Is she saying like, "It's not my fault you have a big lesbian crush on me?"

Becca: Not my fault you're in love with me or something.

Molly: Oh, yeah, that's better.

Becca: Oh, no, she didn't.

Molly: Yeah, that's better.

Becca: Yeah, Different, different non-Emma related romcom. But all I will say is, I will neither confirm nor deny anything about *Clueless*.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: I am very excited for us to watch it. It's going to be so fun.

Molly: Mm too. Oh, my God, I can't wait. So, my hearts and pieces. Rest in peace, Robert Martin. Harriet says that she never would have dreamed to think it possible between her and

Knightley, except that Emma had told her to watch him and [00:23:00] look if he shows signs, and earlier, she mentioned that Emma had said more wonderful things have happened. So, she latched onto that and she looked for signs of him liking her. It says, "But now I seem to feel that I may deserve him; and that if he does choose me, it will not be anything so very wonderful." Meaning, she doesn't think it would be so crazy after all. And I do love this for her.

Becca: Self-love is fun, but we'll talk about that more in the study questions. In this case, it has a few drawbacks.

Molly: For sure. The absolute misunderstanding of the class dynamics in the society that they live in is-- Yeah.

Becca: Yeah, we're going to go back to some certain choice phrases from earlier in this book later.

Molly: Ooh, can't wait. Emma is salty, but all she can manage to say is, Mr. Knightley is the last man in the world who would intentionally give any woman the idea of his feeling for her more than he really [00:24:00] does. This just makes Harriet so happy. She's falling on the floor like, "Oh, my God, Emma, thank you so much."

Becca: "Oh, my God, you gave me permission. You're my best friend in the world. Love you."

Molly: Yeah. And then they hear Emma's dad coming and Harriet's like, "Ah, I'm not composed, I have to go," and she runs off. Emma immediately wishes she hadn't seen Harriet at all, and it doesn't say whether she means at all ever or just at all that day.

Becca: What do you think she means?

Molly: I think she means at all ever. She is anti-Harriet right now.

Becca: Yeah, she's in a state.

Molly: Yeah. The rest of the day and the whole night, Emma is just in it, pacing, walking all over the grounds. She doesn't know how to understand her own feelings. She asks herself how long she has loved Knightley. When did he take Frank's place in her heart?

Becca: And then she's like, "Wait a minute."

Molly: She's like, "Wait a minute, I never loved Frank. I always loved Knightley."

Becca: Not even for a second.

Molly: Not even for a second. I wrote read this, probably. Let me see what I meant.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: "She saw that there never had [00:25:00] been a time when she did not consider Mr. Knightley as infinitely the superior, or when his regard for her had not been infinitely the most dear. She saw that in persuading herself, in fancying, in acting to the contrary, she had been entirely under a delusion, totally ignorant of her own heart and, in short, that she had never really cared for Frank Churchill at all!"

Becca: Hot.

Molly: Eep.

Becca: Oh, Molly, put some other words on the eep.

Molly: Yes, agree. The whole Frank Churchill thing was weird. I felt like-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Well, we talked about it at the time. I was like gently not so gently nudging you towards, does Emma actually care about Frank Churchill?

Molly: Right. It was very much a fantasy for her. We talked about the crush of the celebrity crush of it all.

Becca: Think about how Emma, through the entire book, has thought about Frank Churchill versus how she has thought about Knightley.

Molly: She just cares so much about Knightley's opinion.

Becca: We're [00:26:00] going to get deep. So, for Frank, it's exciting. He's handsome, she's flirting, she's flattered, she's enticed. With Knightley, he is a presence in her life every day and in every situation he is in the back of her brain telling her things and making her feel a certain way. So, Jane Austen does this masterfully. The whole book, Emma's loudly like, "Oh, I like Frank Churchill. Do I like Frank Churchill? I don't know if I love Frank Churchill, but I love Frank Churchill." But while that's all happening, whose opinion is she thinking about the most? Knightley's. Who does she bicker with? Mr. Knightley. Who does she confide all her thoughts in? Mr. Knightley. Who does she ultimately acknowledge, really sees who she is inside? Mr. Knightley. She tracks him through all these things.

Molly: Yeah. When he thought badly of her, she was like, "Oh, the one person who is supposed to [00:27:00] know me inside and out thinks this is me, I need to reevaluate."

Becca: Every moment of his opinion is taken most seriously.

Molly: When he thought badly of her, she cried all night.

Becca: Yeah. Frank is this presence that brings out the worst in Emma. Knightley is this presence that demands the best of Emma.

Molly: Ph, it's so good. Their relationship is so well done.

Becca: Yeah. The whole book is really not focused on it. We have our moments. But now that you're looking back on it, the whole thing, the whole time, it's all Emma-Knightley.

Molly: I feel like Jane Austen invented shipping.

Becca: Because she really knew romance.

