

Molly: Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we have a bunch of new patrons to thank. Shout out to Emily, Katie, Jill, Gabriella, Trevor, Sequoia, and Muriel. If you want to be like these awesome people and get access to exclusive content like our notes, outtakes, bonus episodes, and more, head on over to patreon.com/podandprejudice. Don't forget that we're also selling stickers over at podandprejudice.com/merch. They're very cute if I do say so myself, and they're a great way to show your support of the show and spread the word. Now, enjoy this week's episode covering part two of five of the 2005 adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* with our guest Wil Williams.

[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 the second section of the first half of the 2005 version of *Pride [00:01:00] and Prejudice* starring Keira Knightley and Matthew Macfadyen if I'm pronouncing that correctly. Fingers crossed.

Becca: What if we just said directed by Joe Wright?

Molly: Directed by Joe Wright. We are here with our guest, Wil Williams. How's it going?

Wil: Hi, hello. It's going so well.

Becca: Thank you so much for joining us after such a long hiatus, Wil.

Wil: Oh, yeah. Very, very, very long, but I fit it into my schedule and it was fine. [laughs]

Molly: Wil, do you want to tell our listeners, what you do in the podcast world and in work and life?

Wil: Yeah, for sure. I am a podcast critic and journalist. I write reviews, and what have you for a bunch of different outlets. I'm also the showrunner on Valence, which is a fiction podcast.

Molly: It is very good. I enjoy it a lot.

Wil: Oh, thank you.

Becca: Now, as we walk into this, Molly, where were we in this adaptation?

Molly: Listeners, [00:02:00] for us it's been a hot two minutes since we last spoke of this movie, but for you, it's been two weeks. To remind you, we've just discussed Lizzie and Jane being at Netherfield, and Darcy flexing his hand very sexily. That really gives you all you need to know on where we're at. We can just move right into the next scene, which is our boy, Mr. Collins.

Becca: Your boy.

[laughter]

Molly: All right. First things first, as our listeners know, I hated Mr. Collins in the last adaptation. I hated him in the book. I thought, "What is the point of this character?" I have gone on a journey first from seeing this movie and hating this Collins because I thought David Bamber in the 1995 was so good at being disgusting, and this Collins was not disgusting. Then I watched it again, [00:03:00] and I thought, this Collins is really sweet and kind of just bumbling and doesn't understand what he's supposed to do. He has his idea set out in front of him. He knows what he wants and he is going to do it because that is what is expected of him by Lady Catherine de Bourgh, and I love him a lot.

Wil: He is a dweeb.

Becca: Yeah, that is a take, I think. He continues to be a slight misogynist but one that is less aware of his problematic nature. Or, I would say the David Bamber Collins is not aware, but-

Molly: I disagree.

Becca: -taking more pleasure in being awful.

Wil: Yeah, this Collins is very just like-- He's trying his best. His best is just something. [laughs]

Molly: Yes. When we get to his proposal, I have thoughts and I don't think that he was mal-intentioned at all and we'll get there, but first, we have dinnertime [00:04:00], and he is complimenting them on their home and he says the line about, "What excellent boiled potatoes these are," which is for some reason really famous.

Becca: I think it's just the intensity with which he says it.

Wil: About such a deeply plain food.

[laughter]

Becca: No one has ever thought boiled potatoes are excellent. Mashed potatoes?

Molly: I like a boiled potato.

Wil: I'm not going to lie though. In the movie, they look good as hell, like I would. I would fuck up those potatoes.

Molly: They do. They've got butter and scallions on them.

Wil: Yeah, man.

Becca: You did explain kind of liking boiled potatoes.

Molly: I like them, and I will tell you why. I am from Syracuse, New York. I can't eat them anymore because I'm vegan now, but salt potatoes.

Wil: Salt potatoes are so good.

Molly: They're so good.

Wil: They're so good.

Molly: You just boil the potatoes in a butt fuck ton of salt. You just put blocks and blocks of salt in the water and then you put butter all over them, [00:05:00] and that was my favorite food growing up.

Becca: All right, fair enough. I stand corrected, but I think that boiled potatoes without anything else on them, oof, rough.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Back when we had Caroline on the show, they made a thread for us of what each *Pride and Prejudice* character would be if they were a potato dish, and Collins was boiled potatoes and I get it now.

Wil: Perfect.

Molly: Yeah, it was great. He talks about Lady Catherine de Bourgh, he brings up Lady Catherine de Bourgh and he says the line, "My rectory abuts her estate," and I lost it. I could not stop thinking about butts.

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: Oh, man.

Molly: I'm sorry, but that's just what I heard, and they did that on purpose.

Wil: No, that's valid.

Becca: Never apologize for butts.

Wil: [laughter]

Molly: Buttholes, specifically.

Wil: Yep.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: God bless.

Molly: That was one of those moments where I was like, they told him to do it that way so that I would thinking about his butt hole, and I did, and it worked. Anyway. [giggles] everyone at the table is laughing at him as he does his Mr. Collins thing, [00:06:00] except Mrs. Bennet, who is furious that he is there because he is the symbol of everything that she hates. He is going to come in, take their estate and leave with it. Actually, in the scene leading up to this, I think Lizzie mentioned, he could come whenever he wants. I don't think he even needs to wait for Mr. Bennet to die in this version, which makes him a little scarier, but also, he doesn't really want to do that. He wants to marry one of them. It's very clear. So, sweet boy, I really like him.

Wil: [giggles]

Becca: Aww.

