

**Molly:** Pod and Prejudice is sponsored this week by Athletic Greens. And they have a product I use literally every day. As a lot of you know, I'm a vegan. So, I have to take a bunch of different vitamins and supplements. I started drinking AG1 by Athletic Greens, because I wanted to try one that tastes good and it actually does. It's sweet, fruity, and it doesn't taste at all like a nutritional drink. I like to fill my AG1 bottle with water every night and put it in the fridge to get really cold. Then in the morning, I add one scoop, shake it up, and drink it. It's really the easiest option for optimal nutrition out there.

You take one scoop of AG1 and you're absorbing 75 high-quality vitamins, minerals, Whole Foods source superfoods, probiotics, and adaptogens to help you start your day right. I found that it gives me more energy throughout the day and helps me focus while I'm at work. Right now, it's time to reclaim your health and arm your immune system with convenient daily nutrition. It's just one scoop and a cup of water every day. That's it. No need for a million different [00:01:00] pills and supplements to look out for your health. And to make it easy, Athletic Greens is going to give you a free one-year supply of immune boosting vitamin D and five free travel packs with your first purchase. All you have to do is visit [athleticgreens.com/whomst](https://athleticgreens.com/whomst). Again, that's [athleticgreens.com/w-h-o-m-s-t-](https://athleticgreens.com/w-h-o-m-s-t-) to take ownership over your health and pick up the ultimate daily nutritional insurance.

Hey, everyone, this is the first episode of Season 3 of Pod and Prejudice. If you're new here, we are so excited to be embarking on this journey with you. And to those of you who have been with us from the beginning, thank you, we love you, and welcome back. Before we begin, we want to give a huge shoutout to our newest patron, Felicia. If you want access to bonus content like outtakes or notes and book recommendations, head on over to [patreon.com/podandprejudice](https://patreon.com/podandprejudice). And just a reminder as we're going into a new season, I have never read *Emma* before. So, please, please, please, keep all contact [00:02:00] with our social media spoiler free.

If you absolutely must talk about the plot, email us at [podandprejudice@gmail.com](mailto:podandprejudice@gmail.com) with the subject line, 'spoilers' and Becca will be sure to read your message. And now, without further ado, here's the first episode of Season 3 of Pod and Prejudice covering the first three chapters of *Emma*.

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

**Becca:** All right, so, let's sync up on this one.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Five, four--

**Molly and Becca:** Three, two, one.

**Becca:** Terrifying.

**Molly:** [laughs] We just made direct eye contact.

**Becca:** It was so intense. It was very intimate.

**Molly:** As is being in person recording a podcast with you.

**Becca:** I know. It's been so long for our listeners. They hear us come together every two weeks, but we lived together and then we recorded in person for a while together. But since we've been recording with guests, it's been very much zoom focused and we've been both so busy that we haven't seen each

other in a [00:03:00] while. So, this is a really nice reunion come home, ready to record Season 3 of Pod and Prejudice.

**Molly:** Season 3 of Pod and Prejudice.

**Becca:** Holy shit. Season 3 of Pod and Prejudice.

**Molly:** Wow. For those of you who have been with us since the very beginning, ah--

**Becca:** This was unexpected.

**Molly:** Unexpected. Thank you so much for sticking with us for so long and for building up our little community here. It's so amazing to have you all here with us for this journey.

**Becca:** And for this journey, I just have to say, this is Becca.

**Molly:** This is Molly.

**Becca:** We are here to talk about Jane Austen.

**Molly:** We are here specifically to talk about *Emma*.

**Becca:** *Emma*.

**Molly:** *Emma*.

**Becca:** Graham's going to hate that bit. [laughs]

**Molly:** Oh, yeah. But we're here. We are here, we're talking about it. It's been a long journey to get here. Listeners, if you are here joining us for the first time, allow us to introduce ourselves.

**Becca:** I, Becca, am what you would call a [00:04:00] Jane Austen stan. I've read many of her books. I've been reading them since high school. I've been watching the movies even longer. And my favorite thing to do is tell my friends to read and watch the things I like to read and watch.

**Molly:** And I am one of those friends that Becca told to read and watch a thing that she likes to read and watch. I'm Molly and I have never read any Jane Austen before I started doing this podcast.

**Becca:** At this point in the podcast, listeners, you can go back and listen to Seasons 1 and 2. Season 1 is where we cover *Pride and Prejudice*. Season 2, we cover *Sense and Sensibility*. And that is not what we're doing here today.

**Molly:** No. Today, we're talking about the first three chapters of *Emma*. And we are so excited, because so many people have been so excited to get to this book with us.

**Becca:** This has been a long time coming. For those of you who have stuck with us for a while, you know that we were thinking of doing *Emma* second. But our listeners very closely [00:05:00] picked *Sense and Sensibility* next, which I was thrilled with, because *Sense and Sensibility* is my favorite. But I am so excited to get back into *Emma* because I love this book. I love this book. I'm so excited to share it with you. Molly, are you excited to read it?

**Molly:** I'm so excited to read it. Based on what I've read so far, I really like the style. I like the characterizations that have come out, but it is so different from what we've read so far.

**Becca:** Oh, yes. And we're going to get really far into that-- Hello, *The Economics of Dating and Jane Austen*. [The Economics of Dating and Jane Austen stinger] But we're going to get really far into that and it is particularly different from *Sense and Sensibility*, which was our last book and we're going to talk about why. But I would say this. So, *Emma* is a delightful book. I think it's probably my second-favorite Jane Austen book, but there's an adjective that I think suits this book better than any of her other books and that is funny.

**Molly:** Nice. Yeah.

**Becca:** It is a funny book, isn't it? [00:06:00]

**Molly:** It is funny so far.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** It's definitely funny.

**Becca:** So, that is all I will say about the book.

**Molly:** I want to say, as a little housekeeping bit before we begin, if you are new with us and you're just picking this up because you love *Emma*, and it just popped up on your podcatcher, we are spoiler free. I have never read Jane Austen and this podcast hinges on that. So, if you start following us on Instagram or Twitter, don't message about the end of this book, like, the characters in it. I don't want to know. You can email us at [podandprejudice@gmail.com](mailto:podandprejudice@gmail.com).

**Becca:** And just drop the subject line 'spoiler' in your email, if you want to talk about something about the end of *Emma*. People did that with *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. I read those emails, I can be spoiled, because I know how these things end. Molly doesn't know anything about these books, except that they were written by Jane Austen.