Molly: She did. Because the book isn't about Emma and Knightley, like you said. But for us, at least for me, it's been about Emma and Knightley since eight chapters in, because I was like, "Wait, she cares more about his opinion than all these other people." He's always there, and they're always hanging out.

Becca: [00:28:00] And he's hot.

Molly: And he's so hot.

Becca: So hot.

Molly: He is so hot. So, the whole time you're tracking that relationship and rooting for it, if you're me and I'm assuming a lot of people, there might be some Emma-Frank shippers out there, but you're wrong.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: So sorry.

Becca: Yeah.

Becca: Like, the [unintelligible [00:28:22] are people.

Becca: That's different because that's canon.

Molly: Yeah, but I hate that.

Becca: Anyway, go back to Jane Austen.

Molly: Yes. So sorry to derail it, but basically yes. Just the whole time you're tracking this, and all of a sudden, it's like, "Wait, it's happening. It's happening." Emma is just ashamed of every part of her mind, except for her affection for Knightley, which is her favorite part of herself right now. She starts thinking about all the other shit she's pulled. "With insufferable vanity had she believed herself in the secret of every body's feelings; with unpardonable arrogance proposed [00:29:00] to arrange every body's destiny." And then she was wrong about everything.

Becca: Including her own heart.

Molly: Yeah, she was just clueless.

Becca: It's in the title.

Molly: It's in the title.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Oh, my God, I called Harriet clueless at the beginning of this book, and I was like, "I've nailed it. I've figured it out." [laughs]

Becca: I will neither confirm nor deny anything.

Molly: Okay. She has brought evil upon Harriet, she's brought evil upon herself, and she fears she's brought evil upon Mr. Knightley, because if he ends up with an unequal match, it's going to be all her fault. He wouldn't have liked Harriet if he hadn't noticed that Harriet liked him. Even if he hadn't noticed that Harriet liked him, he never would have even known Harriet if it wasn't for Emma. And Emma is like, "Harriet is the evil of this world." She hates her right now.

Becca: To be fair, have you ever had that circumstance where someone you have no problem with, like, someone you care about, and suddenly, they become the worst person in the world to you?

Molly: [00:30:00] I don't know. I feel like it's different to have no problem with someone and then hate them and be best friends with somebody and then hate them.

Becca: Well, we'll get into it.

Molly: Yes.

Molly: So, she starts reflecting on Knightley and Harriet as a pair. She thinks that this match makes Jane and Frank seem commonplace. There's no gap there in relation, such an elevation on her side, such a debasement on his. And she thinks that Knightley is going to be ridiculed throughout the town for this match. Her opinion of Harriet has shifted so quickly when it's not her trying to match Harriet up with someone above her status.

Becca: It's also someone she cares so much about, not only just in love, but also in life. Knightley's stature is part of his commodity in the world.

Molly: Right. Yes, because he's never going to marry according to her, so he has to stay--

Becca: Yeah, but we'll get into the questions.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So much to say here.

Molly: Emma thinks, this can't [00:31:00] be, it's impossible. And yet, it's not impossible. This wouldn't be the first time a man of his status was captivated by inferior powers. I'm thinking like Lucy Steele situation.

Becca: You will recall that Harriet is very hot.

Molly: Harriet is very hot, yes. I remember she's curvy. I just remember that they said she was curvy.

Becca: She is. She's got a perfect little angelic face. Even Knightley at the beginning was like, "Yeah, she's not very smart, but she's pretty face."

Molly: Yeah. She says, "Was it new for one perhaps too busy to seek to be the prize of a girl who would seek him?" She wishes that she had just left Harriet where she belonged, she wishes she had not stopped her from marrying Mr. Martin, and she just can't believe that Harriet would dare to raise her thoughts to Mr. Knightley. She thinks Harriet's gotten too cocky and she knows that's her fault. It says, "Who had been at pains to give Harriet notions of self-consequence but herself? If Harriet, from being humble, were grown vain, [00:32:00] it was her doing too."

Becca: Interesting to think about.

Molly: Literally, my notes earlier in the paragraph were like, "It's only because you told her that she was important that she thinks she's important," and then they said that.

Becca: Indeed.

Molly: So, at least she's self-aware.

Becca: Yes, she is.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: This is, again, we're in the era of the book that is the humbling of Emma Woodhouse.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, she is getting humbled upon humbled upon humbled.

Molly: Yeah. So, that brings us to Chapter 12 of Volume III, or Chapter 48, if your book isn't broken up that way. Emma never realized how much of her happiness depended on being Mr. Knightley's favorite until now that she's threatened with losing that spot. She has been his favorite for so long, because she, his only female friend. His only other female friend was Isabella, and she has taken this position for granted. "She had not deserved it, she had often been negligent or perverse, slighting his advice, or even willfully opposing [00:33:00] him, insensible of half his merits, and quarrelling with him because he would not acknowledge her false and insolent estimate of her own but still, from family attachment and habit, and thorough excellence of mind, he had loved her."