Molly: After dinner, he suggests that he read to them for an hour or two from Fordyce's Sermons. Mr. Bennet looks like, "Oh my God, are you really going to do that to me?" Then we jump to after dinner. He tells Mrs. Bennet that he intends to marry one of them. You could see on her face like her going from hating him and everything that he stands for, to loving [00:07:00] him.

Wil: Like a light switch.

Molly: Yep. She turned it on.

Becca: Oh, yeah, absolutely.

Molly: Turned on the charm. She was like, "Oh, well, Jane is engaged, probably almost, but Lizzie next to her." Poor thing, first of all, he looked so heartbroken, crestfallen one might say, when she said that Jane was going to be engaged soon. Then Lizzie was just the next best thing, and that's just what it is.

Becca: Yeah. Also, just the earnestness with which he's like, "Oh, no, Jane." "Yes. I want Jane." It's like, "No, you don't get to say."

Wil: Yeah, yes, yes.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: That's where he's still Mr. Collins is a little bit.

Molly: Yes, sure. I think it's because he doesn't get it, because those are the standards of the time is that he's supposed to pick a wife, and so he doesn't get that he's not supposed to ask her if she wants to marry him.

Becca: Yeah.

Wil: Right. I think he just doesn't understand the social cues going on right now.

Molly: Yeah. Then we jump to town. [00:08:00] We see the handkerchief that Lizzie has dropped, tumbling along and someone bends and picks it up, and, oh, it's Wickham. Kitty and Lydia are falling all

over him. He is turning on the charms, and they go ribbon shopping. He talks about how he has no taste in ribbons or buckles. One note that I had is that, and we talked about this a little bit in the last episode, but this version of Wickham is so over the top with how sad he is, like, "I'm so poor and sad, and no one likes me." He's like, "Oh, I don't have any taste in ribbons." Lizzie's, like, "Oh, you must be the laughingstock of the militia. What will they do with you?" And he's like, "Ignore me, mostly. I'm not important." I was like, "Shut up."

Becca: Okay. Yeah, a couple of gripes with Wickham, we'll get into this now. This is the biggest flaw in the movie, I think, by a very long shot, is the complete-- I wouldn't say bastardization of the Wickham plotline, but absolute minimization of the Wickham plotline. [00:09:00] It starts with Wickham himself.

Wil: It's so weird. It's nothing. There's no gravity to it. There's no real way we understand that what winds up happening shouldn't have happened and is bad and Wickham is manipulative, I guess. It seems so incidental to the plot, whereas I'm used to it being *the climax*, like the actual climax, it feels they shifted the climax from that moment to the love confession, and I get that, but I think it's a big disservice to the story overall.

Becca: I would hard agree. Even a modern-day adaptation that barely follows the plot lot of *Pride and Prejudice* like *Bridget Jones's Diary*. *Bridget Jones's Diary* is just entirely built around the plot, featuring Lizzie, Wickham, and Darcy. That is the crux of the story, is having this really bad interaction with the seemingly snotty guy and the smart woman, instead finds utter [00:10:00] charm in this man he supposedly ruined. Then all along, she realizes, "Oh, I was prone to flattery and I was prone to all these things that I didn't think I was prone to, but it turns out that I was a fool. That's the pride, that's the prejudice. I love this adaptation. I think that they do a wonderful job capturing the nuances and the sweetness that is missing in a lot of adaptations of Lizzie and Darcy. I do think Wickham needs to be a bigger part of the story always.

On top of that, once again, Wickham is supposed to be hot. Once again, Darcy is hotter than Wickham. His ponytail looks greasy.

Molly: The ponytail is so bad.

Becca: To quote Mike, he looks like the guy who showed up to the gym already smelling bad.

Wil: [laughs] He's deeply uncharismatic too. There's zero chemistry between them. He is oatmeal boring, nothing about this story-- The thing about the Wickham storyline in this movie is that it feels like a waste of time. [00:11:00]

Molly: Yes.

Wil: That's wild. It's such an important plot.

Molly: Yeah, I was thinking if you're going to go as far as to diminish it this much, just cut it and-

Wil: Just cut it.

Molly: -and give us a different reason why Darcy does something. Just change it-- because I was watching this and I was like, I don't care about this plotline and it feels like you could have done something else with this time, and I was mad about it. At first, I was mad because I was like, "How dare they change the plot of *Pride and Prejudice*?" And then, I was mad, I was like, "Why are you making me sit through this?"

Wil: Yes.

Molly: It's only a two-hour movie, use the time better.

Becca: The thing is, it is such a crucial part of the plot because, one, you have real reasons why Lizzie hates Darcy, not just her own weird evaluation of him. You have the reason she questions herself in the letter, and the reason why we start to sympathize with Darcy. You have the main driving moment where we learn how far Darcy will go [00:12:00] for Lizzie. You have a reckoning for the Bennets on all of their ridiculous behavior. It's all tied back to Wickham, and Wickham is just a nullity in this film. It's so strange.

Wil: It felt like they shifted the focus from Wickham to the conflict of Jane and Bingley. But then they also didn't really back that up with anything because the audience is kept so much out of Darcy's internal processing for why he meddled there. I get that they wanted to go a little bit stronger with Jane and Bingley in this adaptation, but then they didn't back it up enough. Then the Wickham thing was just there and awkward. They had too many priorities, but none of them were in the right order.

Becca: Listeners, we still love this adaptation, all three of us.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, this rant comes with a little asterisk of, you can still love this movie and critique Wickham plotline in it."