**Molly:** Exactly. And *Clueless* is based on this one.

**Becca:** Yes. And once again, listeners, Molly has watched *Clueless* and [00:07:00] does not remember the plot.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, something about me that you should know before we get started is that things like this tend to go over my head. I don't know how I went through my whole childhood not having read any Jane Austen in high school or college. But I somehow did and somehow avoided spoilers for them as well. So, it's possible that I did get spoiled.

For example, I had seen *Bridget Jones's Diary* before I read *Pride and Prejudice*. But those plot points just flew right out of my brain. I don't know why. Maybe it's because I didn't know that they were based on it. I didn't know *Clueless* was based on *Emma*. So, to me, there's no connection there and I don't remember anything except that she wears yellow, plaid skirt.

**Becca:** That's so funny. That happens in this book.

**Molly:** Really?

**Becca:** No.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** Spoiler alert. She doesn't wear a pleated plaid miniskirt in this book.

**Molly:** But a pleated plaid maxiskirt. [laughs]

**Becca:** Anyway, listeners, it's probably time to just dive right in.

**Molly:** [00:08:00] Yes. So, before we dive in-- I know I keep saying that. But before we dive in, the way this is going to work is, we're going to do a very detailed reenactment. Not reenact--

**Becca:** We're going to recount the story. We're going to talk about it as it goes and then I am going to ask Molly a couple questions to probe into her mind without giving away any spoilers, how she's thinking about the book, and the trajectory of the story.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, now, let's for real dive in.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** So, the book starts, I wanted to-- Again, before we dive in, that's going to be my catchphrase this season is the dedication of the book, which we talked about on one of our fun facts for the Pod Squad on our Patreon subtle plug. If you want to become a patron you like what you're hearing, you can go to [patreon.com/podandprejudice](https://patreon.com/podandprejudice). But anyway, we have talked about this before. But the dedication to this book is, I'm just going to read it. "To His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent. This work is by His Royal Highness's permission most respectfully dedicated by His Royal [00:09:00] Highness' dutiful, and obedience, and humble servant," the author.

Jane Austen hated the Prince Regent, because he mistreated his wife and he was debaucherous. And so, he was a big fan of hers and told her, "You have my permission to dedicate any of your future books to me."

**Becca:** And she went, "Mm, sure."

**Molly:** Yeah. She knew. It would look good if she did, but then she was like, "To His Royal Highness, The Prince Regent, by his Royal Highness' permission, by His Royal Highness' dutiful, obedient servant." How many times can she say to His Royal Highness? How tongue in cheek can she be?

**Becca:** By his Royal permission.

**Molly:** By his Royal permission.

**Becca:** We love. We love. And I want to start the discussion with the opening line of the novel.

**Molly:** Yes, let's hear it.

**Becca:** Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever and rich with a comfortable home and happy [00:10:00] disposition seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence and had lived nearly 21 years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.

**Molly:** Can you talk about different from the *Sense and Sensibility*?

**Becca:** Yes. *Sense and Sensibility* opens up with death. And *Emma* decidedly opens on a different note. Let's talk about that note.

**Molly:** Emma's rich, she's got everything going for her. At some point in this chapter, they even say that she has too much going well for her, and she doesn't have any problems, and it's not going to turn out well. Here's some foreshadowing there.

**Becca:** [laughs] Jane Austen turning to the camera.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, her mother is dead, but she has a loving and indulgent father, and an older sister, who's already married and moved away. It's just her and her dad and her governess, Miss Taylor, who is more her friend than her governess.

**Becca:** Miss Taylor is almost like an older sister to Emma. And you can tell as they go through the books that [00:11:00] she cared for her, she taught her, but the two of them were besties. And immediately, the book starts out with not a lot of problems and a whole lot of female friendship.

**Molly:** Yes, I did love that.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** The only thing the book says, or Jane Austen says that can alloy her pleasures. And alloy meaning to debase something by adding something inferior. Oh, by the way, if you're new here, I look up the words that I don't understand and I tell you what they mean, so that you don't have to feel embarrassed about not knowing them, because I know you all don't know that word either.

**Becca:** Listen, I think there's shouts to you, if you're our listener and you're using this podcast to actually get to know Jane Austen for the first time, because a lot of people are like, "Oh, my God, I've never read Jane Austen." And I think that everyone should read Jane Austen and everyone should have fun doing it. So, good for you. Shoutout to us, if you are someone who is using this podcast to read through the canon for the first time with Molly.

**Molly:** Yes, we love [00:12:00] that. The only thing that can bring down her pleasure is that she hasn't too easy, she gets thrown away too much, and she thinks too well of herself. But right now, she doesn't even think of that as a problem. So, the first sad thing to happen in this book is that Miss Taylor gets married.

**Becca:** Again, the inciting incident is so different in this book than it is in *Sense and Sensibility* or even in *Pride and Prejudice*-

**Molly:** Mm-hmm?

**Becca:** -which is when *Pride and Prejudice*, somebody eligible comes to town. In *Sense and Sensibility*, someone dies. Here, Emma is not going to see her best friend every day.

**Molly:** Because she gets married, which is the difference between a comedy and a tragedy.

**Becca:** Exactly. [chuckles]

**Molly:** She realizes how lonely she is when the wedding is over. And all the people are gone, and she's just sitting there with her dad, and there's no third person to temper the situation. Very relatable content. When a party's over and you're like, "I'm bored and lonely now."

**Becca:** Mm-hmm.

**Molly:** [00:13:00] She's just sitting there thinking about everything she's lost. And the next part, the whole chapter really, I forgot that we weren't going through our days and she's reminiscing. So, time is not passing here. But because it said that her dad went to bed and she was thinking about stuff, I got really confused and I thought that a lot of time passed. But this is all just in her mind. We reflect on everything. So, we meet Mr. Weston. He is someone of unexceptionable character, which I have to say 'unexceptionable' sounds like unexceptional. And so, I was confused. But unexceptionable means not open to objection. Meaning, he is a good guy.

**Becca:** He's a great dude. Mr. Weston is just an all-around good dude.

**Molly:** Yeah, we like him. Even though that he is a good dude, Emma is really sad, because she and Miss Taylor have been together 16 years. This woman practically raised her until her older sister, Isabella got married and then they were just like best friends and sisters. Miss Taylor was [00:14:00] "one to whom she could speak every thought as it arose and who had such an affection for her as could never find fault." I think that that's going to come and bite Emma in the butt, because she's learned to just speak freely, and not worry about what it's going to make someone think of her, and not find fault in her, and you can't be that way with everyone.

