

Molly: Hey, everyone. It's our first episode in 2021. I would say Happy New Year, but we're already off to a really rocky start here in the USA. I'll just say, I hope you're all taking care of yourselves, drinking water, taking occasional breaks from the news, perhaps to listen to this podcast. Before we begin today, we'd like to thank our newest patron, Abby. If you want to be like Abby and get access to exclusive content, like our notes, outtakes, bonus episodes, and more, head on over to patreon.com/podandprejudice. Don't forget to check out our stickers over at podandprejudice.com/merch. These adorable stickers are designed by Torrence Browne and are great for water bottles, laptops, and whatever else you put stickers on.

Now enjoy this week's episode, finally covering the first part of the 2005 version of *Pride and Prejudice* directed by Joe Wright, with our guest, Wil Williams.

Wil: The thumbnail is just her looking really sad.

Becca: Oh, my God.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: Oh my God, I froze it on Darcy right **[00:01:00]** after he said, "I'm sorry that I've taken up so much of your time," or whatever. And then his eyes started to close, and I was like--

[laughter]

Becca: Oh my God. Oof, oof. We will get there, but that moment, Oof, oof, oof.

Molly: I went on such a journey with this movie over the last month.

Becca: I'm so excited to talk about this movie. I have so many things to say.

Wil: Me, too.

Becca: Uh. Okay. Sorry. You're going to know why I did that.

[laughter]

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

Becca: This is Becca.

Molly: This is Molly.

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

Molly: The moment you've all been waiting for, dear listeners. You've been waiting so patiently.

Becca: Drumroll, please.

[drumroll]

Molly: We're here to talk about the 2005 version of *Pride and Prejudice*.

[blowing trumpets]

Becca: Directed by Joe Wright, starring Keira Knightley. I'm not going to say the other name because I got so chewed out for mispronouncing Jennifer Ehle through the entire 1995.

Molly: His name is Matthew MacFayden.

[chuckles]

[00:02:00]

Becca: Is it MacFayden or MacFadyen?

Molly: Well, it's spelled MacFayden. If it's not--

Becca: It's not. It's spelled MacFadyen. The Y is in a different place.

Molly: What?

Becca: I'm going to Google this right now because I don't want to get yelled at again. By yelled at, I mean, we got a lot of nice emails where people were like, "Sorry, it's actually pronounced Eeh-lee."

Molly: [gasps]

Becca: What?

Molly: Am I dyslexic?

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: No, no, that's a totally normal reaction, here hang on.

Molly: Oh, my God! His name is—when people emailed us about Jennifer Ehle, we had already recorded all 11 episodes that we did on the 1995. I just tacked a thing on the beginning and was like, "Hey, everybody, we're going to say Jennifer Ehle for the next 11 episodes, strap in."

Wil: Uh-huh. Please don't tweet. Please don't tweet.

[laughter]

Molly: They still twote.

Wil: Oh, of course, they did. If people can tweet, they will. That's the rules of Twitter.

Molly: Them's the rules. We don't make them. We just live in this [00:03:00] horrible place.

Becca: Okay, according to *howtopronounce.com*, it's pronounced like this.

Laptop: Matthew MacFadyen.

Becca: Matthew MacFadyen.

Molly: I have some news for 2005 stan Twitter, because I've never seen anyone spell it this way.

Becca: Okay, so starring Keira Knightley and Matthew MacFadyen.

Molly: And we're here with a special guest. We have with us Wil Williams today. How's it going, Wil?

Wil: It's going. It's going pretty good actually.

Molly: Good.

Wil: Thank you for having me on.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Thank you so much for coming on. We're so excited to have you. Wil, do you want to tell the people what you do in the podcast world and for your life world?

Wil: Yeah, for sure. I am a podcast journalist, critic, whatever word you want to use. I write for sites like Polygon, I used to write for Spotify for Podcasters. I write for Discover Pods. Basically, if a place is talking about podcasts, I've probably written for it at least once. I also sometimes write pieces about food for the takeout. [00:04:00] I have some really goofy ones coming out in 2021 that I'm really excited about. Then in podcasting, I am also the CEO of Hug House Productions. We are a production company, and I am the showrunner on our fiction podcast, Valence. I have written the whole thing with my cowriter, Katie Youmans. We are launching Season 2 in January 2021, and I have done all the sound design for Season 2.

Molly: Oh my gosh!

Wil: It's wild. Yeah. [laughs]

Molly: I will say that when I first asked you to come on the show, your response was, "Sure. If you want someone who doesn't love *Pride and Prejudice*, I'm down to have that perspective, but I do love this version. This version and this version."

Wil: Oh, no, that's so true!

Molly: You were like, "Oh, shit! Do I like *Pride and Prejudice*?"

Becca: Oh, I have news for you.

Wil: That is still I think where I am with the story as a whole. Where I tell myself that I don't like it, but I really am very devoted to certain adaptations. This being one of them. I am a fan. We'll get to that, I'm sure.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Oh, amazing. You've started to tell the people a little bit about yourself, but why don't you tell the people your experience with Jane Austen in general?

Wil: Yeah. I have read *Pride and Prejudice*. I have read *Emma*. I believe I've read *Mansfield Park*. I did not enjoy a single one of them. I did not enjoy the experience. I did not like it. I did it because I had to. I am very much a modern American lit person. I'm a Vonnegut person. I like when things are upsetting and disgusting and very strange and kind of funny. Reading Jane Austen for me, is like I just want to shake everyone's shoulders and be like, "You're fine. It's okay."

Becca: Yeah, the stakes are very low in Austen compared to [00:06:00] some other stories in the canon.

Wil: Yes, absolutely. I think that in terms of this era or similar eras, I'm much more of a Jane Eyre person. She went through it, man.

Becca: She did.

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: Speaking as someone whose favorite book from this era is *Wuthering Heights*, I get that.

Wil: Oh, yeah. Okay, you know what's up.

Becca: Yeah.

Wil: I tend to go more for bigger drama, bigger vibes, too. But I watched the 2005 *Pride and Prejudice* when it came out, expecting very little, I think that I went with some like friends, I don't know, I guess I middle school, and I loved it. I was very taken by it. I really like some of the sort of dialogue direction in it, which I think was kind of new for an adaptation of classic literature, which again, I'm sure we'll get into. And then I at some point, watched *Bride and Prejudice*, the Bollywood adaptation, and I absolutely loved it.

Becca: It's wonderful.

Wil: [00:07:00] Then, I watched *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, which I very, very, very loved. I also love *Emma Approved*. They're both so good. Then, someone was like, "Well, if you like this 2005 version, first off, you shouldn't, because it's bad. Second off, you should really watch the BBC miniseries

because it's the only one that matters." I watched the BBC miniseries, and I was like, "I don't think we can be friends." [laughs] Not because I think it's bad, but because what a thing to say that is the only version that matters and is good.

Becca: People are devoted.

Wil: People are devoted. Yeah. Not for me. I tend to like the versions that aren't quite as enamored with the source material because that is where I also fit.

Molly: Yeah, I think it makes sense to despise the 1995 if you didn't like reading the book because it is just word for word what was in the book. **[00:08:00]** When I first sat down to watch this version, I had just finished the 1995 version. I was like, "This sucks!"

[laughter]

Molly: "This is not a good experience, they're butchering it. It's not *Pride and Prejudice*." But then, I took a few weeks off to cool down, I came back to it, and I watched it. I was like, "I'm going to watch this as its own entity." I put a thing out on Twitter. I was like, "Who likes this movie? Tell me why." I had you explain to me, Caro explained to me, and I was like, "Okay, I'm starting to understand." And then I watched it again, and I was like, "This is pretty good." Then I watched it the third time, and I was like, "This is actually awesome," because a lot of the stuff that happens in *Pride and Prejudice* is not necessary. They got rid of that part.