Molly: Yeah. I will say also in the 1995 version, they really leaned into [00:13:00] the whole, he is a pedophile thing. This Wickham doesn't look that much older than Lydia. He treats her like a kid. In this scene in the ribbon shop, she asks Lizzie for some money, and he's like, "Oh, please, no, let me," and then he pulls a quarter out from behind her ear. We see Lydia very much being like, "Oh, Wickham. Oh, my gosh." But he looks like he could be 20, maybe.

Becca: I think the actor probably is quite young.

Molly: Yeah. In different adaptations in the book and in the other adaptation, there are different reasons for why Wickham sucks. In the book, they definitely leaned more into him being a gold digger, and I think that's what this movie wanted to do. It just didn't do it.

Wil: Nope. Also, this is not important at all, but this ribbon shop looks weird as hell.

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Wil: It's such a weird set.

Molly: It's so strange. Also, ribbons are such a thing in this movie.

Wil: Yes.

Molly: Very weird.

Wil: Very weird.

Molly: Then, they [00:14:00] leave the ribbon shop, thank goodness. They're walking home along a little river. Bingley and Darcy ride by on the other side of the river. Lydia yells out to them and he's like, "Oh, you must invite Wickham to your ball." We see Wickham and we see Darcy, and we see them look at each other and then Darcy turns his horse around and runs away.

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: Did anybody else notice that Bingley and Darcy matched their horses?

Wil: Yes.

Molly: I did not.

Wil: It's ridiculous.

Molly: Wait, were they wearing outfits to match their horses?

Wil: Yeah.

Becca: They were.

Molly: Oh, that's good. I was for one disappointed that they weren't on the same horse.

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: As always.

Molly: As always. In the book, if you'll all remember, they do not clarify that they are on two horses. They say they enter on a horse.

Becca: No, they say enter on horses, you just misspoke.

Molly: I refuse to believe that.

[laughter]

Wil: How sweet. I like it.

Molly: Honestly, everything would be solved if [00:15:00] all of these characters were gay, and I'll continue to say it, screaming from the rooftops. Mary, gay.

Wil: Gay.

Molly: Bingley and Darcy, gay.

Wil: Gay.

Molly: All of them.

Wil: Gay.

Molly: Kitty, gay.

Wil: Gay.

Molly: Lydia, gay.

Wil: Lydia, gay.

Molly: Yeah, she would not have run off with Wickham, so solve--

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: There we go.

Becca: Boom.

Molly: Then I wanted to make a note on the hats. I really like them. I wish that they were still in style, covering the back of the head and then just coming straight up like a lion's mane. Love it.

Becca: I could wear one.

Molly: I could wear one. That's true. I noticed that Mary when she comes home at one point, takes it off, and it's tied around her neck with a ribbon. I guess that's why they need all these ribbons. She can just have it behind her. I love that, how convenient.

Wil: Very good.

Molly: Then, we have Wickham and Lizzie sitting on a tree, talking about Darcy. Wickham gives the backstory, and it sounds very pre-rehearsed and very lackluster, and he doesn't actually seem angry about anything.

Becca: I mean, the [00:16:00] really most distracting thing about the scene other than the fact that it's just not well done is that he looks like a Redcoat from the Revolutionary War, which he basically is.

Wil: Yes, yeah.

Becca: It takes you out of it a little bit.

Wil: It's weird.

Molly: Yeah. Also, he is standing and she is sitting, and so the angle that we're getting of him is from below, and he's playing with the tree and not making eye contact. Then, when he starts talking about Darcy, he starts taking a step forward with everything he says. This is one instance-- I think, this may be the first instance that this shot could be used in a horror film.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: Moving in, he says, "Darcy, his father loved me best, and he didn't like it. And if he wants to leave, then he should leave. I'm not going to run away." I'm like, "All right."

Wil: Yeah. Terrifying.

Becca: Just add that the pig nuts and the whole thing is set.

Molly: Yeah, and there's so many more.

Wil: Somebody has to have done this, right?

Molly: It has to. The reason I think I thought of it is because I did see a video of something [00:17:00] that happens later in the movie, the scene where they're at Pemberley and Lizzie's peeking in through the window.

Wil: By the door, right?

Molly: Yeah, the door.

Wil: And then, she runs away. Yeah.

Molly: And then, he turns around, he sees her, she goes, [gasps] and then she runs away. Someone set that to horror movie music.

Wil: Yes.

Molly: I want the whole movie-- They did it with *Schitt's Creek* for Halloween where they made it into a trailer for a horror movie. I want that, but for this movie, and I have no video editing skills. So, someone please make it.

Wil: They do exist.

Molly: [gasps] Oh, of course, they do. Oh, good.

Wil: Yeah, I will send you links in the chat.

Molly: Excellent.

Becca: Amazing.

Molly: Following our Wickham's sob story. We have a transitional scene where Betsy is walking around the house, Betsy is one of the servants, and singing a song. Jane and Lizzie are talking about Darcy, and Jane doesn't believe her that he could possibly have done that to Wickham. Lizzie's like, "Let him deny himself. Till then, I never want to talk to him," [00:18:00] which, like, how's he going to deny if you don't talk to him about it? Lizzie, come on-

Becca: Oh, Lizzie.

Molly: -communication skills, but she's just mad. Then that's the end of that scene, but I did notice that in that last bit, Jane is in her corset or her stays or whatever it's called, and she just got either a leaf or a tuft of lavender just tucked in her boob sticking out. Did anyone else notice that?