**Becca:** What am I going to do here?

**Molly:** Neither confirm nor deny.

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

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** [laughs] I missed this. It's so fun.

**Molly:** It's so fun. Miss Taylor is only a half mile from them, which is not far in terms of Regency Era distances. But Emma is more sad that she's not going to have anyone to intellectually spar with on the daily. She can't really have conversations with her father, who is a-- Let me see, if I can say this word, valetudinarian, which is a person who was unduly anxious about their health.

**Becca:** I mean, let's talk about an iconic relatable king. [laughs]

**Molly:** Honestly. Because he is nervous about everything and I [00:15:00] relate.

**Becca:** Yes. One of the context pieces of this is that Mr. Woodhouse was rather old for having a small child when he had Emma. Mr. Woodhouse is older than some of the other parents we've seen, which means he's a bit more indulgent as you see here. But he's also at this point, an elderly man compared to Daddy Bennet, who's in the prime of his life.

**Molly:** Right. Well, Daddy Bennet, at least in the movies, he's old.

**Becca:** Well, Daddy Bennet is a little old. But Mrs. Bennet's young, Mrs. Dashwood's young.

**Molly:** Right. Yeah. And I think part of that is, we've seen a lot of women parents, but he's the dad parent. And the men are often older than the women in these relationships.

**Becca:** Yes. But Mr. Woodhouse is a bit older than Mr. Bennet was.

**Molly:** Yeah. And it says, "He's older in his ways and how he behaves than he actually is in years." So, he's like, "Oh, I have to stay inside, because the outside world will kill me."

**Becca:** Exactly. So, he's just this wealthy man who's [00:16:00] like, "Oh, yes, I definitely dying," and she's like, "Oh, you have indigestion."

**Molly:** Yeah. And Emma's sister is too far away for her to see every day. She's 16 miles away in London. So, she only sees her on holiday. So, it's just Emma and her dad.

**Becca:** We have some context here. How far are they from London?

**Molly:** 16 miles.

**Becca:** Yes, which is not that far, but is still sufficiently far that they can't be there all the time, but closer than some of our other characters have been.

**Molly:** Totally Emma looks down on the town that her estate is on. I wanted to read this part out loud.

**Becca:** Go for it.

**Molly:** "Highbury, the large and populous village, almost amounting to a town, to which Hartfield, in spite of its separate lawn and shrubberies and name, did really belong, afforded her no equals. The Woodhouses were first in consequence there. All looked up to them. She had many acquaintances in the place for her father was universally civil, but not one among them who could be accepted in lieu of Miss Taylor for even half a day." It's annoying.

**Becca:** Yeah, it's a combination of super [00:17:00] snotty and classist and also, at the same time, relatable and being like, "Oh, God, I already know everybody here and none of them is as cool as my best friend who just moved away."

**Molly:** Totally. That part's relatable, but I don't like is the whole Hartfield is in Highbury, basically. But it has a separate lawn, and it faces the other way, or I don't know. But she's like, "It's almost a town, the place where we are living." She just is so insular like, "This is my estate and where I live and those people out there less than me." It's annoying.

**Becca:** Yes. And it's not uncommon, I think, in a lot of places in the UK for there to be one big manor home in a town that is otherwise not so populous. And we talked about this with Rosings and Catherine de Bourgh, but those towns are built around like the economics of that estate. And Highbury is a little bit larger than that, but a lot of [00:18:00] people in the town probably work at Hartfield. And you see more people who are in the middle and upper middle class in Highbury than you do in some of these other towns. But the estate there at this point in time is still a piece of the town's economy and Emma is a part of that estate.

**Molly:** Yes. And she has to be cheerful for her father, even though she's sad, because he's a nervous man who hates change and to him, matrimony is always disagreeable.

**Becca:** First of all, this part always makes me laugh, because it makes me think of anybody in their 30s who just suddenly looks around I was like, "Wait, why are people getting married?"

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** So, it just feels like half of the people I know nowadays are just now Mr. Woodhouse being like, "No one should get married. What are they doing?"

**Molly:** Right. It's very relatable. You look around, all of a sudden, all your friends are married and having babies and you're like, "Hey, wait a minute, I don't want that."

**Becca:** It's like, "Wait, no, no. Where did you go? We had brunch."

**Molly:** Right. "Come [00:19:00] back." He's like, "Come back. You're not hanging out with me anymore." He's really upset. He hasn't even gotten over Isabella getting married, his other daughter, when Miss Taylor, who's like a daughter to him, gets married, and now, nobody's hanging out with him except Emma. So, yeah, we relate.

**Becca:** [laughs] Mr. Woodhouse, a completely wealthy white man, who's also a total relatable icon.

**Molly:** I know. And also, the opposite of Mrs. Bennet, she wanted to marry off her daughter so bad, and he's like, "Please do not get married, Emma." He keeps calling Miss Taylor, poor Miss Taylor, and saying she would have been better off staying with them forever. And Emma was like, "Well, not really, because now she has a house of her own and she's better off not having to deal with my odd humors," which I noticed she loves to be self-deprecating.

**Becca:** Emma's super witty.

**Molly:** She is witty. Yes.

**Becca:** Yes. She's a fascinating character. We're going to talk so much about Emma as a character.

**Molly:** I'm already fascinated.

**Becca:** Yes. We're going to go into it, but I'm not going to talk about it fully right now. But one thing she has is always a fun little quip and she's very playful in her quipping. Lizzie is [00:20:00] very sharp in quipping, Elinor is internal. Emma is fun. She just has a good time throwing her words around and making people laugh.

**Molly:** Yeah, I feel like Emma is a standup.

**Becca:** Yes, absolutely. She's putting on a little performance for everyone around her.

**Molly:** Yeah. Her dad is like, "What? She's not better off with her own house. This house is three times bigger than that one and you're perfect just the way you are." And Emma's like, "Well, it's going to be okay. We're going to visit each other all the time." And Mr. Woodhouse is like, "Well, I can't walk all the way to Randalls," which is the name of her new estate or her new house. And Emma's like, "Well, we

don't expect you to walk. We'll take the carriage." And he's like, "It's too short a distance to take the carriage. Where will we keep the horses when they're there?" And Emma's like, "Dad, we literally talked about this last night at the wedding," which is when I realized the wedding was yesterday. Was the wedding yesterday or this morning?