Becca: Oh, yes, they trim a lot of fat. That brings us to our next question. What is your favorite thing in the Austen canon that can be an adaptation, a book?

Molly: Probably not a book.

Becca: It sounds like it's not going to be a book.

Wil: Yeah, I'm going to say probably **[00:09:00]** *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. It's between that and *Emma Approved*. Both of those adaptations for me have like highs and lows. *Emma Approved*, I like more across the board, but some of them, like secondary character performances, I cannot handle. Whereas the *Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, I think is more inconsistent across its entire span, but the performances and casting themselves are consistent enough to really carry it through the inconsistency and pacing at writing. Yeah, *Lizzie Bennet Diaries* is probably my favorite.

Becca: Very good choice. Which heroine or character in the Austen canon do you feel you most relate to and why?

Wil: Emma Woodhouse. [chuckles] When I watched *Emma Approved* the first time, I was like, "Oh, this is me." And then I was like, "Oh, no, this is me." [laughs]

Becca: No spoilers to Molly but make of that **[00:10:00]** what you will Molly dear.

Molly: Love it.

Wil: Mm-hmm, yeah. I very much identify with a very, very well-intentioned person who is very, very, very type A, and much nosier than they need to be. I realize I have just described journalism, and I am a parody of myself.

[laughter]

Wil: But, hey, if the shoe fits. Had I not gotten into journalism, I probably would have gone into event planning. I love both equally. Emma Woodhouse really speaks to me.

Becca: Yeah, I was going to say, "How could you have those qualities and relate to Emma Woodhouse?" sarcastically because--

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: I have one last question for you. Because you have some clear Austen hot takes, what is your hottest Austen hot take?

Wil: Oh, God. Okay. My hottest Austen [00:11:00] hot take, that was a lot to say. [chuckles] It would have to be that I think that most versions of Mr. Darcy in the book and in adaptations are absolutely fucking unbearable, and I can't stand them. This is perhaps the only Mr. Darcy I can stomach. This and perhaps kind of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. I can't handle him in the miniseries. I can't handle him, I'm sorry.

Becca: That is so fascinating for my takes on this 2005 version of Mr. Darcy.

Wil: Oh, I'm sure. I am very much in the minority here. It is a spicy take.

Becca: That is like a five chili peppers hot take. What are the scovilles on that take.

Molly: Do you have something against Colin Firth? Or is it just his performance in that?

Wil: Oh, maybe I do just have something against him in general. Okay, here's the thing. White male actors bore me incredibly.

Molly: That's fair.

Wil: I can't tell the Chrises apart [00:12:00] genuinely, I don't know which one is which.

Becca: They're all just in Marvel.

Wil: Yeah, they're just Marvel. It doesn't matter to me which ones do which things, I don't, they're all crass[?]. The same goes for every British male actor. They are all the same person in my head. And then also Ewan McGregor exists. He's the exception.

Molly: Thank God.

Becca: Yeah.

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: Praise be to you and McGregor.

Wil: Honestly. They're either Ewan McGregor or they're not, those are my categories. The thing about most of the performances is, I feel they tend to go more cocky and really toe to toe with Elizabeth, instead of being painfully awkward and having zero understanding of how communication works. That's what I like about this version. For me, he seems less like an asshole and more he just really fundamentally is in his [00:13:00] own head is cripplingly shy and awkward, and does not understand the impact his words will have on other people. I like that he comes across as very honest, in this adaptation, usually in a way that is deeply flawed. I don't like Mr. Darcy's, that are intellectually competitive with Elizabeth. I like that this version isn't. He's just saying what he believes to be true, and then is continually like, taken aback and astounded by her retorts. That shit's hot.

Molly: It is really hot.

Becca: Very hot. Very different, obviously, than the 1995. You've hit the nail on the head on what is so different, not only in the aesthetics, and the pacing, but also the actual love story itself in this version. It's fascinating because it's one of those changes from book to movie that has really seeped itself into [00:14:00] pop culture in a big way.

Wil: Absolutely.

Molly: Yeah. I don't think that this Darcy is, as Darcy was written, necessarily. I think that, yes, Darcy is awkward, and we all realized that when we get to the end of the book, but it's what you said is that Darcy always goes toe to toe with Elizabeth. They're always butting heads. This Darcy is such a departure from that, that when I first watched this, I was like, "That's not Darcy, this is a totally different film."

Wil: For sure.

Molly: I think that's okay now, after having watched it thrice. The thing is that in culture, as you said, Becca, Darcy is now so beloved. I posted a meme yesterday that was the Jane Lynch, the Sue Sylvester saying, "I'm going to create a--" and I did, Jane Austen writing *Pride and Prejudice*, "I'm going to create a love interest that is so socially awkward." I think that's not necessarily how you would read the book at first, but that's how this Darcy has made everyone think of him, so props to him.

Becca: I [00:15:00] will say that it was fascinating to watch you read this book, because you had an authentic 2005 version-less read on *Pride and Prejudice*. Watching your journey with the character of Darcy, part of it is that you learn and realize that he is a human disaster boy. The other part of it is that he's genuinely not nice and then becomes nice through the story.

Molly: This Darcy is nice from the start. He was just trying to brush Bingley off when he said the thing about her being tolerable. He was smitten the moment he saw her, walk in the ball. We'll get there.

Becca: As I said, this version was directed by Joe Wright and it was written by Deborah Moggach, or Mogg-ash. Oh, no!

Molly: [laughs] It's okay. People are going to email us no matter what.

Wil: Yep.

Becca: M-O-O-G-G-AC-H.

Molly: Moggach.

Becca: Moggach. Anyway, she wrote the script, and she originally wrote it quite close [00:16:00] to the original story, but Joe Wright convinced her to take certain liberties to modernize some of the text and to change a few of the dynamics in the story, particularly the dynamics of the Bennet family. Now, they didn't want to create the same exact Regency era realism that the original one did. Instead, they opted for a more modern cinematography, one that really tried to draw in younger audiences and touch on the same themes as *Pride and Prejudice* but without the exact word-for-word adaptation of the story, partially because the 1995 version can't really be recreated. It is a beat-for-beat adaptation of the book, why create the same thing twice? The movie was actually very well received. It was nominated for several Oscars, including Best Actress for Keira Knightley.

Molly: [laughs] That's funny!

Wil: Huh?

Becca: Yeah, we're going to talk about [00:17:00] that quite a bit.

Wil: [crosstalk] Okay.

Molly: I think she's great. She's as Keira Knightley as ever. That's all I will say about that.

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: Oh, yes. One of my least favorite things about this is the reception of the story from the critics. I think my problems with the critics can be summed up in one New York Times review from November 11th, 2005. This was written by a Stephen Holden, and the title of this review is, "Marrying Off Those Bennet Sisters Again, but This Time Elizabeth Is a Looker."

Wil: Oh, no. [laughs]

Molly: Gah! I just lost some of the dinner that I just ate.

Becca: I know. The whole selling of the movie, the sale of the movie is about the fact that everyone was really hot in it.

Wil: That's so bizarre to me.

Becca: Particularly, Keira Knightley as the sort of beautiful young Elizabeth Bennet. Granted Jennifer Ehle was rather old to be playing 20 when the movie came out in 1995, but that is a [00:18:00] common thing that they will do in many Jane Austen adaptations you will see. I'm looking at you, *Sense and Sensibility*.