Wil: Yeah, why not, man?

Becca: I did not notice it.

Molly: Yeah, why not? I guess, maybe it's just to make her smell good.

Wil: Yeah, I think it was lavender. It was for the purpose of scent.

Molly: That's amazing. Attention to detail.

Becca: I'm going to start doing that. Just like a little flower titty.

Molly: [laughs] That brings us to our next scene, the ball at Netherfield.

Wil: Mm-hmm.

Molly: Here we go.

Becca: Oh, yes.

Molly: We begin with a shot of Collins walking in, looking around, looking nervous. I noticed that everyone is in white or creams and beiges in this scene, which is, I guess, to show that this is a fancy ball.

Becca: Also, [00:19:00] not everyone's in period costume here, but this was really just like a time to luxuriate and what people thought looks good in the 2005 era, and it does look good.

Wil: It does look really good.

Molly: It definitely does look good. I noticed-- I think I'm not sure what Caroline was wearing in this one. She was wearing a lot of empire waist dresses, which are more 1810s according to this video that I watched. Whereas the more drop waist dresses are 1790s, etc. She was definitely wearing something like that in this scene, looking very pretty. Lizzie and Jane go to greet Bingley, and Lizzie is looking around. We know that she's looking for Wickham, but Wickham ain't there.

Becca: Lizzie's hair in this scene is very mid-2000s, not at all period.

Wil: Absolutely.

Molly: The fishtail braids?

Wil: Yes.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: The fishtail braids just woven in and out of her bun.

Becca: Ah.

Wil: She was ready to go to prom.

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Molly: With the little pearls in there everywhere. It was a lot.

Becca: The hair accessories were so mid-2000s. A little *Lizzie McGuire*. [00:20:00]

Molly: Honestly, I'm surprised they didn't have butterfly clips.

Wil: It's probably good that we didn't get the scene where they went to Claire's together.

[laughter]

Becca: Just [unintelligible [00:20:08]] while Jane gets her ears pierced.

[laughter]

Molly: Oh my gosh. They need those like charm bracelets with the pop-out square charms and you like put them on. Uh, so good.

Wil: Yes. Oh, my God.

Molly: This is actually the first note that I actually have about horror film, and I started really picking them up after this. Lizzie is walking through looking for Wickham, and she's coming down and the shot

is just her and she's entering another room, and then Darcy comes out behind her, follows her for a second and then turns away, and it's like he's a vampire or a ghost.

[laughter]

Becca: I know exactly what you're talking about.

Molly: I'll post a clip of this on our social media, but this is it. He is going for it, and then he turns away and the music is swelling.

Becca: Please put the *Jaws* soundtrack under that.

Molly: Absolutely. [00:21:00] Jane tells Lizzie, Wickham isn't coming because he was detained or something. Then, Collins pops up and asks Lizzie to dance. He and Charlotte are the same height, but they're both way shorter than everybody else and they're standing next to each other in this moment. I liked that framing because we get to see that they match a little bit better than Lizzie.

Wil: Yeah, that was a good choice.

Molly: They move into the dance. This was a thing in the last movie too, but not so much. Which is having a conversation while dancing, and you have to talk while you're near them. Lizzie is having two conversations at once. One is Collins trying to woo her and one is Jane talking about Wickham. Poor Collins doesn't understand that there's two things happening at once.

Wil: No.

Becca: No, he does not. Also, him dancing with Lizzie looks yikes.

Wil: Yes. I really like the cadence-- I'm not wild about Keira Knightley's performance in this film. I think that it is absolutely serviceable. [00:22:00]

Becca: Her chin does a lot of the work for her.

Wil: Her chin and her cheekbones are doing a lot. She's fine, but I do like-- I don't know if I can credit this to the director or to her, but I like that there's this vibe that she only really speaks as she is passing the other person with maybe a little bit-- She goes a little bit longer sometimes, but it gives it this feeling of when she is not speaking, she's like, "Be witty, be witty, be witty," and then she gets it all out in one go. She's so deliberate in what she says. It feels she's almost not listening to the other person, which I think is very in character for her.

Molly: Especially with Darcy.

Wil: Yes.

Molly: Especially when we get to that dance, everything that she says is, "I'm going to tell you how this conversation is going, and you're going to follow along." After the dance, this is another moment where

this could be as a horror movie shot. She's like laughing and laughing and then all of a sudden [00:23:00] there's just a wall of man in front of her, and it's Darcy. She looks up--

Becca: Matthew Macfadyen is so tall.

Molly: He's so tall. Is he really that tall? Or did they make him look extra tall? I'd be interested--

Becca: He's tall. Here, I will look up his height right now.

Molly: This is important.

Wil: He's at least got really tall energy.

Molly: He does. He has tall energy.

Becca: 6'3".

Molly: 6'3"? I just went off my vocal charts.

Becca: I'm sorry.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: He's a tallboy.

Wil: He's a tall boy.

Molly: She sees him. He asks if she'll dance with him. She says yes. This was so 2005 and I loved every second image. She and Charlotte immediately run into the other room and she's like, "Did I just agree to dance with him?" Maybe she was blacked out a little. Charlotte says that she's sure she'll find him agreeable, and she's like, "Oh, that would be inconvenient because I've sworn to hate him for all eternity." They giggle about it. It's such a 2005 mood.

Wil: Mm-hmm.

Becca: You can see it's a little gentler here. She's not as pissed off to dance with him.

Molly: Right.

Wil: Yeah, she's just [00:24:00] stressed out and doesn't know what to do.