Becca: Sound familiar? It's fucking Luke and Lorelai.

Molly: Yeah, [laughs] it is. She didn't deserve him.

Becca: Well, the way she's saying it now is like, "All we ever did was bicker, and he just berated me for being annoying, and full of myself the whole time, but he loved me anyway. What the fuck?"

Molly: Right. She's like, "What have I done?"

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Yes, it is exactly Luke and Lorelai. She thinks that she has been very dear to him, but she can't allow herself to begin to hope. She says, "Harriet might think she's worthy of Knightley's love, but Emma can't think the same for herself."

Becca: oh.

Molly: She thinks that he wouldn't have yelled at her about Miss Bates if he did love her at the Box Hill Gate.

Molly: Yeah, the Box Hill Gate. I think that's not true. I think that he only ever berates her [00:34:00] because he thinks that she can do better, and that is the highest mark of love.

Becca: That is true. That is always the highest mark of love. But right now, Emma is in what we would call a depression spiral.

Molly: Yes. [laughs]

Becca: She's having a moment.

Molly: Emma is having a moment. She's got her Ben & Jerry's.

Becca: She's got her Regency Era, Ben & Jerry's 's.

Molly: Yes.

Molly: Regency Era, is it Adele? Is it Taylor Swift?

Molly: No, I know what it is.

Becca: What?

Molly: She's got Olivia Rodrigo.

Becca: Which one?

Molly: Well, later on, it's going to be *Jealousy, jealousy*.

Becca: Okay.

Molly: *Jealousy, jealousy*.

Becca: I was in early 2000s Taylor Swift mode here.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: Because I was thinking, *He's the reason for-*

Molly and Becca: *-the teardrops on my guitar.*

Becca: We're not paying for that.

Molly: Hang on. Before we move on, I have to tell you which Olivia Rodrigo song this moment is, because I really think that this whole episode--

Becca: Wait, I want input from our listeners for this moment, for Emma. I want to hear on our Instagram which songs they think Emma's listening to with her Regency [00:35:00] Era, Ben & Jerry's.

Molly: Please make us a playlist.

Becca: Oh, my God, that would be a great playlist. Emma moping over Knightley.

Molly: Yeah. Olivia Rodrigo might not be best for this moment, but it is good for a later moment.

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Molly: Or just it's good for the moments with her and Harriet. It's very jealousy-jealousy, et cetera. So, Emma still hopes that Harriet is overestimating his feelings for her, for his sake, she says. Sure. She just wants Knightley to remain single for his whole life and for everything to go back to how it was and then she'll be perfectly happy. She thinks that marriage isn't in the cards for her anyway. She wouldn't leave her father, and she thinks to herself, "She would not marry even if she were asked by Mr. Knightley."

Becca: So, that's an interesting little quirk, because Emma said, "Oh, I would marry, but only for love." She's confronted now with real true love, like, to her core love and she says, "Will I marry?" [00:36:00] And she still says, "No." Revolutionary lady in her own right. A lot of other flaws coming out in this chapter.

Molly: Yeah. I think that while she is saying that, I don't think that that's true. I think that she is saying that to make herself feel better. I think that if Knightley asked her to marry him, she would say, "We have to stay near my father. We have to stay at Donwell or Highbury. We're not leaving." But I don't think that she would say no. She decides to wait until he comes back and then observe him with Harriet and see if Harriet is in fact correct. Until then, she doesn't want to see Harriet at all. She writes to her and says, "Don't visit me."

Becca: "I need a minute."

Molly: "I need a minute." The way that she writes this letter, it just makes it very obvious that she's in love with him. She says, "I don't want to talk about this." [00:37:00] Why wouldn't she want to talk about this? Why would she be so upset if not because she's in love with him?

Becca: Well, the class.

Molly: So, she's mad at Harriet. Harriet at least agrees and is like, "Yeah, that makes sense that you're mad at me because I'm in love with someone above my class status?"

Becca: Well, I think also because she's so close to Knightley. She blindsided her in this moment, and we're going to talk about it. It is, if we're just looking solely at their society, an insane match.

Molly: No, it is. Totally.

Becca: So, I think Harriet wants to live in a world where she's like, "No, I was built up on this and I think I have this in the bag, and I don't want to deal with you telling me otherwise right now. So, maybe it does make sense that we are just going to sit apart on this for a little bit," which is good. Sometimes, you need to take a bead in your friendships.

Molly: yes.

Becca: They are in very serious need of a bead.

Molly: Oh, yeah, they've been in need of a bead. [00:38:00] After Emma hears from Harriet agreeing to stay away, Mrs. Weston stops by with news about a walk she just took with Jane. Mrs. Weston says she hadn't wanted to go visit. She thought that if she and Mr. Weston visit the Bates', everyone's going to know about the engagement. [giggles] And Mr. Weston is like, "No, I want to pay my courtesies." It says he, "did not conceive that any suspicion could be excited by it, or if it were, that it would be of any consequence, for 'such things, always got about."