Molly: Also, she's not that old and also if you're going to call Jennifer Ehle unattractive, then just get out of my house.

Wil: Yeah, no, no, no. No, no, no, no.

Becca: They're not calling her unattractive, but there is a-- Well, you know what? Yeah, they are, and it's fucked up.

Molly: Yeah, it's fucked up.

Wil: Yeah. Keira Knightley was-- in 2005, she was one of the "Hottest Women" in Hollywood. She was such a big thing. Honestly, a lot of the discussion around Keira Knightley looking back on this era specifically was so weird, so repulsive, there was so much discussion about like, "Look at how skinny she is. She's the skinny, skinny and it's so hot." And then the other pushback was like, "She's too skinny and I hate you all!" Both of these are bad.

Molly: That's Hollywood summed up.

Becca: Oh, yeah, basically.

Wil: Yeah. [00:19:00] Can we just let a woman exist and do her job, please?

Molly: Also, she was 18 when this movie came out--

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: [crosstalk] --wrong in saying that.

Becca: 18 when it was filmed, I believe.

Molly: Yeah, so she was at most 19. That's-

Wil: Oh, my God.

Molly: --disturbing. She is so beautiful but let her act and judge it based on that, like, Jesus. Yeah, okay. Well, fuck that guy, Stephen Holden, is that his name?

Becca: Yeah, apparently.

Wil: Yeah. You said that it was written by someone and then you said, Stephen, and I was like, "Oh, this is going to blow."

[laughter]

Becca: Oh, yes. You just know immediately. You guys remember when I had a gagging sound, when I opened a review? I was like, "Yeah, that's it."

Wil: Oh, yeah. [laughs]

Molly: Yes.

Becca: One of the things about this adaptation is that it really does breakthrough into the main Hollywood zeitgeist in a way the 1995 one doesn't. That has its advantages, and it has its disadvantages. The advantage is that this story, this movie, [00:20:00] more than anything brings, *Pride and Prejudice* to the masses. It indoctrinated a whole generation of young people who enjoyed these stories and got them on a path of enjoying more stories of this type. That is a very good thing about this adaptation. The bad part about it is that this movie gets a bad rap with diehards for the book, because of its obsession with everyone being really attractive of, in some people's view, the watering down of Mr. Darcy, of the shirking of the Wickham plotline, emphasis on some period inaccuracies. For example, this movie set in the late 18th century as opposed to the early 19th century, about 30 years earlier than the book.

Molly: Yeah, that's what I was going to actually say. I watched this video, someone, I think one of our listeners sent me about the costumes and the Youtuber's name was Abby Cox. What she said was that [00:21:00] they set it earlier, because that was when it was written. It was released after she had already written some other-- What was her first book?

Becca: *Sense and Sensibility*.

Molly: *Sense and Sensibility*. She wrote *Pride and Prejudice*, she wrote *Sense and Sensibility*, published it, published *Pride and Prejudice*. In that time, the styles changed, and all of that. I guess what Joe Wright was going for was, this is what it would have been in her head.

Wil: Okay.

Becca: That is fascinating.

Molly: And it was pretty.

Wil: Yeah.

Becca: It is a beautiful movie. My personal take on this movie is I really liked this movie. I enjoyed the hell out of it. I think it's not exactly the 1995 or the book, and it shouldn't be, because its own different take on this story. It's a story that I love, and it's told in a different way here, and I never don't-- it's so fun to watch this movie.

Wil: I think that this movie also, it both solidified a lot of what Hollywood was doing at the time, [00:22:00] but in a more mainstream way. I think that it also paved the way for a lot of similar adaptations down the line. I think that without this adaptation, we wouldn't have the, I think, Keira

Knightley *Anna Karenina*, we probably wouldn't have the Anya Taylor-Joy *Emma*, that came out. We certainly would not have the Greta Gerwig *Little Women*. There is so much crossover between these two. I hadn't seen *Little Women* before I watched *Pride and Prejudice*, this version, the last time. I've watched it since and then today watched *Pride and Prejudice* again.

The way that the 2005 *Pride and Prejudice* blends this aesthetic, and this era with more modern Hollywood, borderline mumblecore dialogue direction, like going for that very naturalistic sense where we have directors like [00:23:00] Baumbach and Gerwig. To some extent, I feel like this pulls on the rhythm that you can find in like Sorkin's work, where it's very snappy back and forth, versus giving the dialogue a lot of room to breathe. I really love how characters in this cut each other off, speak over each other, and it's so much more heightened in the modern-day adaptations now with things like *Little Women*, where it's hyper-realistic, hyper-naturalistic, that's very much more my style than a-- heightened dialogue, which is another reason why the '95, I was like, "I can't handle this. This is not how people speak." [laughs]

Becca: I don't think anyone can deny that this movie is sumptuous to look at. Everything is beautiful. From the cinematography, to the costumes, to the actual people in the costumes, everything is just a very pretty thing to look at. [00:24:00]

Molly: And listen to. The music when it started, I was like, "This sounds familiar." Then, I realized that I listened to the soundtrack for four years in college as my study music without realizing it.

Wil: The soundtrack rules. Meryton Town Hall is a bop. It's so good. I worked at a music store for a long time in high school and college, the kind of music store where we sold instruments and sheet music. Without fail, we would sell out of the *Pride and Prejudice* sheet music book for piano every time we ordered inventory, like for years, for years and years. I didn't even start working there until, I don't know, 2008 and we had to order more every single time because it rules. So good.

[crosstalk]

Molly: It's so good.

Becca: On that note, I think this is a perfect lead into talking about the movie almost 45 minutes into recording. [00:25:00]

[chuckles]

Molly: We love to see it. My first notes were that this is pretty because the title slide is a beautiful sunrise. The music, [scats Pride and Prejudice 2005 opening music]. Great, great stuff. Lizzie is reading a book, walking home, wandering around the house. Right off the bat, I noticed animals everywhere, kind of a mess, and lots of servants. Also, that the house is like pretty in disarray. We have Mary playing the piano. It was kind of nice. It almost seemed like Mary was playing the theme song, but then we heard that she was actually just playing scales. Lydia and Kitty are running around. There's ribbons and dresses and scraps of fabric everywhere, the paint is peeling. Two things. One, they make them seem poorer than they are in this movie.

Becca: They absolutely do.

Molly: But also, they have all these servants, so that was balancing it out. [00:26:00] Maybe they are poor, but they're still considered middle class because they can afford servants and a cook and all of that. But the animals and the slop, I was just like, "Oh, they want them to be poor."

Becca: They're simultaneously trying to highlight the class difference between her and Darcy, but also trying to give us that sumptuous upstairs-downstairs feel that became so popular in this time period.

Wil: I would even argue that there is something here to be said about the fact that they choose to afford the servants over fixing things in the house because one thing that I'm not wild about this adaptation is how awful and useless and shitty they make the mother.

Becca: That's so funny because I feel like they make her so much tamer in this adaptation.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: She's definitely tamer. She is definitely less out there, she doesn't do a whole lot.

Becca: Oh, yeah. [00:27:00]

Wil: That's true. It just seems the film was really trying to emphasize she doesn't know how to do anything.

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Molly: Lizzie walks into the house, and we hear through a window that Netherfield Park is let at last, and we go in and we see Kitty and Lydia listening at the door. I wanted to know Jena Malone.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Awesome.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Fuck, yeah.

Becca: Also, Carey Mulligan playing Kitty.

Wil: Yes. This cast is bonkers. There are so many huge actors in this cast that, I don't think, had really gotten too much of their start at this point. But now looking back, you're like, "What the hell? What the hell?"