Molly: Yeah. She's laughing at it. In the 1995, she was like, "Shit. What did I fucking do?" In this one, she's like, "[chuckles] Oh, God. Got to dance with Darcy." Then, it's time for their dance. This dance is so weird. I'll just get that out there right off the bat.

Wil: It's weird. Why? Walk in circle, dip a little? Bend knees a little? What is this?

Molly: Uh-huh.

Wil: This is not a dance. This is like, just a very sad walk.

Molly: Funny that it starts with her saying, I love this dance and him saying, “Yes, quite invigorating.” I was like, “No, it’s not.”

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: Okay. Haters gonna hate. I love this dance. I think it’s so hot.

Molly: No, it’s hot. It’s certainly hot, but it’s super weird. They make it hot.

Wil: The actual mechanics of the dance, if you took that dance out of this specific scenario and you watch someone do it, you’d be like, “Are you good?” [00:25:00] “Are you okay? What are you doing?”

Becca: That’s where you find me at a party.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: But additionally, the cinematography here is so strange, because we have them first. They’re having a conversation. There’s sarcasm. She’s trying to tell him how the conversation is going to go. He doesn’t know what to do. They stop in the middle, everyone is still dancing. This is when she brought up a Wickham, I believe. Their faces are really close to each other. He’s like, “Why are you asking me these questions?” She’s like, “I’m just trying to figure you out.” Then everyone fades away, and they’re in a different room all of a sudden. The room is 10 times smaller. They’re just looking at each other and walking in circles. I felt like I was in a different movie.

Wil: Yes.

Becca: Yep.

Wil: Every time she asks him about Wickham, he gets so close to her very specifically, and it’s weird because this happens later on in the first proposal in the rain scene, where he’s [00:26:00] pretty far away, and then she asks about Wickham, and then he gets real close. That’s very weird for you to be like sexual tension on talking about Wickham. Don’t get me wrong, the tension worked on me I was into it, but the lead-up to it was so bizarre.

Molly: He’s a boy who doesn’t really know the difference between getting close in like, “I want to fight you,” and getting close and, “I want to kiss you.” It’s all the same to him. I love how he says Mr. Wickham, every time he’s like, [imitating Darcy] “Mr. Wickham.”

Becca: [imitating Darcy] Mr. Wickham.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: Wickham has a name that’s easy to say with disdain.

Wil: Yeah.

Becca: Yep.

Molly: It's those fricatives. After the dance, Lizzie is flushed. Collins is like, "Oh, is that Mr. Darcy were you just dancing with?" He goes to introduce himself.

Becca: The height difference.

Molly: Oh, the height difference because Collins is probably 5'3", so it's a full foot. The room gets silent when he says Mr. Darcy, which is like just another **[00:27:00]** moment, why is the room getting silent? Why did they get silent when he arrived? Why is it getting silent now?

Wil: Yeah, that's too much, too much.

Molly: It's like a thunderclap. It's like, all right, everyone's listening. Caroline Bingley is like, "Oh, your relatives are very interesting." Then they both bow at each other, she and Lizzie. Another instance of like, "We have to be polite, but we hate each other."

Wil: Yep.

Becca: Oh, yeah. What follows next is-- so I've been doing a Marvel rewatch recently. Mike pointed this out of it, but have you both seen the first *Avengers* film?

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Yes. A while ago.

Wil: It's been really a long time.

Becca: There's a shot where they're fighting as the Avengers for the first time that follows each of them fighting through New York City, fighting aliens.

Wil: Yeah. Okay.

Becca: This is like that shot but just for Bennet family humiliation through the party.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: Yes.

Wil: Yeah, you're not wrong. Wow.

Becca: [laughs] That **[00:28:00]** I have to credit to Mike. That was not my take.

Molly: #MikeTakes.

Becca: #MikeTakes.

Molly: Yeah, it starts with we hear Mary singing and Lizzie walks into that room and we get the shot of Mary singing and Daddy Bennet coming in closing the piano, and Mary cries and everyone's laughing at her and it's just like--

Wil: So sad.

Molly: I feel so bad for her. It's not even-- in the 1995, I could laugh at Mary with everyone else because she was kind of like-

Becca: The worst.

Molly: -from being angsty, and she was the worst. In this one, she's just trying to play the piano and she's not bad. She's not good, but she's not bad.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: It was so mean. Then we move to Kitty and Lydia getting drunk and just giggling really loudly and they run past. We see Mrs. Bennet sitting with her wine and-

Wil: And her little feet.

Molly: -her little two feet are just dangling.

Wil: Yeah, it's just kicking around.

Molly: I feel she's really short. I don't know what she looks like against everyone else, but she's got [00:29:00] short energy.

Wil: As a short who loves to drink, I felt very seen in this moment. I felt very represented.

Molly: I love it.

Wil: My people aren't talked about oft.

[laughter]

Becca: I'm glad you're getting the representation you deserve.

Wil: Thank you.

Molly: Yeah. We also see Bingley following Jane around like a puppy and he's talking about horses. She's doing the Jane thing where she's interested. We know she is, but she's not good showing him and he reaches out and touches the ribbon on the back of her dress very reverently. It's super strange.

Wil: Yes.

Becca: I find it's so sweet though. It's such a tender moment.

Wil: It's tender. It's also two steps away from him smelling her hair.

Molly: Absolutely.

[laughter]

Molly: Precisely. That's what it was. I was like he is looking at her like she is-- she smells good.

Wil: Poor boy's got it bad.