**Becca:** I don't know exactly. It doesn't make it clear in the books, but it doesn't really matter. The point is it just happened.

**Molly:** It just happened. I think it was this morning. I think this is all happening that evening, potentially the day before. And [00:21:00] they're like, "We just talked about this. And James, who takes care of the horses, wants to visit too, because his daughter, Hannah, works there. We got him that job there." And Mr. Woodhouse then goes on about how great Hannah is and how glad he is he got her a job at Randalls, and how that means she can update Miss Taylor when James comes and visits. James can do it for them. They don't have to actually go visit.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** He just doesn't want to go anywhere.

**Becca:** He's scheming to get out of getting in the Uber.

**Molly:** He really is. I so relate. He doesn't want to get out of bed.

**Becca:** Who amongst us has not canceled plans to sit in bed and eat cookie dough?

**Molly:** Literally me for this week.

**Becca:** Except that Mr. Woodhouse is eating roll instead.

**Molly:** I know, because cookie dough is bad for the system.

**Becca:** Exactly.

**Molly:** Then, Emma thinks that maybe a game of backgammon will distract him. But as she's setting up the game, a visitor arrives.

**Becca:** And who might that visitor be?

**Molly:** Keira Knightley.

**Becca:** Is it?

**Molly:** No, I just had to do [00:22:00] it at least once, and I got it out of my system, and now, I won't do it ever again.

**Becca:** Quite honestly though, I would pay to see Keira Knightley play Mr. Knightley. But we'll get there.

**Molly:** All right. So, I'm going to picture Keira Knightley in drag for Mr. Knightley.

**Becca:** Keira Knightley, if you want to do that or come on this podcast, we would be more than happy to support your endeavor.

**Molly:** Absolutely. So, Mr. Knightley, who I just want to throw out there for no reason whatsoever, but I just think that it should be said that he's Emma's brother-in-law.

**Becca:** I think we can tell the listeners that you heard something in the rumor mill.

**Molly:** You're right. We should tell them. Listeners, I heard something in the rumor mill about Emma and Mr. Knightley. I don't know what that means for the story, the plotline, but all I know is that he is her brother-in-law. So, I don't believe it. They're related. We've talked about this before. It's not so weird when people are related in dating in this world. But he's our **[00:23:00]** sister's husband's brother. I think that's weird. So, to me, they're going to be sparring partners. I don't know what I heard, what I read. That's what they are to me right now.

**Becca:** I will neither confirm nor deny either way. Do you want me to comment on the brother-in-law, if at all?

**Molly:** Yeah, he's her brother-in-law, right?

**Becca:** He is her brother-in-law. Yeah.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** Yeah, let's leave it at that for now.

**Becca:** Okay.

**Molly:** Mr. Knightley arrives and is her brother-in-law. He's her sister's husband's brother. He lives a mile away from them and he visits often, but today, he's actually coming from visiting her sister and his brother.

**Becca:** So, something that's going to drive you really crazy is that they will consistently refer to Mr. Knightley as Mr. Knightley and the brother as John Knightley.

**Molly:** His name is John?

**Becca:** His name is John.

**Molly:** Again?

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** [laughs] And what's Mr. Knightley's name?

**Becca:** Mr. Knightley is George Knightley. His brother is John Knightley.

**Molly:** I cannot believe there's **[00:24:00]** yet another George and another John.

**Becca:** Can you at this point? Although we have a new name now, we haven't had an Emma, yet, have we?

**Molly:** No, we have not. This is true. Or Isabella.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** Or Woodhouse or a Knightley.

**Becca:** Well, the last names don't overlap so much. It's really the first names.

**Molly:** That's true, that's true. Mr. Woodhouse thanks Mr. Knightley for coming at such a late hour. It is nighttime. Is that proper of him to stop by, it's not matter since he's family?

**Becca:** Mr. Knightley has an unusually close relationship with Mr. Woodhouse and Emma. They're friends. And they're more than just friends. They are neighbors. Mr. Knightley is over in a casual sense in a way that doesn't always happen.

**Molly:** He's not calling on them.

**Becca:** No, he doesn't often call on them. He will come over and just hang out with them. He's close to them. I think they have known each other for a very long time. And Mr. Knightley doesn't have to fall on the same decorum with the Woodhouses that others [00:25:00] might. He does because he's a proper dude. So, he's apologizing for showing up late. But he's also welcome literally anytime at this estate.

**Molly:** Yeah, and Mr. Woodhouse is like, "Oh, you must be so cold, and wet, and dirty. It was raining out there." He's like, "No, it's completely dry. I'm dying."

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** And then, Mr. Woodhouse is like, "Well, it rained for half an hour earlier. I wanted them to call off the wedding."

**Becca:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Molly:** Then, Mr. Knightley is like, "Oh, the wedding. Congratulations, by the way. Who cried the most?" And Mr. Woodhouse is like, "It was Miss Taylor, the poor thing. A terrible event for her."

**Becca:** Poor Miss Taylor. Poor Miss Taylor. And he's not calling her Mrs. Weston.

**Molly:** No, he never does.

**Becca:** mm-hmm.

**Molly:** That's when Mr. Knightley says, "Well, I can feel bad for you and Emma, but I can't feel bad for Miss Taylor." And at first, I was like, "Ah, he's a romantic." But no, not really. He was just like, "She's much better off this way."

**Becca:** It's a very good match for Miss Taylor, as I'm sure you've gathered as [00:26:00] we've talked about it.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** But he's a decently well-off man and Miss Taylor was a governess.

**Molly:** Right.

**Becca:** And he's a nice decent man that everyone likes in town as well. So, Mr. Knightley is looking at this being like, "Oh, an advantageous match for a woman who's older and doesn't have a lot of means."

**Molly:** Right. Exactly. He says that it's also better for her to only have one person to look after instead of two. And then, Emma makes one of her little quips where she says, "Especially when one of those two is so fanciful and troublesome." And her poor dad is like, "Oh, yes, very true. I am afraid I can be fanciful and cumbersome."

**Becca:** [laughs] You could almost hear the "Daddy, no."

**Molly:** Yes. She's like, "No, no, no, I meant me."

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** He is the personification of [unintelligible 00:26:51].