Molly: That's so funny, because I was like, "I love this Kitty. She's great. I hope that her career--" [crosstalk] [laughs]

Wil: You know it did. [chuckles]

Molly: Yeah, so good for her. She was awesome. She was maybe my favorite of the Bennet sisters in this. I think that she [00:28:00] did a great job.

Becca: Of all five of the Bennet sisters?

Molly: I'm going to say it, of all five, she was the best.

Becca: What are the Scovilles on that take?

Molly: Well, listen, Kitty doesn't have a personality, famously. This Kitty came out and was like, "I'm going to have a personality, and it's that I have zero filter." She just speaks when she wants to, and I thought she was awesome. So much different from the 1995 Kitty who just follows Lydia around and does what she wants. So much different from the book Kitty who just follows Lydia around and does what she wants. Props to this Kitty. They're all listening at the door, and Lizzie comes over and she's like, "We shouldn't be listening at the door," and they're like, "No, no, no, listen, he's rich." And Lizzie is like, "[gasps] He's rich?" Jane's like, "He's rich." And then, they're all listening at the door, and Donald Sutherland comes out.

[laughter]

Becca: Doing his best to tempt your loins.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: Yeah. Well, listen, the first time I watched this, I was like, "Who is this Daddy Bennet?" And my mom was like, "That's Donald Sutherland. [00:29:00] I love Donald Sutherland." I was like, "He's not as good as the 1995. That one was hot. This guy's not." By the way, my thing is that I have a crush on Daddy Bennet, and I think that he's the hottest. After watching this a few more times, Donald Sutherland could get it.

Wil: Yeah.

Becca: Yeah, no, I could get behind a take vaguely with Donald Sutherland. I did not know what you were talking about in the 1995 version, but that is--

Molly: I stand by it. We get him automatically telling them he's already gotten to talk to Mr. Bingley. In that moment, I was like, "Oh, because they're all talking over each other. We just got the first 10 chapters of the book, done."

Becca: Yes. They trimmed all that fat.

Molly: Yeah. I'm okay with it. That's all we really needed. When they're in the room, Mary keeps asking who they're talking about. Who is this guy who has all this money? Who is it? I love Mary, that's not new, but I like this Mary a lot. [00:30:00] I think that she's sadder.

Becca: Less uncomfortable, less awkward, more socially aware.

Molly: Yeah, she's very aware that they are ignoring her all the time, and it's sad.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: After, they say that Bingley is coming to the ball, this is just a little moment that I liked. Kitty asks Jane if she can borrow a dress, and Jane is like, "No." And Kitty's like, "I'll lend you my green slippers." And Jane's like, "Those are mine." And Kitty's like, "Oh."

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: That actually brings me to my first study question, which is, how are the Bennets different in this?

Molly: Well, some of the reasons that we said already, Kitty has way more of a personality, love that for her. Jane hasn't said anything yet. Put that on backburner for Jane, but they're just like pure chaos.

Wil: Yeah, there is a lot of chaos energy. They feel very-- as somebody who has two older sisters, they feel very much like actual authentic sisters to me.

Becca: I am a middle of three sisters, and this scene really resonates with me. **[00:31:00]** Also, I think one of the markers in the book is that Lizzie doesn't get along with most of her family. She gets along with her dad and she gets along with Jane. I think in this adaptation, because it's geared more towards a younger audience and more modern audience, you see that the issues they have as a family are much more playful and that generally they are actually a unit. You see Jane and Lizzie having that banter with Lydia and Kitty, and the sort of way in which Mr. Bennet prods at all the girls very lightly.

Molly: Yeah, I like that Lydia, her nickname is Liddie. They're Liddie and Kitty. That was very cute. Lizzie watching everyone fighting over dresses and stuff and laughing like, "I'm so happy here with my pals." It was nice.

Wil: Another thing that feels like it paved the way for the *Little Women* adaptation actually.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Oh, absolutely.

Molly: God, that's such a good adapt-- I've never read *Little Women*.

Wil: Oh, me either.

Molly: But I really liked that movie.

Becca: I mean, I cried the entire time I watched that film.

Wil: Same.

Wil: Same.

Becca: There wasn't even a break. [00:32:00]

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Oh, same.

Becca: It was a visceral experience for me. It's fine. Anyway. Next scene.

Molly: Yes. The next scene is the public ball. It's a huge room. It looks more like an inn than anything that I've seen thus far. Everyone is dancing and talking while they're dancing, and it just looks like a lot of fun.

Becca: Once again, I was watching this with my boyfriend, and Mike's take on this was, "This looks way more fun than the last movie's ball."

Molly: Yeah. People are dancing-dancing and the dances before seemed lifeless and we're just walking in circles, but they're jolly, they're drinking wine, they're skipping around each other. It was just a good time. Lizzie is talking to, I think it's either Charlotte or Mary when she says this and she calls men, humorless poppycocks.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Oh, she's talking to Jane and Charlotte because Jane is telling her that she's going to eventually have to settle down with a man, and Lizzie is like, no, humorless [00:33:00] poppycocks.

Wil: Yeah, no.

Molly: Phenomenal.

Wil: This scene was so funny. There's pockets of comedy throughout this film, but this scene really consistently. There is one shot that without fail always makes me laugh so hard. It's when Mr. Darcy comes in, and they're all like, "Oh!" and then they're all talking to him. Elizabeth asks Mr. Darcy, "Do you dance?" And he's like, "Not if I can help it," and then the shot stays on her for precisely as long as it should, because she looks at him and then she just looks away, like, "Okay." The shot goes on for too long and then cuts too fast. Somehow, it's both too long and too fast, and it's [laughs] so funny.

Molly: So funny.

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: It's just the way he says, it's like, "Not if I can help it." And then she just, raises her eyebrows and does that little, "Oh," with her mouth. [00:34:00] She's like, "Okay then."

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: It's so relatable. The thing is that you know that he's standing there, like, "Oh my God, I'm standing next to the pretty girl. Uh, what do I say? What do I say?" And she says, "Do you dance?"

[laughter]

Becca: Yeah, that's the thing about this adaptation from the moment you see him, you're like, "This is a melting disaster of a human."

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Yes, let's talk about him entering the room, and everyone just stops what they're doing and parts the seas for them to walk through. So weird. I loved it.

Becca: I've got to say that that movement is bizarre.

Wil: It's so weird. The orchestra is even like, "Oh, we better," as if they're like looking over their violin. Like, "Who's that?" Calm down.

Molly: It was so funny. Right off the bat, we see that it is just Caroline Bingley and Darcy. There is no Louisa, there is no Mr. Hurst. Again, I went on a journey with this movie. There was the first time I watched it where I was like, "How dare they [00:35:00] cut Mr. Hurst and Louisa?" Then there was the second time where I was like they were really unnecessary to the plot, weren't they?

Becca: Completely unnecessary. Yes.

Molly: That was okay, I guess. A note on the casting here, the entire first time that I watched this, which then led into a month of me ruminating on it, I thought that Bingley was played by Eddie Redmayne.

Wil: I was just going to say. He totally looks like Eddie Redmayne. He is just ginger Eddie Redmayne.

Molly: Thank God, someone agrees with me.

Becca: I know this actor from one other thing, and it's *Rome*, and he plays Octavius. Young Octavius in *Rome*.

Wil: What a weird choice. What?

Becca: As a distinct little shit in that.

Wil: That's wild.

Becca: Meanwhile, here he's like the personification of maple syrup. He's so sweet.