Molly: He does. Then Lizzie walks into the other room with the dancing and already Kitty and Lydia are dancing in there. I don't know how they went from getting drunk to being in **[00:30:00]** the middle of a dance, but that seems like it was just a film flaw perhaps. Jane is dancing with someone else and Bingley is watching, and across from them, we see Lizzie and Charlotte talking about how Jane is shy, but Bingley doesn't know that, and Jane better show him how she feels. I agree with that. Then, we move down the hall and we see Darcy and Caroline dancing. I was just thinking, imagine being so upset with your life, that you have to be as mean as Caroline Bingley, you're at a party at your own house and you're not having any fun and you're just making fun of everyone and she says, "I can't help feeling that at any point this evening someone is going to produce a piglet and make us chase it."

Wil: What a miserable person.

Molly: Truly.

Becca: Let me tell you if you need to make yourself feel better by shitting on the people around you and trying to make yourself feel better that way, you're not doing a good job for your own self-love.

Wil: Nope.

Molly: No.

Becca: Caroline Bingley does. **[00:31:00]**

Wil: Someone needs to talk to Caroline Bingley about punching down. That's for damn sure. Girl, you're rich, shut up.

Molly: For real. Then we see Mrs. Bennet and she's eating pudding out of a cup and she accidentally spilled some on somebody and then she takes her spoon and she scoops it off of his chest and eats it.

Wil: Again, felt very represented.

Molly: [laughs]

Wil: Do see myself in her.

Becca: Amazing.

Molly: I love it. Honestly, I have seen myself in Mrs. Bennet for quite some time. She's high strung. Everything is a big deal. I get it.

Wil: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Becca: She's loud.

Molly: She's loud. I'm loud. Graham's constantly telling me that I'm loud. Then, and this part broke my heart, Collins is standing in the middle of the hall holding a daisy, and when I first saw this, I was like, "What the fuck is he doing with that daisy?" But then, the next scene, he has a new flower, and you just know, he had planned to propose to Lizzie tonight. He brought the flower, he was looking for her all night. He was so nervous.

Wil: Yeah. [00:32:00] Hurts me. It's so sweet and it breaks my heart.

Molly: I just felt so bad for him. He goes in with such purpose. We'll get to it in a minute, but he had a plan and his plan got torn from him. The poor guy had to stay there until 5 AM being miserable. In this moment, we also see Mary crying in the hallway and Mr. Bennet coming in hugging her, and that was a really nice moment. She was like, "I practiced all week," and he was like, "I know, I'm sorry."

Wil: A little hug.

Molly: Yeah. He made her cry, but then he comforted her. He's just a good dad. He's a good dad. I know that he fucks up in some ways, but I think that actually, I'll say this about this, in the 1995 version and in the book, something that we talked about a lot was how his failings as a father were such that his daughters were out of control and that was going to ultimately be the downfall of the family. Whereas in this one, I don't see that he has failings [00:33:00] as a father to be honest. Yeah, they're out of control, but they love him.

Wil: Yeah. It seems it's just chill that they're out of control. He seems very accepting of the fact that they have this chaos energy. Feels like if anything, he kind of revels in it.

Becca: Yeah, he does thrive in the chaos a little. I think that it goes back to what I was saying in the first scene is that this adaptation paints the Bennets as a much more functional family unit. They're much warmer with each other.

Wil: Yes.

Molly: Then, it's light out and they leave. What time must it be? It must be like 5 AM, and they're the only ones.

Wil: Yeah, like 5 or 6.

Molly: Yeah. Becca's notes says "Raged all night." [laughs]

Becca: They did. We've all been to that party where you stayed too long, and you're the last one there. What I like about this is that that is the vibe that is happening in the book, but this leaving at dawn actually captures that because that's what we know to happen when you leave the party too late.

Molly: Right. Charles and Caroline are watching them leave. Caroline is like, "Charles, you cannot be serious." [00:34:00] That is the end of that scene, which is ominous.

Becca: That brings me to my study question. The ball in this part really highlights the difference between this adaptation and the original source material and also the 1995 adaptation, and in several different ways that I personally think, come out in this scene. If you guys have any insights that you want to speak to with that?

Wil: I will say it does feel-- it's kind of steeped in the aesthetic of the film, the aesthetic of the period. To some degree, though there is obviously anachronism, but it felt so deeply modern to me, the way that the scene is, again, the pacing of it, the way it was shot. It felt very similar to me to the party scene in Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo and Juliet*. That's the vibe that I got from it.

Becca: That is so fascinating because I didn't put that together, but it absolutely has that vibe. [00:35:00]

Wil: I was like, "Where's the angel wings?" [laughs]

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: In my heart, love till now. This is a completely unrelated note, but that *Romeo and Juliet* has so much potential, but Claire Danes and Leo DiCaprio are not trained in Shakespeare and it is vastly apparent.

Wil: Big agree.

Molly: Yeah, I watched the first maybe half an hour of that movie and stopped.

Wil: Uh-huh. It's a lot.

Becca: Here's the thing. The guy who plays Mercutio is sublime. Yeah, John Leguizamo as Tybalt, perfect.

Wil: Yes. So good.

Becca: Both Romeo and Juliet are terrible.

Wil: It's weird because the cast is fairly diverse. Then for the leads, they were like, "Guess we better get two really bland whites," like the blandest white people you could get. I liked Claire Danes. I am a fan of Claire Danes. I loved my [unintelligible [00:35:48] life. Leonardo DiCaprio, is a man who exists. Damn, they really not good in those roles.