**Becca:** Oh, my God, he's so doom and gloom. And it's great, because his life is amazing.

**Molly:** Yeah. Then she's like, "No, I was talking about myself. Mr. Knightley loves to find fault with me. We always say what we like to one another," and she says it in a very joking-- But actually, [00:27:00] Mr. Knightley is one of the few people, who can see the faults in Emma and tell her about them. And so, she's like, "Oh, no, we're just joking." But really, she just wants her dad to think that everyone thinks she's perfect.

And Mr. Knightley is like, "Yes, well, I never flatter you, Emma. But I really just meant that Miss Taylor is winning in this situation, because she only has to please one person instead of both of you." And then, Emma is like, "Okay, well, let me tell you about the wedding. It was perfect, and nobody cried, and we all thought it's great that we're only a half mile away, because we're going to see each other every day," which is the opposite of what she was just stressing about privately.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah. Basically, on the outside, she's just all smiles and happiness and she's like, "Oh, my life is perfect. So, my life's perfect still." and she still has this little nagging sadness.

**Molly:** Yeah. But she's so sad. Her best friend's gone.

**Becca:** Yeah. She's not devastated. She's happy for Miss Taylor. But she's lonely-

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** -and a little melancholy about it.

**Molly:** Right. And her dad knows this and he's like, "Emma is a lot sadder than she's acting." [00:28:00] And Mr. Knightley is like, "Well, how could she not be sad? How can she not miss Miss Taylor? But this is the best situation for Miss Taylor, and you should all be happy for her." And Emma is like, "Well, yeah, and I should be especially happy, because I made this match myself. And everyone thought that Mr. Weston would never marry again." So, he had been married once before. And then, Mr. Woodhouse is like, "Don't go about making any more matches. I hate marriage." And Emma's like, "Well, I won't make any more matches for myself, but I will make more matches for other people."

**Becca:** We're going to talk about that in the study questions but keep going on.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Becca:** We've figured out what Emma's cleverness and her boredom leads to, which is her desire to do some heavy matchmaking.

**Molly:** Some meddling, if you will.

**Becca:** Some nosing into other people's business.

**Molly:** She explains that Mr. Weston had been a widower for many years, and he was perfectly content with his single life. But one day, she and Miss Taylor met him in the street, and it started to [00:28:58] and I quote, "mizzle." That's what it said in the book. He really did.

**Becca:** I miss that, I miss that.

**Molly:** It's mizzle instead of drizzle. I love that. Thanks, Jane Austen.

**Molly:** Thanks for this new word that I'm going to use all the time, mizzling. So, it started to mizzle. It sounds like fuzzy rain, like rain coming down out like muzzie. It sounds like-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** It sounds like mist and drizzle in the same sentence.

**Molly:** Oh, that's probably, actually what it is.

**Becca:** No, it's probably not what it is. It's probably either a publication error or what they used to call drizzling back in the day.

**Molly:** Well, I love it. We should bring it back. Anyway, it starts to mizzle, and he ran with such speed to get them to umbrellas. And in that moment, Emma was like, "He and Miss Taylor are destined for each other." She's like, "Oh, it was such success in matchmaking. You can't possibly expect me to quit." And Mr. Knightley says, "What do you mean success? That implies that you did some work."

She's actually been working to get them together for the last four years. Instead, he imagines that she sits around or that she has been sitting [00:30:00] around every so often thinking, "I think it would be a very good thing for Miss Taylor and Mr. Weston were to marry." And he's like, "You can be proud of a lucky guess and that's about it." And then, Emma's like, "There's a lot of pleasure and triumph in a lucky guess and it takes some talent. But there's something in between the do nothing and the do all. So, in between the working to get them together and the-- Hmm, I think that would be a nice thing for them."

She promoted Mr. Weston's visits to their state and gave him a little encouragement over the years and made it easy for them to fall in love. And Mr. Knightley says that they are adults and could have managed that for them.

**Becca:** [laughs] You're getting a sense of the dynamic right here, which is, you know that gif of Rapunzel having a good time when she's free in *Tangled* and she's swinging on her hair around in a circle and Flynn Rider's in the middle with his arms crossed?

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** That's Emma and Knightley in the scene.

**Molly:** Oh, my God, you're so right. I love that. He says that [00:31:00] Emma was more likely to have done harm to herself than to have helped them by interfering. And then, Mr. Woodhouse is like, "No, Emma's selfless. She never thinks of herself if she has the chance to help others." He has a skewed image of his daughter. He really loves her, which I love, but he thinks that she can do no wrong.

**Becca:** Yes, we'll talk about this a little bit more in the characterization of Emma and as the book goes on. But it is true and part of this is Mr. Woodhouse is older and he's a nervous man, and he has this daughter who's quite attentive to him and is a really young, pretty clever girl, and she's very easy to indulge by all measures of society, except if you're Mr. Knightley and he'll have a little stick up your butt.

**Molly:** He does have a little stick up his butt. But also, I have to say, in my mind, he's hot.

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

**Molly:** Cool. I am picturing Keira Knightley in drag now. So, that's not what I was [crosstalk].

**Becca:** Ah, that's perfect. Who were you picturing before I said that?

**Molly:** Maybe it's because I just saw *Funny Girl* last [00:32:00] night and so, I was picturing a Mr. Arnstein like man, but younger. Who was I picturing? Oh, I was picturing the guy from *Bridgerton* who plays Anthony. Anthony? Anthony.

**Becca:** I'm not going to tell you who has over the years played Mr. Knightley in film adaptations, but I will tell you've typecast correctly.

**Molly:** Perfect, at long last.

**Becca:** Yeah, you've nailed it. No Tilda in this one.

**Molly:** [laughs] But I'm picturing Tilda Swinton as *Emma*. Just kidding. But Gwyneth Paltrow played Emma on point, right?

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

**Molly:** Totally. But that's who I did confuse for Tilda Swinton at one point. So, actually, we're still on track. [laughs] Anyway, if you don't know what I'm talking about, go back and listen to Season 1.

**Becca:** Yeah. You can learn all about who Molly wanted to play certain characters. Basically, Molly thought Tilda Swinton was Judi Dench and you need to hear the context of how absolutely wild that thinking is.

**Molly:** Totally. Yeah. Or you can just look up pictures of [00:33:00] them and see that I'm dumb. [giggles] Mr. Woodhouse says he doesn't want her to keep making matches, because they break up families. And I put a little frowny face. And then, Emma's like, "Okay, okay, but one more for Mr. Elton." Mr. Elton John has-- Is his name John? Can you imagine if his name was John Elton? Becca's looking it up everyone.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** What's his name?