Molly: Yeah. He is maple syrup. The other Bingley was a puppy dog. This guy is maple syrup all the way, ah, with chocolate chip pancakes.

Wil: Yep.

Becca: Oh, yeah. Now that's what I want.

Molly: Lizzie calls them painted peacocks. [00:36:00] I'm just loving all of her little quips. When they come in, Charlotte whispers to Lizzie that he owns half of Derbyshire and she's like, "The miserable half?" Another quip that I loved. Then as he's walking by her, he glances at her, snaps his head away. Lizzie sits there like, "Huh," and then she lets out this really loud giggle. This scene is so funny.

Wil: It's so funny.

Molly: Every little moment and they don't say a lot, but it's just in the little glances and it's brilliant, so good. Once the music starts up again, Lizzie starts telling Jane, like, "Smile at Mr. Bingley. Smile at him. Smile. Go." Bingley's like looking across the room at her. Mrs. Bennet dances through the crowd to get to the girls to bring them over to Mr. Bingley.

Becca: Such a vibe.

Molly: Just captured like this is a party and everyone's dancing, and so I'm going to dance through the crowd.

Wil: I like that this adaptation shows like, "Yes, we are also bound to these [00:37:00] social contracts of respectability, and what we were supposed to do and manners, but also, we acknowledge that they're weird as hell." It's not just that they are oppressive. I feel we do get that vibe. But also, that they're just very strange.

Molly: So strange.

Becca: Oh, yes.

Molly: Another moment where they acknowledged the strangeness is a little bit later on when Lizzie arrives at Netherfield, and she's in there, and nobody's talking. She's like, "Where's my sister?" And Darcy is like, "She's upstairs." And then, Lizzie is like, "Okay, thanks" and then she bows. I was like, "This is great. She knows that this is just so weird that she has to do this right now." So yeah, totally agree. They meet Bingley and Darcy. And then, Bingley and Jane are talking, and he is just a big old dork. He's like, "I don't read much because I'd much rather be outside. Not that I can't read. I can read, I promise." It's so cute.

Becca: These two, honest to god, [00:38:00] have so much chemistry. I know the main story is very much between Lizzie and Darcy. But one of the things I appreciate about this adaptation is that Bingley and Jane do not have much screen time, but the little screen time they have they use it. They milk it.

Wil: Yeah, they sell it really well.

Molly: Yeah. Another instance in which they're cutting down the meat of the story to be more condensed is we find out at this ball that the regiment are coming, and we're going to go see them ASAP. So, that happens. Lizzie and Darcy are standing next to each other. This is the moment of, not if I can help it. Then, Lizzie and Charlotte go under the bleachers.

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: The stairs?

Molly: This is the weirdest shot. This is so out of place. They seem they're in high school and they're under the bleachers. It's like in a teen movie where the girls are gossiping under the stairs, and then they hear the boy that they like above them. It's just exactly that. So strange.

Becca: Oh, yeah, that one, that moment's a bit weird.

Molly: Yeah. That's where Bingley says to Darcy, **[00:39:00]** that Jane's sister is pretty cute and Darcy's. Like, "Oh, she's tolerable. Yeah, but not handsome enough to tempt me." Like I said earlier, this moment in the book was malicious, and this moment here is like he's just so uncomfortable talking about himself. It's the opposite of the Bird, that's like, "I am uncomfortable when we are not about me." "I am uncomfortable when we are about me."

Becca: Oh, entirely.

Wil: It read something like, "Do you think she's hot?" And be like, "No. I don't." [laughs]

Molly: Exactly.

Becca: Once again, the whole story is a little bit different just with these little tweaks, because you see at the beginning here that Darcy obviously is already so into her. She is kind of into him but she's like, "Oh, no, he insulted me." But in the book and in the 1995, it's very clear from the beginning, Darcy's not giving her the time of day. It's not until he learns how smart she is, and how witty she is that he starts to understand that maybe this is a girl he'd be **[00:40:00]** attracted to. Here, it's like immediate.

Molly: Yeah.

Wil: Mm-hmm.

Molly: Then we get back to the dancing. Bingley's dancing with Charlotte and he's like, "Your friend, Charlotte, is so amusing." Mrs. Bennet jumps right in to embarrass everyone and talk about how ugly Charlotte is.

Becca: What a hard moment for Mrs. Bennet, tough, happens in the books, but oof.

Molly: Tough luck for Mrs. Bennet. This is a moment that going into it, I was like, this doesn't happen until like way later in the book. Mrs. Bennet brings up that there was a man once who wrote a lot of poetry for Jane, and Lizzie is like, "Poetry kills romance," and Darcy's like, "I thought poetry was the food of love." This whole interaction happens way later in the book, but it was perfect here. I will tell you why. Darcy says, "What should one do then to encourage affection?" Then, the little side glance that he does, like, "Did I just say that out loud?" And Lizzie says, "Dancing. **[00:41:00]** Even if one's partner is only barely tolerable."

Wil: So good.

Becca: What a sass moment from her.

Molly: She just turns and exits. She's like, "Hm, bye."

Becca: Also, it's just one of those moments where clearly, she makes it so clear there that she heard him, which to me says, "Darcy, that's when you make amends for that."

Molly: Yeah. Be like, "Oh, sorry." Well, I guess he was in front of her mom. I don't know, it was awkward.

Wil: I don't think he's a man who has ever been told that apologies are good.

Becca: Oh, no, definitely not.

Wil: I think that he has even the understanding that you would have to apologize for that kind of thing.

Molly: Yeah, let's get into Darcy's psyche a little bit because he grew up in this home, where-- I don't know anything about his mom, but his dad loved someone else more. His sister is perfect, and he was probably put under a lot of pressure to be the strong man and live up to [00:42:00] his dad's expectations, try to earn his love when his love was all going to Wickham. He probably is pretty fucked up from that. So, yeah, I don't think he knows what to do in this situation.

Wil: I don't know if it's specifically for this adaptation or if it's for others as well, but I know that Mr. Darcy has been called good representation for several kinds of neurodivergent people as well. I know that Mr. Darcy in autistic spaces is usually seen as like, we accept him as one of our own. I'm not autistic and can't speak to that, but something that I've seen in the commentary. I've seen the same with just general social anxiety, general anxiety disorder, etc., etc. I do like that in this version, like, you get the sense that the way he has been raised has not benefited him, and has lasting, lasting effects on how he deals with the social world. [00:43:00] I think that's actually really nice. Again, it's another checkmark for me, I'm like, "I like this one."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Yes. I totally agree. I've seen a lot of the same commentary discourse, again, also, I'm neurotypical, can't speak to the experiences of those with autism, but I have seen many people with autism relate to Mr. Darcy. I think this adaptation definitely plays up how he feels deep discomfort in some of these situations with some of these really strict social norms.

Molly: I've also seen that for this adaptation with Mr. Collins.

Wil: Oh, yeah. Okay.

Molly: Which we'll get into Mr. Collins, but I've had a few people mention that for him as well. We'll get into how much I love this Mr. Collins later. Then, we cut to after the ball. And what is this lighting? Lizzie and Jane are underneath a blanket, and it's like they have a flashlight in there. My mom was like, "Is

that a flashlight?" I was like, "It's probably a candle." Then I was like, "Wait a minute, that would burn the house down. What's going on?"

Becca: Yeah, it's basically [00:44:00] very much, "Oh, we want these two actresses to look beautiful, but there is no way there could really be light under these covers."

Wil: There is an almost identical shot in *Practical Magic*.

Becca: Yes!