Becca: I feel free to get roasted by somebody [00:36:00] for the study.

Molly: It's okay.

Becca: But I don't care.

Wil: Oh, certainly.

Molly: We'll get roasted for most tapes.

Becca: Yeah, I completely agree. I come from the opposite point of view, which is I love Leo. I wasn't necessarily super attracted to him, but I do think he's an underrated actor. It took me so long to not hate Claire Danes because that was the first thing I ever saw her in.

Wil: Oh, yeah, that'll get you. [laughs]

Becca: You know what actually broke it? It was *Stardust*.

Wil: Oh, I love *Stardust*. What a fun time.

Becca: Wonderful movie.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: I've never seen that.

Wil: It's a delight. Another adaptation of a very good book.

Molly: Which book?

Becca: Neil Gaiman's.

Wil: *Stardust*.

Molly: Oh. Duh.

[laughter]

Becca: Yeah, that's all I'll say on that matter. I think that the Baz Luhrmann *Romeo and Juliet*, the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, the movie, is that it's so close to being brilliant because some of the aesthetic choices are so interesting. The way they do the ball is very interesting. Bringing us back to *Pride and Prejudice*, it works here.

Wil: It does work here, it felt really natural. [00:37:00] It also felt a way to do a period piece rager. It totally sold me. The long shot that you mentioned, following through with all the tragedies basically, that

feels that weird meandering energy of going through a messy party. But it also feels very in line with the story itself. I really enjoyed the scene. I thought that it worked really, really well.

Molly: I did, too. I think that in keeping with the rest of the film, it really brought a chaotic energy, there was a lot happening all at once. That is something that was happening in the 1995 version, but this one got it with more yelling.

Becca: Yeah, I actually think this is such a fun scene and that's really what sets it apart from both the book and the 1995 because that scene in the book and the 1995 is painful.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Painful to watch. No one's having fun. They're all there, they're [00:38:00] all miserable. Here, obviously, the Bennets are not acting with the most propriety, but they fit into the general chaos of a fun party. There's more of a romp happening around them. It's not as obvious that really is bringing shame to the family name, whereas in the 1995, it's like, "Oh, God. Mary, stop playing the piano right now."

Wil: Right.

Molly: Right. Although there is the moment of Caroline pointing out like, "Your relatives are very interesting," and that felt very on the nose to me. I was like, "We got it. We got it." The next morning, everyone is hung over. Mrs. Bennet cracks an egg into her milk.

Wil: She sure does.

Becca: Hey, that's a protein hit.

Molly: Yeah.

Wil: I want to make it very clear. I don't feel represented by this.

[laughter]

Becca: I felt represented by this.

Molly: This is so much. They were all like, "Oww, it's too loud. Mary, stop playing the piano. We're so hung over." Then, Collins comes down, and he clears his throat and only Mary looks up. [00:39:00] I was watching this with my mom, and she's always been on the Team Mary and Collins, but she was so upset that he did not just switch his gear, go for Mary. Why not? She's there. She's obviously into you.

Wil: Great.

Becca: Again, back to everyone being too attractive in this film. Mary's hot in this film.

Wil: Yeah.

Becca: It doesn't make sense that he won't go for her. She's a beautiful woman.

Molly: Yeah. Hard agree. He asks to speak with Lizzie, and Mrs. Bennet makes everyone just get up and leave in the middle of their breakfast. Lizzie is like, “No, no, no, no, no, no.” She like tries to grab Jane. “Jane, don’t go!” They all go. Even Mr. Bennet, she’s like, “Dad, no, please stay,” and he’s like, “I don’t know what to do.” And so, he leaves. Then, Mr. Collins very slowly lays this flower in front of her. She is petrified. She cannot move, and he does his little proposal. It’s a lot less grody than the [00:40:00] 1995. To me, it didn’t feel the absolute disregard for her feelings that the 1995 proposal felt like. It felt like he had this plan. He starts in the beginning when he says that he’s doing this by the wishes of Lady Catherine de Bourgh. You can see that she told him he has to, and so he’s going to do it.

Wil: Right. This really feels like a business transaction because, yeah, it is. That’s what marriages were. I feel it makes total sense. It’s like he is coming to present something at a business meeting and he has a PowerPoint he’s reading off of.

Becca: Absolutely.

Molly: And he’s going to finish that PowerPoint no matter what.

Wil: Yep.

Becca: It felt like an audition where they said, “Thank you,” but he kept doing the monologue.

Wil: [giggling] Yeah. Oh, God.

Becca: Also, they had him kneel, and the camera work just really wanted you to know that this man is shorter than Keira Knightley.

Wil: Yeah. Which is like--

Becca: It was a big part.

Wil: Oh, man, [00:41:00] I could dive into that about how that’s weird and making fun of short men is weird and also vaguely transphobic. Let’s maybe just let men exist in the same way we’re like let’s just let women exist. I don’t know. I get it. He’s short. I get it.

Molly: Yeah. I agree with that.

Becca: It’s extremely on the nose in an obnoxious manner.

Molly: It does highlight the fact that he’s so nervous, and so not picking up on her social cues that he won’t even look up at her, he’s looking at her belly button. It’s uncomfortable. She repeatedly tries to tell him no, and he’s like, “Wait. Next slide. I’m pretty sure that you’re just saying that. So, just think about it.” When she says no, she turns and runs away and everyone falls into the room. Lydia and Kitty are screaming, cackling. Poor Mary is just watching him like, “Why wasn’t it me?” Mrs. Bennet [00:42:00] chases her.