**Becca:** It's not John.

**Molly:** What is it?

**Becca:** According to Jane Austen's Wikipedia, Jane Austen Wiki Fandom to be specific, it's Philip.

**Molly:** Philip.

**Becca:** Phil Elton. I'm dying-- [crosstalk]

**Molly:** Phil Elton. Well, there's only like four British names for men, apparently.

**Becca:** Phil. We get some new ones in this one.

**Molly:** Anyway, Phil has been in town for a year. He's a good guy. She thinks that there's no one in town who deserves him. He has a very nice place. He shouldn't be single. So, she wants to find a wife for him. And Mr. Woodhouse is like, "Maybe [00:34:00] if you want to do something nice for him, you invite him to dinner and maybe Mr. Knightley will meet him too." And Mr. Knightley is like, "Yeah, why don't you help him pick the best of the fish or chicken but let him choose his own wife?" and that's the end of that chapter.

**Molly:** Yes, it is.

**Molly:** Which brings us to Chapter 2.

**Becca:** It does indeed.

**Molly:** In Chapter 2, we get the story of Mr. Weston. His family has been rising over the past few generations. I wasn't entirely sure. It said that he came into his independence early, meaning his inheritance.

**Becca:** I'm not quite sure.

**Molly:** Whatever it was, he didn't have to go into trade like his brothers.

**Becca:** No, he joined the militia, which is a more respected profession than trade.

**Molly:** Right.

**Becca:** Trade and law in this time period were a bit more like upper middle-class professions, whereas you could be a Colonel Brandon type in the militia.

**Molly:** Right. It said that the militia was embodied. Does that mean that it was they had the militia and it wasn't broken up, because there was no war or something?

**Becca:** Something of that nature, yes.

**Molly:** Cool. I'm using context clues, everybody. At some [00:35:00] point when he's in the militia, he meets Miss Churchill, and she falls in love with him offending her proud brother and his wife. Miss Churchill has full access to her own fortune, because her parents are dead, though not any portion of the estate, because she's a woman. So, she marries Mr. Weston against her brother's wishes, mostly to

piss him off. Now, she has a great husband, he's a good guy. She should be happy about it, and she is, but she regrets marrying down, and losing her estate.

**Becca:** Hello, Economics of Dating in Jane Austen.

**Molly:** Graham, the sound effect.

[Economics of Dating in Jane Austen stinger]

**Becca:** Yes, thank you.

**Molly:** The quote is, "She did not cease to love her husband, but she wanted at once to be the wife of Captain Weston and Mr. Churchill of Enscombe.

**Becca:** This is interesting, because we have not seen a lot of results of marrying down-

**Molly:** No. Yeah.

**Becca:** -in these stories. We've seen a couple of women marry down. It's rare in these books we've read so far. But Miss Churchill's story is an aftermath one. When you marry for love and then you have to take a real class dive for love, and it [00:36:00] actually does have an effect on our happiness.

**Molly:** Yeah, it does. And she ends up dying, not because of that, but-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** Just generally dying.

**Molly:** She generally dies. She leaves Mr. Weston poor and with a child to take care of. So, he's not doing too hot, and he ends up giving his son, Frank, to Miss Churchill's brother to take care of. He quits the militia, he engages in trade. He gets help from his brothers who are in trade, and he lives happily out his life in a small house in Highbury for 18 to 20 years. During that time, he builds up some wealth, he purchases a small estate, and he's in a generally good position to marry someone who might not be as well off such as Miss Taylor.

Now, he's liked her for years, but he was determined not to get married until he could purchase Randalls, which is the estate. So, now, 18 to 20 years later, he has purchased Randalls, and he marries his woman, and he settles into a new, [00:37:00] happier life, which he expects his second marriage will show him the proof that it's "a great deal better to choose than to be chosen, to excite gratitude than to feel it."

I thought that was interesting because Miss Churchill was like, "I'm in love. I choose you and I also want to piss off my brother." Obviously, she did love him, but she knew that it was a bad match for her. She picked him and brought him along. He was left worse for wear afterwards and now, he's doing someone else a favor.

**Becca:** He's speaking basically to the power dynamic of the relationship. And as we know in the Economics of Dating in Jane Austen--

**Molly:** The sound effect.

[Economics of Dating in Jane Austen stinger]

**Becca:** Yes. The money really dictates the power in the relationship. And in Mr. Weston's first marriage, he did not have any power. He was in love, and walked into a marriage, and had no control over his own finances. And the way his life panned out and ended up getting resented by a woman who did not have to marry him. In this situation, he works his [00:38:00] entire life to build himself up to a place where he's financially stable on his own terms and he can control his own worth his life, his inheritance, everything. His estate, in this case. And his wife to be, Miss Taylor doesn't need to bring anything to the marriage, because they're both older.

This is not a marriage that is going to get heirs. Frank is not dependent on a dowry from Mr. Weston, because he's got an aunt and uncle, who are super rich. So, you have Mr. Weston genuinely having agency that is hard to come by in these time periods to choose who he loves and marry that person. But that's hard fought, because he was on the consequences of a class-based marriage that was not ideal for him as the person who was coming up from a lower class.

**Molly:** Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. I do have to say, I wonder, I hope the best for the Westons, but I do wonder if they're going to stay as happy as they are right now, because [00:39:00] everything seems to be working out too well.

**Becca:** I will neither confirm nor deny. But this brings me to our new men's name.

**Molly:** Frank.

**Becca:** Frank.

**Molly:** Yes, my notes said, "Will Frank return?" and kind of. He continues to be a character.

**Becca:** Yes, he does. And you might notice from the timeline, but he would be an adult at this point.

**Molly:** Yes. I was thinking about this. So, it said that he had-- Well, we'll get there in a little bit, while I'll just say it now. He writes a letter to Mrs. Weston or to Miss Taylor on the occasion of their wedding and she is super smitten and happy with him as a son-in-law or stepson. But they're probably closer in age than she is with Mr. Weston. How old is she? She was a governess. She was probably just like a teenager, a young teenager for Emma. So, she's not that much older than Emma. She's probably in her late 20s, early 30s.