Becca: [giggles]

Molly: Because of him.

Becca: Yeah, it would seem so.

Molly: They visit Jane, and Jane is very quiet and seems to be suffering, even while her aunt and grandma are thrilled that they're there. And Mrs. Weston asks Jane to go get some air with her. At first, she says no, but then she gets convinced. While they're driving, Mrs. Weston gets her to open up. Jane admits that since she got engaged, she has not known peace, and Emma asks if she thinks she's wrong for having had a secret engagement. And Mrs. Weston [00:39:00] says that she blames herself completely. She's been in a perpetual state of suffering, but "all the punishment that misconduct can bring, it is still not less misconduct," which is something we talked about with Emma and feeling bad about things, but that not making it better.

Becca: Yes. And you can see, at least with Jane Fairfax here, Emma has made genuine effort to be better.

Molly: Yes. And even now, in her feelings towards Jane about all of this, she is totally on Jane's side.

Becca: Yeah. How could you not be?

Molly: Well, yeah. Except I don't understand, but we'll get into it.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: There was one word, expiation, the act of making amends or reparation for guilt or wrongdoing atonement. So, she was saying, "My pain is no expiation." Jane told Mrs. Weston not to let this reflect badly on the people who raised her. She was raised well, and this mistake was all her doing, and she's very nervous to tell Colonel Campbell. Emma thinks that for all this [00:40:00] suffering, she must really have loved Frank a lot to enter into this engagement. But can we just backtrack a minute? Frank has been openly flirting with other women in front of her.

Becca: The whole time.

Molly: Talking shit about her in public.

Becca: And making little petty jokes about her too, shamefully.

Molly: And making other people see that. How does she still love this guy?

Becca: Why do you think?

Molly: I don't know. They had that whole fight at Box Hill where she was like, "If you think that this is a bad match, you can break it off." Does he still love her?

Becca: We don't know, because you asked about a letter that Mrs. Weston is waiting on.

Molly: Oh, yes. Well, that hasn't happened yet.

Becca: Well, just to jump ahead, Mrs. Weston is waiting on a letter from Frank where he says he promises he's going to explain himself.

Molly: Oh, right, because he talked about-- He said he was going to write.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Okay, that's the letter.

Becca: So, we don't have that yet. So, we don't know what Frank is thinking.

Molly: I just don't understand how Jane could still love him after [00:41:00] all that. He's been cruel.

Becca: Listen, the heart wants what it wants. There are a lot of people out there who date people who are a little cruel to them and love them anyway. Why do you think she still loves him? This was a study question, but we'll ask it.

Molly: Unless they were in some sort of agreement about how they were going to act in public. Maybe they said, "Be that way. Be however you got to be."

Becca: All we know now is that Emma's our protagonist, so we don't have all the answers on Frank and Jane.

Molly: Yes. Okay. So, Emma feels bad knowing how she's contributed to Jane's unhappiness. Mrs. Weston says that Emma's involvement was innocent. She says that Jane said the whole ordeal had made her unreasonable captious, which means tending to find fault or raise petty objections and irritable. She became hard for Frank to bear, and his playful disposition that normally delighted her now bothered her. His [00:42:00] flirting, all the-

Becca: Flirty McFlirt face.

Molly: -the way that he is started to get on her nerves and that's why she's been so grumpy, which, of course, but it does say something that she loved that about him before when it wasn't a secret engagement and he wasn't around other sexy women that he was doing it with.

Becca: Yeah, and he's also stressed. Also, you have to imagine a lot of that energy was directed at Jane before.

Molly: Right.

Becca: Good thing to think about.

Molly: Yes. Jane brought up Emma then and said how kind Emma had been to her and the attention she'd shown her. She felt bad that Emma didn't get proper recognition for it. Emma almost cannot accept this recognition, because she feels she has done more evil than good for Jane. But she's happy that Jane is happy, and "it is fit that the fortune should be on his side, for I think the merit will be all on hers." Then Miss Weston tries to defend Frank, and Emma's like, "I can't listen to you do that." So, she starts [00:43:00] daydreaming about Mr. Knightley, and she's spacing out. And then Mrs. Weston says the thing about the letter. She's like, "We're waiting for the letter." Emma can't remember what the letter is, but as we've discussed, it is a letter from Frank.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Mrs. Weston says, "Are you okay?" And Emma says, "Yeah, I'm always okay."

Becca: She's like, "I'm fine."

Molly: I don't know why it is coming-- [crosstalk]

Becca: She's ross.

Molly: Loud and squeaky, because I'm fine.

Becca: I'm fine.