Wil: This is just a shot between beautiful sisters, that it always happens. Also, it is so intimate, and this is the case for how I feel about *Practical Magic*, and it was the case for me in this scene. I kept being like, "Are they going to make out? What is this?"

Becca: That's exactly what my boyfriend said.

Molly: Yes. There's also an identical scene in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and they do make out.

Becca: Oh, my God, you're right! Yeah.

Molly: That is the end of that scene.

Becca: My study question was, what air does the ball capture? What does it not capture from the books?

Molly: I'll tell you what it does not capture. In the books, the room was very small. In the 1995, the room was very small. I guess in the book, they never said it was very small. Maybe [00:45:00] my perception is being colored by the 1995. But when I saw the 1995, I was like, "Oh, everyone can hear what everyone is saying because the room is small and that's why it makes things awkward." Like Lizzie overhearing Darcy saying the main thing about her, for example, or someone hearing Mrs. Bennet talking about how Jane is going to marry rich. So, that's what it did not capture for me.

Wil: Again, it felt very natural. I felt like a bunch of real people having fun in the old-timey way. It felt legit. Okay, one thing that always gets me about this movie, and I don't know enough about this era of dance, or any era of dance, but they didn't really care about the beat. It was just there was music happening and also dancing happening. The two were now really affiliated. I also like that. I like that there's these complex dances and everyone knows how to do them, but also that, yeah, you know how to do them, because it's not actually really that tied [00:46:00] to anything else going on. I like the vibe that this building was kind of large, again barn-like, but it felt somewhere that would accommodate both people of the Bennet family class and people of the Darcy family class. It felt a place where there was a vague enough aesthetic and budget on it that people from just around could all be there, and nobody would feel too out of place.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: That is exactly what I was thinking about with it, and I think this is also-- I see it as a benefit but also a disadvantage. It captures pure joy. It's a joy as seen, but in the book and in the 1995, one of the things about this ball is that the Bingleys and Darcy do look out of place, they feel out of place, except Bingley who can weave into any crowd he wants. [00:47:00] Here if you're not having fun, you're either Darcy who needs to run and hide, or you're Caroline who's just vicious. There's not a lot of sympathy for why anyone would feel out of place here.

Molly: Right. When they walked in in the 1995 version, it was like, "What are you doing here?" They had the same everyone-stop-and-look moment, but it was definitely a poor people's gathering. There was a shot in this that I just want to call out and then we can move on to the next scene, of Darcy standing on the far end and everyone dancing in front of him and he's standing like six feet above everyone else.

Wil: Yeah. He's so tall and it's awkward. This poor man, you know he wants to just Homer Simpson back into a bush, but he is so incapable because he's so tall and he dresses like he is always in mourning, and he looks so stressed out. His vibe is incapable of invisibility because he's just exuding stress. [00:48:00]

Becca: Ooh, yeah.

Molly: Also, his hair is so funny.

Becca: It's so funny.

Wil: It's such a specific haircut that I think I might actually be currently rocking. You guys can't see as I have my headphones on, but it flips out in all of these places and his bangs are so uneven.

Becca: I call it the period piece mullet.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: It's a mullet. He has a mullet.

Wil: His bangs look like they're crying all the time.

Becca: It's so weird. It's like chopped to stick out a little bit at every side. I'm like, why?

Molly: It's like he filmed the scene in the rain first, and then they filmed the rest of the movie, and he's just damp the whole time.

[laughter]

Molly: Anyway, moving on to the next scene. It's after the ball and Mrs. Bennet is recounting the ball to everyone. This is a great moment of the dialogue direction that you were talking about, Wil, where everyone is just talking over each other. Mr. Bennet's like, "Oh my God, we were all there." Mrs. Bennet is talking about how he's going to die very soon. One of them has to get married rich, [00:49:00] and he's like, "Yes, I'm going to die very soon." Then, it's all so overlappy and so much, and I love it. Then a

letter arrives for Jane inviting her to dine with Caroline Bingley. Mr. Bingley is going to be out. Mrs. Bennet's very upset about this and she tells Jane she must go on horseback and everyone's like, "On horseback?" And then, thundercloud.

Wil: "The carriage," "but the carriage," the thunderclap. This movie loves thunderclap as punctuation in a way that I absolutely cannot take seriously. I think really spoils some otherwise moving dramatic moments. They're so funny. They're so over the top.

Molly: There was one scene I was watching this with the subtitles on, and it was just Lizzie and Wickham talking, I think, and it said, "Thunder rose ominously in the distance," and I was like, "I didn't catch that."

Wil: Yeah. [laughs]

Becca: I love that the subtitles were basically, like, "You're supposed to find this ominous right now."

Molly: Yeah, right. **[00:50:00]** Jane arrives at Netherfield soaking wet and she gives this cute little sneeze. [imitates a cute sneeze] Then the next morning Lizzie is like, "This is unacceptable. It's raining." Lizzie pulls a towel off of the rack but it's raining on the towel, so the towel is wet, and Lizzie starts drying her hair with a wet towel.

Becca: Also, it's just a moment of how come Lizzie is out getting soaking wet and she's fine, but Jane is like bedridden after a ride in the rain.

Molly: Well, Lizzie was just hanging out with the chickens or something outside, I think. Jane walked three miles.

Becca: Rode three miles.

Molly: She rode. Oh, right.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Why is that? Why did Jane get sick?

Becca: Poor plotting.

Molly: Poor plot.

Wil: Yeah. I mean, maybe Jane, she's a sweet, frail, fragile little thing, I don't know, one can get it.

Molly: Right. Lizzie loves to walk. She says that a lot in this movie. She's like, "I really like to walk." We know.

Wil: Mm-hmm. We know.

Molly: She's got a strong constitution. We jump to Netherfield. First, we see Lizzie walking to Netherfield. It's this beautiful, misty, [00:51:00] just grass and one tree. It kind of looks like the beginning of the *Lion King*, but in England and in the rain. Lizzie is walking. She gets to Netherfield. We see Caroline and Bingley in the breakfast room. Caroline says that their friend is redecorating their ballroom in the French style, "A little unpatriotic, don't you think?"

Becca: I love that moment.

Molly: Which is like the essence of them. The servant comes in and announces Lizzie is there. Darcy's head just perks up. It's just he's already so in love with her and it's so obvious. When she walks in, he shoots out of his chair like he's got the fire under his butt. He's just like, "Argh."

Becca: I feel I need to point out that she looks ridiculous.

Wil: Yes.

Becca: She walked through the mud, so her leg petticoat has gotten muddy, but she's got like 70s Stevie Nicks hair. And looks like she's been on a mountain [00:52:00] for like three weeks. I don't understand.

Wil: This was a hell of a storm.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: Completely unpinned all of her hair.

Molly: Yeah. Why did she do that, first of all? Second of all, it's not like that-- I get that it's uncommon for people to walk places, but you're not going to get like that messed up walking. Also, the fact that Caroline just right off the bat was like, "Good god, did you walk here?" Lizzie's like, "I did." Then, they just stand in silence for a good long time.

Becca: The reason this partially bothers me is this movie sometimes leans into this, "Lizzie doesn't care. She's a tomboy troupe." Lizzie's not a tomboy. She's just smart and witty.

Wil: They try to push that like, "I'm not like other girls," which I think was very of the time.

Becca: Yes, absolutely.

Molly: It sets it as a 2005 movie. Also, that really, I think, set a public opinion of *Pride and Prejudice*, [00:53:00] which is that it follows the I'm not like other girls troupe, and in a way, I guess it does, but Lizzie Bennet isn't-- [laughs] I almost just said she's not like that. That would just like the double playing into that troupe.