Wil: Dude, this scene ending was sad. It made me very, very deeply, genuinely sad for him. The way that they are all laughing at him and he just looks so confused and mortified. Movie, calm down. That was not fair punishment for how awkward this was.

Molly: No. When Mrs. Bennet goes to ask Mr. Bennet to go talk to Lizzie, you can see in the background, Mr. Collins is just standing by the door, staring out like, "What did I do wrong?"

Becca: It's also very much like-- in the book, you're genuinely worried that Lizzie is going to have to marry this awful man and get trapped in a loveless marriage. Whereas this was a bit more of the vibe of Beauty and The Beast when Belle runs out after Gaston proposes to her and she's like, "I want adventure in the Great White somewhere." [in singing tone]

Wil: Absolutely.

Becca: It feels just a stepping stone. True love.

Molly: Yeah, she runs out chasing the geese or the geese are chasing her. There are a lot of geese involved.

Wil: There are a lot of geese. [00:43:00]

Molly: Yeah, she runs out to the lake. Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Bennet come, and Mr. Bennet has his iconic line where he's like, "Your mother wants you to marry Mr. Collins," and she's like, "I'll never speak to her again." And he says, "Okay. From this day forward, either, your mother will never speak to you again if you do not marry him, and I'll never speak to you again if you do." Lizzie, you can see the love in her relationship with her dad there. She's like, "Thank you."

Wil: That's so sweet.

Molly: When she gets back. Everyone is sitting on the stairs looking sad. I wanted to note that Lydia has a feather in her hand and is just playing with it.

Wil: Yeah. There's a lot of fiddling with feathers in this film. Feathers and ribbons. This film is really obsessed with them. But still no feathery angel wings, so what's the point?

Molly: Yeah, really what is going on there? We'll have to talk to the costume designer. It turns out that there's a letter from Caroline. Then, we cut to Caroline, [00:44:00] Bingley, and Darcy all in a carriage. Everyone but Caroline looking very sad to be leaving. I realized it doesn't really make sense. How did she and Darcy convince Bingley to leave? It doesn't make sense in this movie why they're leaving.

Wil: No, it doesn't at all.

Molly: It made sense on the other adaptation, but what?

Wil: It does not track here.

Becca: That's because for one thing, we've been following the Bingley and Jane relationship much more closely in this. It's much more obviously marked out these two have a flirtation. On the other hand, the Bennets have just not been as awful.

Molly: Right. Caroline's disdain was made clear, but Darcy's wasn't. I think that since he's the main guy who's supposed to have taken Bingley away, it doesn't make sense.

Becca: Also, Molly makes the point a billion times over that Bingley is someone who needs 12 opinions on something.

Molly: He does.

Becca: That's not established here.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Right. [00:45:00]

Becca: You just see this sweet and love boy and you don't see him grappling with the fact that all these people are saying mean things about her. You just see, "Oh, he's in love."

Molly: Yeah.

Wil: Man, I really think that they should have just done away with the entire Wickham plot with what we got, and really focused more on Bingley and Jane. I think that would have-

Molly: Agree.

Wil: -solidified so much more. I know that they couldn't have, that's a huge thing to cut, they would have gotten too yelled out for it. But it was so clear that they really prioritized this relationship over all of the Wickham drama, and I wish they just would have committed to it more.

Becca: Absolutely.

Molly: That night, Lizzie is helping Jane pack a bag and she's reading the letter and all the letter says is that they're going to see Georgiana because Darcy missed her, and Bingley wants to see her and trying to imply that Bingley and Georgie are a thing, which Jane believes and Lizzie's like, "Shut up, don't be stupid. [00:46:00] Don't give up." They're packing a bag for her to go to London, stay with her aunt and uncle, and hopefully see Bingley. None of this is really explained in this version. It's just accepted that she's going, and that's fine. Yeah, it's just a plot device.

The next morning, they're seeing her off. Daddy Bennet turns to Lizzie and says, "It's your turn now. Why don't you go after Wickham and get jilted by him? That should be fun." Lizzie is like, [in a whisper] "Father, no."

[chuckles]

Molly: That's the end of that scene.

Becca: I actually don't have a study question at the end of the scene. That actually is time for part two, is it not?

Molly: Seems like it? Yeah.

Becca: Oh, boy.

Molly: Okay, so that is the end of this episode of Pod and Prejudice. Wil, thank you so much again for coming on. This has been a true delight.

Wil: Oh, thank you.

Becca: Do you want to tell the people where they can find you?

Wil: For sure. You can find me on Twitter [@wilw_writes](#). W-I-L-W_Writes. You can find my site at [wilwilliams.reviews](#) **[00:47:00]** and you can find my production company, Hug House, at [hughouse productions](#).

Molly: Amazing.

Becca: All right. Listeners., that concludes this episode of Pod and Prejudice. Until next time-

Molly: -stay proper-

Becca: -and find yourself someone who looks at you the way Mary looks at Collins.

Molly: Yeah.

Wil: [laughs]

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

Molly: Pod and Prejudice is edited by Molly Burdick and audio produced by Graham Cook. Our beautiful show art is designed by Torrence Browne. To learn more about our show and our team, you can check out our website at [podandprejudice.com](#). To keep up with the show, you can follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook [@podandprejudice](#). If you like what you hear, check out our Patreon at [patreon.com/podandprejudice](#) to see how you can support us, or just drop us a rating and review wherever you listen to podcasts. Thanks for listening.