Molly: Yeah, she really is. She says, "Let me know what the letter says." And then Mrs. Weston leaves. Emma just sits there thinking about how bad she's been to Jane in the past and how she's been so jealous of her. Another moment where Olivia Rodrigo--

Becca: Jealousy- jealousy? Yeah.

Molly: She wishes that she had just followed Knightley's advice and befriended Jane instead of Harriet at the beginning of this book. Justice for Harriet though. It's not Harriet's fault that Emma took her under her wing.

Becca: Yes. We're going to have a long talk about Harriet and Emma's friendship in the study questions. There's a lot to discuss there.

Molly: Okay. [00:44:00] Great. It says, "Birth, abilities, and education, had been equally marking one as an associate for her, to be received with gratitude, and the other what was she?" She regrets starting rumors about Mr. Dixon and Jane. They clearly distressed Jane, but I have to just draw attention to the fact that Frank participated in these rumors and talked about them in front of Jane like, "He did that too."

Becca: Oh, yeah. But that doesn't exonerate Emma.

Molly: For sure.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: She feels that she has stabbed Jane's piece in one thousand different instances, Box Hill being the worst of them, obviously.

Becca: Oh, Box Hill Gate.

Molly: Oh, Box Hill Gate.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: The rest of the day is cold and rainy and gloomy, and it's summer, so the day is long, which only made such cruel sights the longer visible.

Becca: Oh, we've all been there, Emma. This is where the Regency, Ben & Jerry's is really coming out. That playlist is playing and she's like, "I hate everything and I'm very alone."

Molly: Mr. Woodhouse hates this weather, and Emma has to stay by his side [00:45:00] because it's affecting him poorly. It reminds her of the night after Mrs. Weston's wedding, being all alone with him. Back then, she had friends that would always come to visit. That night, Knightley came and hung out with them, and she's like, "He's never going to do that again." She thinks that none of her friends are going to ever come again because Mrs. Weston is having a baby, Frank and Jane are getting married, Knightley's going to be lost to Harriet. She's just going to be alone, and she's devastated that Harriet's going to be Knightley's favorite, his dearest, his wife, and it's all her own fault. Her only solace is that she's going to try to be better. And so, hopefully, even though she's going to be lonely for the rest of her life, she's going to have less regrets.

Becca: Yeah. What's the exact quote there? It's a good quote.

Molly: "And the only source whence any thing like consolation or composure could be drawn, was in the resolution of her own better conduct, and the hope that, however inferior in spirit and gaiety might be the following and every future winter of her [00:46:00] life to the past, it would yet find her more rational, more acquainted with herself, and leave her less to regret when it were gone."

Becca: Ugh, sad.

Molly: The saddest thing to me was just thinking back on how-- when Mrs. Weston got married, she was alone with her dad, but Knightley came over, and then all of a sudden, all of these other friends came into her life, and she was suddenly a social butterfly. We talked about how she didn't used to be, and now she is. She had this image for the whole winter going forward. All of these new friends that were going to hang out with her and make it less winter can be depressing. And now she's like, all of those are gone.

Becca: Yeah. What we see now is Emma's left alone with just her character development.

Molly: Yeah. It sucks to be alone with your character development.

Becca: Oh, it's the worst feeling. But she is a new person, a new way of being alone than she was at the beginning of the book.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Which brings us to my study questions. [00:47:00] All right, so, we're just going to do one non-Harriet Emma question to start, which is, how do you comp between Jane and Harriet? There's a lot of comparisons that Emma makes to the two of them in these chapters. What do you make of that?

Molly: Hmm. Well, we've talked about their statuses before, at least. But Emma is comparing them in terms of right and wrong. All of a sudden, Jane is in the right. Emma doesn't think any ill of Jane versus Harriet for loving the wrong person. Emma's angry at her for it. Is that what you're talking about?

Becca: Well, yeah, there's a lot of comparisons between the two. The way Emma feels about them in these chapters really swaps.

Molly: She wishes she had befriended Jane instead of Harriet.

Becca: Well, part of it is that somehow, someway, her jealousy towards Jane [00:48:00] transferred over to somebody else for a moment.

Molly: Well, remember, there have been moments where Knightley is like, "Oh, I'm so fond of Jane Fairfax," and Emma was like, "Grumble, grumble, grumble."

Becca: Exactly.

Molly: Hmm.

Becca: Mm. I want to read a quote about Harriet to get this discussion off. This is from a conversation between Mrs. Weston and Knightley in Volume I.

Molly: Way back.

Becca: Knightley says this about the friendship between Harriet and Emma. "Harriet Smith-- I have not half done about Harriet Smith. I think her the very worst sort of companion that Emma could possibly have. She knows nothing herself, and looks upon Emma as knowing everything. She is a flatterer in all her ways; and so much the worse, because undesigned. Her ignorance is hourly flattery. How can Emma imagine she has anything to learn herself, while Harriet is presenting such a delightful inferiority? And as for Harriet, I [00:49:00] will venture to say that she cannot gain by the acquaintance.