**Becca:** I would say, she's got at least a decade on Emma. Maybe more.

**Molly:** So, she's 30, 31. [00:40:00] Emma's 20, 21.

**Becca:** Emma's 21. We learned that in the first chapter.

**Molly:** Well, they said, almost 21.

**Becca:** Yes. So, 20 to 21.

**Molly:** Yeah, she's lived to 21 years.

**Becca:** And Mrs. Weston now would be in her 30s.

**Molly:** And Frank would be 23-ish. So, I don't know. Anyway, Frank seems like an eligible bachelor to me. Becca is giving me the blanket stare, listeners. We're back. Anyway, I think Frank is an eligible

bachelor. Speaking of Frank, Mr. Weston sees him once a year, and he is very proud of him, and he tells everyone all about Frank. And Highbury is very proud of Frank in turn, because they'd hear all about him all the time. It's like someone going into work and talking about their kid and man everyone at work is like, "Oh, how's Frank?"

**Becca:** It's actually also deeply tragic, because you have Mr. Weston being in a circumstance, where his wife died and he had this little child to [00:41:00] take care of, and he doesn't get to raise his son. But he sees him all the time and he just adores him. And this deep pride he has in his son and the way his son turned out and everything, it's very sad, because he should have gotten to raise him himself.

**Molly:** Heartbreaking, especially because Frank hasn't come to visit once in his life. He always goes to visit Frank. And somehow, they've talked about Frank coming to visit him and it's just never happened. And they it breaks my little heart. I was all on in my margins, just like little frowny faces and--

**Becca:** You really feel for Mr. Weston as a person in this chapter.

**Molly:** Yeah. [crosstalk] Mm-hmm. Mrs. Weston, meanwhile, feels bad for having left Emma, but she knows that Emma will be okay, especially because the distance between them is so short. And it even said, it's perfect for solitary female walking.

**Becca:** it indeed is.

**Molly:** Jane Austen loves solitary female walking.

**Becca:** She loves the female walk.

**Molly:** Mrs. Weston is so clearly and visibly happy that [00:42:00] even Emma is surprised how often her dad continues to say, poor Miss Taylor.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** He really thinks that she would have been better off staying with them. And I just think he must think pretty highly of himself. I have some problems with-- What are they? The Woodhouses. I like them. They're good people, but they leave a rude awakening to society. That's what I think. Anyway, we'll get there.

A few weeks passed and eventually, people stop complimenting Mr. Woodhouse on the marriage, which is good. And then, all the cake gets eaten, which is good, because it was stressing him out that so many people were eating cake, because his own stomach "could bear nothing rich" and he could never believe other people to be different from himself. That is meta about his worldviews.

Additionally, he had kept asking Mr. Perry, who is the apothecary, who comes over all the time about it. And Mr. Perry was like, "Well, yes, wedding cake probably isn't the best, if you don't take it in moderation." And Mr. Woodhouse is like, "Listen, Mr. [00:43:00] Perry said that wedding cake's not the best." So, he's trying to tell everyone not to eat the cake, but they all kept eating the cake, and there was no rest for his benevolent nerves until all the cake was gone.

**Becca:** Oh, Mr. Woodhouse creating an internal problem for just himself is just-- Oh, I love him. He's such a disaster.

**Molly:** I love him too. And it seems that even when things are going on around him, he seems so oblivious and he still thinks that everyone should agree with him. And he doesn't mind that they don't, but he's like-- We'll talk about it in the next chapter. But anyway, there was even a rumor going around that the apothecaries on children were eating the cake. But he was like, "That's too much for me to believe." And that is the end of that chapter.

So, that brings us to Chapter 3. Mr. Woodhouse likes company, but only on his own terms. People have to come to him, he can't have too many people at once, and he doesn't like them to come for dinner, because dinner stresses him out, but they can come over for cards. So, he has people over every night for cards. The Westons and Mr. Knightley come by [00:44:00] a lot, because they really like the Woodhouses. And Mr. Elton is lonely. So, he comes.

I noted that it said that he would join them for the privilege of exchanging any vacant evening in his own blank solitude for the elegant season society of Mr. Woodhouse's drawing room and the smiles of his lovely daughter. I'm putting it on the record that I think that Mr. Elton has a crush on Emma.

**Becca:** I will neither confirm nor deny. I will only confirm that we now have confirmed Emma is hot.

**Molly:** Emma is hot. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Becca:** Yes. We were talking about it. That's the other part of this is that Emma is so charming, but also part of it is like, you're also just hot. It's a line in *Mad Men* as well.

**Molly:** Yeah, she's hot. Charming and hot. They also have over Mrs. Bates and her daughter and Mrs. Goddard. Mrs. Bates is very old. She's a harmless old lady. It really said that. Miss Bates is incredibly popular for someone who isn't young, hot, rich, or married. She's just really likable. There was a whole page on Miss Bates, and how likable she is, and how she has nothing else going for her. But I love her.

**Becca:** [00:45:00] Well, Mrs. Bates and Miss Bates are not well off. They're really not any good space, monetarily. But Miss Bates is a fascinating character, because she's the worst-case scenario.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm.

**Becca:** She's super low on money, she's older, and she's definitely a full spinster, but not in a cool like Catherine de Bourgh widow way and like a never married, never taken on sort of way. And so, she just has to rely on the kindness of strangers for her and her sick mom all the time. And she's a very pleasant person and she never acts as though that's a problem. But people like her as a person a lot, but it's also like, "Ugh, I can't believe she just exists like this."

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Which we are not a fan of her on this show.

**Molly:** No. But I don't-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** We stan a woman's right to not have a marriage.

**Molly:** Right. But I also think that it [00:46:00] seems to me anyway that people are just fine with that. They like her as a person and still invite her over, at least the Woodhouses do.

**Becca:** Everyone likes her for sure. But it's kind of like-- who Charlotte Lucas could have ended up in a worse circumstance than she was in.

**Molly:** Right.

**Becca:** And also, how she could have ended up if she didn't have the finances and backing of her father at that time, which is just to say that like, "Everyone likes you and everyone's still friends with you, but people do pity you almost outwardly."

**Molly:** I wonder if Emma is going to work some of her matchmaking magic on Miss Bates. So, she's older. She's like what, probably, 27 older?

**Becca:** Older.

**Molly:** 30?

**Becca:** Probably, older.

**Molly:** Who else could possibly be 30 and willing for her? I don't know. How old is Mr. Elton? We'll find out. I'm sure.