Becca: I would say the story in general doesn't shit on other women.

Molly: No.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Except Lydia.

Becca: Oh, well, yeah, except Lydia. The uplifting of Jane, even the understanding and the compassion for Charlotte, the story doesn't need to make Lizzie different than them. She's just witty, she's just effervescent, and she wins Darcy on her wits, not her looks.

Molly: Right. Which that critic at the beginning would disagree with but fuck that guy.

Wil: Fuck that guy.

Becca: Oh God.

Molly: Lizzie goes upstairs to go see Jane and Bingley comes in. He's like, "Oh, it's been such a pleasure. I mean, not that she's sick. It's a pleasure that she's here and sick, uh, eh." In these moments, I was like it makes so much sense that Bingley and Darcy are best friends. [00:54:00] They really made it work. In the book, I was very much like, I guess they balance each other out. We have an introvert and an extrovert, but they just got two big nerds in this.

Becca: Yeah, they're just nerds.

Wil: You know these two guys were a little bit "too old" to be playing with *Star Wars* action figures. But they did it anyway. They probably made home movies together that they never showed anybody, but they say like, "No, no, they were so good actually, they were really good." And they go back and watch, and they were like, "Oh, no." They were those weird kids.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: You're basically just describing my boyfriend.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: That makes sense, Becca, because we've discussed that you're a Jane and he's probably a Bingley.

Becca: He's hardcore Bingley.

Wil: There we go.

Molly: So, cut to my least favorite part of this film.

Becca: Cut to the part of the film that speaking of my boyfriend, he paused and rewound three to four times because he could not believe it happened.

Molly: It was disruptive, [00:55:00] I would say to the flow of the film.

Wil: It's weird. It's so weird.

Molly: It's so weird. Mrs. Bennet comes in to tell Mr. Bennet something, and Mr. Bennet's bringing a pig in, and he's talking about their pig and zoom in on the pig's balls, and Mrs. Bennet, looking at them with her eyebrows raised like, "Ooh."

Becca: I don't know what happened in that shot.

Wil: No.

Becca: I don't know if they meant to put the pig nuts on display.

Wil: Oh, they did. They totally did.

Becca: And if so, did they let the actress in on that before they took a closeup shot of her face immediately after the pig nuts? [laughs] [crosstalk]

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: Because it looks like she is sexually attracted to that pig.

Wil: Oh, yeah. She's into it.

Becca: The way it's framed.

Wil: This is such a weird choice. I have questions and I don't want answers. I don't want them.

Molly: For sure. That's how I feel about this moment. I [00:56:00] think that a lot of people watching the movie noticed it and chose to ignore it. I think that that's probably what we have to do.

Becca: I've heard people get mad about the pig walking through the house as something that's an exaggeration of the Bennets' poverty.

Molly: No, they were bringing it inside because they were going to show it-- I was trying to listen to what he was saying. He's like it has nothing on this other pig, but it's like going to the market or some shit.

Becca: Yeah, but Mr. Bennet being involved directly with handling a pig is not totally in period, but I've not heard many people be like, "Hey, why did they throw pig testicles on my screen for a solid two seconds?"

Wil: It's so wild.

Molly: Yeah, we've already spent too much time talking about it because it's just that--

Becca: Agree to disagree. I think this is important.

Wil: [laughs]

Molly: This is one of the hard-hitting questions we need to ask. Why were there pig testicles? What were you trying to say? Were you trying to imply something about Mrs. and Mr. Bennet's love life? Were those testicles as big as his [00:57:00] testicles perhaps?

Wil: Yeah. I think that this is perhaps a moment to bring up the camera work in this film. The cinematography, beautiful. But the actual camera work, weird as hell.

Molly: So weird.

Becca: Yeah.

Wil: It's so weird. It was so distracting. The editing as well. There are a lot of really quick shots that just whip by and then the camera work itself, I get that they were trying to go for following the naturalistic dialogue into naturalistic camerawork and having it be a little bit shaky, zooming in for emotional impact, but it almost felt like it was shot like a Western at times. It was so cartoony in the zooms. I often could not take them seriously because they were so exaggerated. What a weird choice.

Molly: Yeah, there were a lot of really overexaggerated zooms, and there were a lot of moments that I have picked out to share with you all as we go through that I decided and [00:58:00] this might already exist, but we need a supercut of all the moments that seem like a horror film just sliced together, and I've selected a good number of them. I'm sure there are more.

Becca: Do the pig nuts make it in?

Molly: Yes, the pig nuts could definitely be in there.

Wil: Oh, yeah.

Molly: There are just so many. Yeah, the camera work is bonkers, and that was just such a weird choice. I hope that the person that was carrying that camera, in particular, was like, "I'm going to do this and see if they catch it" and then, they accidentally use that take. Oh, I also liked in this moment when Mr. Bennet looks up, he says something, and he calls her 'blossom' and I thought that was nice. It showed a little lightness in their relationship. I thought this Mr. and Mrs. Bennet loved each other so much more than the '95.

Becca: Absolutely. This is the Mr. And Mrs. Bennet that I keep saying it's like a shadow of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet in the books. I don't know why I keep saying books. It's one book, but the book.

Molly: Hmm, yeah. Then we get to go meet the militia. [00:59:00] Lydia is so excited and she's like, "I'm going to throw my handkerchief in and someone's going to pick it up and then we're going to meet and then we're going to fall in love." She does and they just trample it, and she is so offended. We get our first glimpse at Wickham who I have to note, to me, it looks like a kind of second-rate knockoff

Orlando Bloom and maybe that's just because I was thinking Keira Knightley, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, Orlando Bloom.

Becca: No, he looks so much like Orlando Bloom.

Wil: Yeah, I totally agree.

Becca: But less hot.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Yeah. No offense to this guy. It's just that I don't like the writing for this Wickham. We're going to get into it, but he's so over the top with how he's like, "I'm poor and sad," that I think it was impossible for him to do a good job.

Becca: We're jumping a little ahead.

Molly: Yes, we are.

Becca: But I would argue that that's the worst part of this film. Anyway, go back to where we are in the film.

Molly: Yes. We go back to Netherfield, and Caroline is just thirst trapping over Darcy, [01:00:00] talking about how well he writes and will he write to his sister for her, and he is shutting her down time and time again. I think in theme with this movie, everyone's a bunch of nerds, and Caroline likes to act like she's cool, but she also can't take a hint.

Wil: Nope.

Becca: Caroline Bingley, notoriously bad flirt.

Molly: Yeah. This is the conversation that happens in the book at some point where they're talking about accomplished young ladies. Charles tries to pipe up and she goes, "What do you mean, Charles?" I've really liked this Caroline. I thought that she was so funny.

Becca: I think she's brilliant. She's so wicked.

Wil: Yes.

Molly: They're talking about what makes a woman accomplished. Caroline lists all these things. Lizzie has a book in her hand, and Darcy says, "She also must improve her mind by extensive reading," and Lizzie snaps her book close.

Wil: She just slaps it. She was like, "Whoa."

Molly: This is amazing. I've seen memes of this moment, which is like, [01:01:00] "Oh, Darcy likes reading?" [imitates buzzer]. And then they take a turn about the room. Everyone has seen this in 2020

my exercises, take a turn about the room memes. It's everything that you could hope it would be honestly. They walk around. They tease Darcy. Darcy does not want to be teased.

Becca: What I love about this Bingley is that he doesn't seem to get all the snark and tension in the room.

Wil: Not at all. This puppy.

Molly: The laugh that he does when he tries to defuse the situation.