Hartfield will only put her out of conceit with all the other places she belongs to. She will grow just refined enough to be uncomfortable with those among whom birth and circumstances have placed her home. I am much mistaken if Emma's doctrines give any strength of mind, or tend at all to make a girl adapt herself rationally to the varieties of her situation in life. They only give a little polish."

Molly: I remember that moment.

Becca: We highlighted that moment way back at the beginning of the book. Now, think about this. So, what Knightley is saying here is a couple things. Emma chose Harriet, because she was a flatterer, because she didn't want to be challenged. She wanted a fun, pretty little project she could make in her own image. What Knightley says is, that's bad for Emma because Emma's not going to learn herself. And for Harriet, that's also bad because all Harriet's going to [00:50:00] do is get a glimpse into a life higher than herself and get enough of a taste of it to yearn for it and think maybe she deserves it, when in reality, her circumstance in life means she will never have it.

So, what we are seeing now in this book is partially Emma having true profound jealousy over this Knightley thing, having a moment of realization for her own feelings. But what we're seeing is that Emma is finally being humbled the way she should have been this entire book. And Harriet has so been made in Emma's image that she has grown only comfortable in the higher classes. Her comments on Robert Martin, the gall of believing she can marry up to Knightley, that in Jane Austen's time is not something she can do easily. So, this whole thing has come together to show that Harriet and Emma, while they love each other, are bad companions for each other.

Molly: It's complicated, obviously, and The Economics of Everything in Jane Austen.

Becca: Graham, a sound effect.

[The Economics of Everything sound effect]

Molly: Like The Economics of Friendship in Jane Austen we've talked about before, and we've talked about The Economics of Dating in Jane Austen, but the fact that it's difficult to be friends with someone outside your class. It's difficult to be in love with someone outside your class. But sometimes, it's okay if it's just a little bit, like, if the people in the middle, it happens sometimes, like, Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet.

Becca: Well, that goes to one of my other questions. We're just jumping around now, because this is so organic and fun. What is Jane Austen saying with this? Does Jane Austen approve of what's happened to Harriet?

Molly: I don't know. That's what's confusing to me is [00:52:00] like, Harriet-- Now, we've talked about how Jane Austen was writing Emma as a character that no one but Jane Austen is going to like-

Becca: yes.

Molly: -which I think is amazing. But we are getting the book through Emma's perspective so like, "Right now, I'm mad at Harriet too. I'm annoyed that she has grown outside of her class," and is like, "Oh, yeah, I can love Knightley. I can love whoever I want." If this book was told through Harriet's perspective, I would be all for it. I would be rooting for her in Knightley.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: But they're just such opposite ends of the spectrum.

Becca: Well, I think what Jane Austen is doing here is she's showing how arbitrary this is, because, again, Emma was totally fine with her loving Frank Churchill.

Molly: Exactly.

Becca: But the moment it happened to her boy, class snuck right in. A lot of people interpret Emma's reaction to Harriet's admission here, a lot of different ways. One of those ways is an

unflattering portrait of Jane Austen's feelings that people should stay [00:53:00] in their class.

Molly: I don't think she's saying that.

Becca: I don't think so either. It's a subjective thing we can talk about. But I think Jane Austen is pointing out how arbitrary the class is.

Molly: Yes. Because Emma was so adamant that Harriet should raise above her class. She was like, "You cannot marry Robert Martin." And now as soon as it's someone that Emma wants to be with, she's like, "She should have married Robert Martin."

Becca: Exactly. And also, the feeling of protecting your own and protecting your people and your class is a big thing, because remember, she and Knightley are kind of family as well.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: I also think, the whole book. Emma has been flitting in and out of classism. She's been classist to certain people, and then completely oblivious to class in other circumstances. And with Harriet, she's been really, really fast and loose with the class system in England until-- [crosstalk]

Molly: If there was a possibility that Harriet could have come from-- we don't know who her family is, but continue.

Becca: That's [00:54:00] all bullshit though.

Molly: Right. No, totally. That was just to tell herself that.

Becca: Yeah, it's because she wanted to be friends with Harriet. You could say gay, but you could also say like, the want of a flattering friend, who looks subconsciously lesser to you than you are to yourself. So, it's funny because, it's even said in the book, Harriet has been growing less aware while Emma's been growing more aware in parts of this book. And Harriet was very aware of the difference between her and Mr. Elton when they first were a maybe pair, and Emma was like, "Nonsense. That's literally nothing." And now, Harriet thinks she can ascend to Knightley's level, who is the highest-class person in the town, and Emma says, "Holy shit, where did she get that gall?" I think we know where she got that gall.

Molly: Emma knows where she got that gall too.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: But I also, there is a part of me that wants to root for that.

Becca: Yeah, because we're modern women. And to [00:55:00] us, it feels crazy that a girl like Harriet can't aspire to be with whoever she wants to be.