Becca: I didn't even read it as defusing the situation. I thought he was like, "Oh, she said something funny."

[chuckles]

Molly: What a sweet, sweet boy. He goes, "Ha, ha." And then he points at her and it's so cute.

Wil: It's really cute.

Molly: What a freakin' chicken nugget.

Wil: [laughs]

Becca: Ah, cute, perfect short little chicken nugget.

Molly: He really is. Then they ask Darcy, like, "What should we do? If we're not going to laugh at you? We're trying to find a fault in you." Why does Darcy seem like he has this answer prepared? **[01:02:00]** He goes on this little rant. He's like, "Oh, it's that I find faults in people, and my good opinion once lost is lost forever." It's so not in response to the situation at all. I was like, "Is he thinking about this?"

Wil: Not at all. Yeah. It's like a complete non-sequitur. Like, "Honey, what are you--?" "What? What?"

Molly: Yeah, I was super taken out of it. Then I was like, maybe he's just awkward, and I think most things can be written off as that.

Becca: Part of it is that those are really famous lines from the book and they just like throw them in there.

Molly: There are a few moments like that where I was like, "You haven't been using the book word for word, so you don't need this, but you did it anyway."

Wil: Yeah. It translates weird. For me, I was just like, "Yeah, I get it." He's real awkward.

Molly: Yeah. The next morning, the rest of the Bennet sisters arrive and we have-- well, before they come in, Bingley is sitting at the table slumped over and I really liked them in their natural habitat moment that we got to see, with Darcy and Caroline being very **[01:03:00]** upright and Bingley sitting

back, relaxing, eating his breakfast. The Bennets arrive. We have Kitty and Lydia and Mrs. Bennet in matching costumes.

Wil: And Mary.

Molly: And Mary in black.

Becca: Pure black.

Wil: Mood. I love it.

Molly: I really like Mary. This poor girl.

Wil: Just this Wednesday Addams here to fuck up everyone's day. I love it.

Becca: There is a meme out there that's the four of them sitting on the couch or something, and it's like in order. It's like Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and then Mary's Monday.

[laughter]

Molly: Oh. She is. She's a little Monday girl. Kitty, this is one of those moments where Kitty has no self-control. She is sitting there, and Lydia is asking about a ball or something. Kitty's like, "Please throw a ball." Lizzie's like, "Kitty, shut up." Then, Mary says, "Balls are no fun," and Lizzie is like, "Thank you, Mary." Thank you, Mary, is the mood for [01:04:00] the whole movie. Poor Mary.

Becca: Oh, yes.

Wil: Yeah.

Molly: Then, they take Jane home, and they're all getting into the carriage. Darcy helps Lizzie into the carriage, and he touches her hand and she looks down and she's like [mild gasp] and then she watches him walk away. And then, he takes his hand and he does this hand flex, which I know is a very famous hand flex. It's hot. I'll admit it. It's a hot hand flex.

Wil: I don't know why it's so hot, but it's so hot. It got me. It got me. I was like, "Okay, yeah, yeah, yeah."

Becca: You know that feeling when someone who you're attracted to touches you and you get that like prickle in your skin?

Wil: Yep.

Becca: You can feel him get that.

Wil: Yes.

Becca: It's so sexy. You get it because it's like the first time they've made contact skin to skin.

Molly: Yeah, it's fucking hot.

Becca: You can even see her feel it a little bit in that moment.

Wil: Hoo.

Molly: Yeah, when he touches her hand, she looks down like startled, like, "Oh." **[01:05:00]** She doesn't even know she likes him yet.

Becca: And then, he raises one of those very bushy brows and then walks away and he's just like, something inside him is a little broken. Oh, sexy, sexy.

Molly: It is.

Wil: I'm imagining the audition process like, "Yeah, okay. Yeah, you read the lines. Fine. What about your hands?"

[laughter]

Molly: I need to see your hands.

Wil: How's your hand acting?

Becca: They just have a bunch of men hold Keira Knightley's hand, stare at it, walk away, and then just go, boop, with the hand.

Molly: Oh, man. I've been walking around lately, like doing the hand flex to see if it makes me feel powerful or something. It doesn't really--

Wil: But it's something though.

Molly: It's something. Then we go home, and we find out that Mr. Collins is coming, and that is the end of that scene.

Becca: My study question is it's about the hand flex. It's about what we've seen so far. The interactions between Darcy and Lizzie this time translate so differently than other adaptations of the story or iterations, I'll say. **[01:06:00]** What do you make of how the story is being told right now? By the story, I mean, specifically, the romance.

Molly: Well, it gives us a romance, it gives us a love story from the beginning, from the moment Darcy sees her, he's like, "That's the girl I'm going to try to woo. But I can't do it yet because I don't know how." In the book and the only other adaptation that I've seen, he genuinely seems to hate her and she genuinely seems to hate him. Here, every interaction is charged and we're like, "Oh, there's something here to see."

Wil: Mm-hmm. They feel really inevitable, and neither of them wants it. They're both stressed out by this fact. I like that the attraction is mutual too. It's not just that in other adaptations, he won't give her the time of day, and then in this, he does. I also feel the same is true for Lizzie in most other adaptations. I don't really get the sense that she is into [01:07:00] him at all but she finds humor in him in this version, which I think is really sweet. Also, maybe I like this version a lot just because Lizzie and I look for the same things. If we're going to talk to a man, we're going to look for the same things. It's one, does he expect me to impress him/like, have I not already impressed him by being myself? Two, is he a big dork that I can laugh at? Yeah, that's just why I like it, but I like their vibe in this.

I like that they gain things from each other immediately. I like they're both challenged in a way that doesn't feel quite so frustrating. I mean arguably in this scene specifically with this, what is an accomplished woman and him being such an ass, this seems like the first point of real tension and real distrust and almost betrayal for this real rapport that they have. But [01:08:00] I like that they have that weird rapport. I like that they're both challenged by each other in a way that is not just stressful, but kind of fun.

Molly: Yeah, I'll also add that in other adaptations, they seem genuinely afraid of each other. Every time they run into each other, it's like, "Er, sorry, I've got to go the other way."

Becca: [in a British accent] Mr. Darcy!

Molly: Yeah, [in a British accent] Mr. Darcy! In this one, he seems eager to talk to her every time. Let me fix this. She seems like she's going to laugh at him because he's a big dork and she's not going to run away. I think that that allows them to be in the same room, which allows for electricity to build.

Wil: Definitely.

Becca: I love that. I love all this takes. I totally resonate with describing them as inevitable in this one, because from the very beginning, it's like, this is a love story. Whereas in *Pride and Prejudice*, it's like this is *Fight Club*.

Wil: Yeah. [laughs]

Molly: On that note, we are going to end that episode there because we've already recorded an hour and a half's worth of [01:09:00] material. Wil, thank you so much for coming on the show. Do you want to tell our listeners where they can find you on the internet, where they can read your stuff, etc.?

Wil: Yeah, for sure. You can find me on Twitter @wilw_writes, that's W-I-L-W underscore writes. You can find my website at wilwilliams.reviews, and you can find Hug House my production company at hughouse.productions.

Becca: Fabulous.

Molly: Until next time, listeners, stay proper--

Becca: -and find yourself a dork.

[laughter]

Molly: Find yourself a big dork.

[laughter]

[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](https://www.facebook.com/podandprejudice). If you like what you hear, check out our Patreon at [patreon.com/podandprejudice](https://www.patreon.com/podandprejudice) to see how **[01:10:00]** you can support us, or just drop us a rating and review wherever you listen to podcasts. Thanks for listening.