Molly: Right. The only reason that I'm anti-Harriet right now is because I'm pro Wood-Knight--

Molly and Becca: Knighthouse.

Molly: So sorry.

Becca: Yeah. No, it's fine. What do we call the other one? Knightsmith?

Molly: Knightsmith.

Becca: Knightiet?

Molly: Harriknight?

Molly: Harriknight was the one.

Becca: Yeah. I have this here. How does Emma's jealousy for Harriet in this moment and her love for Knightley clash with her class feelings here?

Molly: Well, her jealousy is encouraging the classism a lot, because before she was rooting for Harriet and Frank when she had no feelings for Frank, she was like, "Yeah, take him. I don't want him." Now, as soon as she's jealous, she's like, "You're too poor for him," and it's bringing out an ugly side of her.

Becca: [00:56:00] Well, yeah, I think if you read that Knightley quote again, you can see that a lot of this friendship for Emma is premised subconsciously on the fact that Harriet is beneath her.

Molly: Yeah. Also, this is a completely different thing, but if she remembers everything so well as she says she does, she can remember that Knightley said all of that.

Becca: Well, Knightley said it to Mrs. Weston, not Emma.

Molly: Oh. Right. Oh. [laughs]

Becca: He was fucking right.

Molly: He was.

Becca: So, what we have is, Emma's been flattered by Harriet the whole book, and Harriet just broke her out of that by becoming Emma herself. [laughs]

Molly: Yes. I feel like there's like a sci-fi movie where-- Okay. Let's take Megan, for example. Megan, M3GAN, is a doll, and she's supposed to listen to everything that you say and do, but she learns too much, and she becomes a murderer, and that's what's happening [00:57:00] here.

Becca: That's what basically happened here is that-- She loved Harriet, but she was also a vanity project for Emma.

Molly: Exactly.

Becca: She played fast and loose with her and created a monster.

Molly: It's like, if wicked, if they hadn't become best friends.

Becca: It's a tale as old as time. The idea that it's the Cady Heron of it all.

Molly: Yeah. *Mean Girls* is a tale as old as time.

Becca: Exactly. Yeah. What about Emma here? Is this moment a regression for her or a development for her?

Molly: Great question.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Can it be both?

Becca: Yeah. Describe how it's both.

Molly: So, development. She finally understands her own feelings. So, that's good. She's also more aware now of the fact that you can't pick and choose with class, because she has been with Harriet. She's been picking and choosing, "Oh, well, it's fine for Harriet to like this person, and it's not good for Harriet to like that person." [00:58:00] But she's starting to realize, "Oh, I actually can't control other people's destinies. That's not on me. I don't know

other people's hearts." Regression in that, she was picking and choosing, and now she's like, "But it doesn't benefit me," and she's being a dick.

Becca: Yeah, I think that's totally correct. She's humbled now by her own fucking hubris. And another Taylor Swift song, antihero would fit this moment.

Molly: Yes, I cannot wait to make that real.

Becca: She's learning everything she's done wrong, and she's done wrong by Harriet too, because she has put Harriet in a position of being uncomfortable in her own class.

Molly: First of all, as much as Harriet may think that Knightley loves her, I just don't think that he does. He likes her. He has come to appreciate her as a human being. I think that is A+ for Mr. Knightley. He's so hot. **[00:59:00]** He does not love her, I think. And I think that there's only room for Harriet to be humiliated.

Becca: Yeah. And what do we learn about Harriet's personality in this scene?

Molly: Well, she really does care what Emma thinks. She was nervous-- Well, she wasn't nervous. She was shy, but she wasn't scared when she is revealing this.

Becca: She feels firmly that she's correct here.

Molly: Yeah. And she hasn't done that before. She has developed a backbone.

Becca: Yeah. How much was she a vessel until now for Emma to just put whatever she wanted into it?

Molly: 100%.

Becca: Harriet is like, to be fair, becoming her own person a little bit.

Molly: Yes, which I'm happy for her. I just wish that she could have become her own person with a different man, like, Robert Martin, for example.

Becca: Yeah, if only.

Molly: If only.

Becca: Okay, let's talk about Emma and Knightley.

Molly: Argh.

Becca: Let's talk about Knighthouse.

Molly: Knighthouse?

Becca: Everyone take a moment. Knighthouse, **[01:00:00]** In this house, we stand Knighthouse. Let's talk about the nature of the love and why it's different than Frank, which we already talked about, and how Emma realizes-- why Emma realizes it now.

Molly: Well, I will say I was expecting the realization. I guess, I don't know what I was expecting. I was expecting it to come slowly, but it never does. There's always a moment where you realize you like someone. So, perfect, how that happened. The nature of it is best friends, family. It's like falling in love with your best friend. They say that's the best way to-- whatever.

Becca: You were looking for friends to lovers trope?

Molly: Yeah, I got it, baby.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: There's just such a deep thread of knowing each other that runs through their whole lives. He's known her since she was a baby. He is old enough that he probably babysat her, but that's fine.

Becca: [01:01:00] Yeah, that's a pretty big yikes on the age difference.

Molly: But it's not as much as like some others.

Becca: Yeah, the thing is that it's like, Emma's not a teenager. She's in her early 20s.

Molly: She's 20-- what, one, two?

Becca: She's 21, 22-ish, and Knightley's in his early 30s.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: It's not that weird.

Molly: It's definitely not weird for Regency Era standards. So, we're not even going to-- It happens nowadays too.

Becca: Yeah, I think we can say-- I will say, unlike Colonel Brandon and Marianne, Colonel Brandon really does seed all the power in the relationship to Marianne. Obviously, Knightley has a little bit of a hold over Emma, a little bit of power, but it is really, truly a friendship. So, they are, in some regard, just on a different footing.

Molly: They feel equal.

Becca: Yeah. It's not a matter of him encapsulating her.

Molly: Also, Marianne was 17.

Becca: And Emma's 21, 22. So, it's different.

Molly: Yeah. There's just this deep understanding between them. Best friends. Ah, I love it.

Becca: Okay. [01:02:00] And how has Emma been humbled at this point? We're on a roll humbling Emma.

Molly: She's not the center of everybody's lives. She's realizing, first of all, that Jane and Frank have their own story that she has no idea about. She realizes that she's been wrong about every single pairing she's tried to set up and that that has hurt people. So, she's feeling bad.

Becca: And she was stupid enough to not--

Molly: To not know her own heart, to not know how she felt.

Becca: What do you think of Emma?

Molly: What do I think of Emma? She's on a journey. At this point, I am equally-- I'm annoyed at how she's--

Becca: She has a real classist moment here. She's pretty garbage.

Molly: Very garbage. She's being so classist. She might be right, but it doesn't excuse how she's thinking of Harriet and being like, "Oh, I wish we were never friends." [01:03:00]

Becca: We're in a tough spot here where Emma's correct now, the way Knightley was correct before. But it's correct in the context of a society that is cruel to people in lower classes. So, in that regard, we can be like, "That's fucked up." Jane Austen has a lot to say on that, and we've talked about that, but I think we can also acknowledge that this sucks.

Molly: Yeah, it does suck.

Becca: Funniest quote?

Molly: This is when Mrs. Weston is telling Emma that she and Mr. Weston went to go visit Jane. It says, "Mr. Weston had thought differently, he was extremely anxious to shew his approbation to Miss Fairfax and her family, and did not conceive that any suspicion could be excited by it, or if it were, that it would be of any consequence; for 'such things,' he observed, 'always got about.' Emma smiled, and felt that Mr. Weston had very good reason for saying so."

Becca: We love our social king, our homecoming king.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Questions moving [01:04:00] forward.

Molly: Is Harriet right? Does Mr. Knightley like her? I don't think so. But does Mr. Knightley love Emma? They have to end up together.

Becca: Well, I think no matter what we can agree that if this were the 21st century, we would be like, "Throuple. Throuple. Throuple."

Molly: [laughs] No. Emma and Harriet do not have that kind of chemistry anymore. Well, okay, here's the thing. I have to scratch that because I've been saying gay this whole time, but I'm not going to scratch.

Becca: Not like romantic chemistry, but like a sexual chemistry.

Molly: Not Emma and Harriet. Emma and Jane Fairfax are fucking.

Becca: They should be.

Molly: Emma and Harriet, no. Okay. Who does Knightley love?

Becca: How will this fadge?

Molly: How will this fadge? Also, Frank and Jane, why?

Becca: Who wins the chapters?

Molly: I don't know. God, I'm mad at everyone. I'm mad at everyone. Emma was really the star of [01:05:00] the show, but she had a really bad moment here. But also, she knows herself now. She knows how she feels and she's willing to sit in that.

Becca: So, is it a tentative Emma Woodhouse?

Molly: A tentative Emma Woodhouse.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: But also, Jane is looking real elegant over there right now.

Becca: Let's give it to Jane Fairfax, because she did not have a classist rant in her head against her friend.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Yeah, still fair. Well, we can acknowledge that Emma's been humbled. Emma's developing.

Molly: Yes. She is sitting with her character development, and it is a hard time, but she's doing it.

Becca: All right, listeners, that concludes this episode of Pod and Prejudice. I think it's been long.

Molly: It's been average.

Becca: All right. I always think it's been long. I'm always like, "Our reading over?" For next time, we're going to read Chapters 49 through 51. Or, if your book is Volumes I and II, Chapters 13 through 15 of Volume III. Molly, are you feeling ready for that?

Molly: I am so excited.

Becca: All right. Well, then, until next time, stay proper.

Molly: And **[01:06:00]** fall in love with your best friend.

Becca: Do it.

Molly: Do it.

[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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