**Becca:** You'll find out. We'll get there.

**Molly:** Well, I'm shipping Miss Bates with someone.

**Becca:** Miss Bates with getting some dick.

**Molly:** Listen, or something else.

**Becca:** Or [00:47:00] something else.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** No discrimination.

**Molly:** Yeah. Well, this is weird and gross and whatever. But there was part of me that was, if it doesn't work out between Miss Taylor and Mr. Weston, I feel Miss Taylor and Mr. Weston's hot son would end up together, except for that she is in love with Mr. Weston. So, that's good. But I do worry about their whole situation.

**Becca:** You're just doing Emma's job for her right now.

**Molly:** I am. I am. I'm starting to think about it. I'm shipping, well, not shipping. But I do worry about their situation. I worry that he has chosen her not for love, but because he wants someone less well off than him, so that he can feel a little bit more stable in his life. So, I wonder if their relationship is going to last. I wonder if he's going to fall in love with his hot son and then Mr. Weston will be available for Miss Bates. That's probably very far fletched. Fletched, flung, farfetched.

**Becca:** Farfetched is what you were going for?

**Molly:** Yep, yep, yep. But I'm just putting it out there as a [00:48:00] thought. Anyway.

**Becca:** I won't confirm or deny that.

**Molly:** Then, we meet Mrs. Goddard. She is the mistress of a school and I wanted to read this part, because I thought it was funny. It's not one of those places, where "Young ladies for enormous pay might be screwed out of health and into vanity, but a real honest, old-fashioned boarding school, where a reasonable quantity of accomplishments are sold at a reasonable price and where girls might be sent to be out of the way and scrambled themselves into a little education without any danger of coming back prodigies." So, they'll get smart, but not too smart.

**Becca:** Yeah, smart, but not smart enough to not get married.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Jane Austen is teasing.

**Molly:** Oh, yeah. No, I know.

**Becca:** Yeah. Satire.

**Molly:** Yes, yes, yes.

**Becca:** It's so funny.

**Molly:** It's a funny joke. Yeah, no, I get it. Good job, Jane Austen. I love her commentary on society and the world that she lived in.

**Becca:** Yeah, and I think even like these first few chapters are so steeped in it already.

**Molly:** Totally. Especially, because our main character is snobby.

**Becca:** Mm hmm.

**Molly:** Mrs. Goddard school has a really good reputation, because she feeds the [00:49:00] kids well, she lets them run about in the summer, and she treats their chilblains in the winter, and chilblains are like frostbite, but itchy. I googled it.

**Becca:** Yikes.

**Molly:** It said that, "No wonder 20 young couples now walk after her to church." Does that mean the kids grew up and still want to hang out with her? What does that mean or just her kids follow her around?

**Becca:** I think it's that they come with her to church every Sunday, that that it's a popular school.

**Molly:** I understand. Oh, 20 young people is a lot.

**Becca:** Mm-hmm.

**Molly:** I understand. It says that she has formerly owed much to Mr. Woodhouses' kindness. So, she comes to hang out a lot at night. Now, I'm wondering what he did for her in the past. I'm just putting that on the record.

**Becca:** We know theoretically that Mr. Woodhouse has had sex because he has two daughters.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm.

**Becca:** Also, I feel I should say, to be fair to Mr. Woodhouse, because I feel some people are going to say this in the DMs and I will put this out there in a way we haven't thought about it. He's absolutely hilarious. But part of the reason he's probably so [00:50:00] scared and sad is because he did lose his wife pretty young and unexpectedly.

**Molly:** Oh yeah. No, I feel bad for the guy.

**Becca:** But at the same time, he is such a plethora, a spoil of riches for comedy.

**Molly:** Yes. I wasn't saying that he had sex with Mrs. Goddard. I was saying, I wonder if there was some financial agreement between them at some point. But sex works too.

**Becca:** It's possible he gave money to the school.

**Molly:** Totally. Yeah, that might make sense. I was just thinking like, "Oh--" [crosstalk]

**Becca:** Or he gave money [mumbling]

**Molly:** All right, all right, all right. I was just thinking, maybe it would come back up later, if someone was in a pinch. But probably not. But I'm just putting it out there. Emma likes having all this company, but it doesn't make up for the loss of Mrs. Weston. Then one day, Mrs. Goddard asks to bring Miss Smith with her. Now, Miss Smith "was a girl of 17, whom *Emma* knew very well by sight and had long felt an interest in on account of her beauty."

**Molly and Becca:** Gay.

**Molly:** And Harriet Smith is a mystery. It says that she's somebody's daughter. [00:51:00] Somebody had put her in Mrs. Goddard school and now, someone has made her a parlor boarder. I don't know what a parlor boarder is.

**Becca:** I think it means-- I'll google this because I don't want to get it wrong. But basically, essentially, Harriet's graduated and she's still boarding there.

**Molly:** Oh, I understand.

**Becca:** Archaic term for a privileged category of people at a boarding school, parlor boarders are described by a modern historian as paying more than other peoples for which they get a room of their own. Basically, she's one of the richer kids at the school.

**Molly:** I see. So, does Emma just not know anything about Harriet or does nobody know anything about Harriet?

**Becca:** People don't know about Harriet. She's a mystery.

**Molly:** Wild.

**Becca:** Yeah. It's possible Mrs. Goddard knows and keeps it under wraps. But the implication is that she genuinely does not have a title or background, which in this day and age, is highly relevant.

Especially because she's a young woman of good manners and noted beauty. But this is a time period that's about connections.

**Molly:** Does Harriet secretly [00:52:00] have a bad background, like her parents not--? I don't know.

**Becca:** We don't know at this point. Emma's speculating the opposite, isn't she?

**Molly:** Yeah. She thinks that Harriet's the shit.

**Becca:** Yeah. She's decided, "You are hot. So, you must be the tits." But I don't know. This part always strikes me as so interesting, because for me, it feels-- I've never been a "popular girl." Is this what popularity is like? You just see someone who's also pretty and you're like, "We're going to be the pretty girls"?

**Molly:** I guess. Oh, because in *Clueless*, again, it's been so many years since I've seen it. But Brittany Murphy appears one day, and the popular girls like, "You're one of us," right?

**Becca:** I'm not going to confirm or deny that happens in *Clueless*.

**Molly:** Cool. That's what I remember. But also, I could be thinking of *Heathers* or *Mean Girls*.

**Becca:** They do all blend together, don't they?

**Molly:** Yeah, they're all the same.

**Becca:** I would dispute that, but I'm not going to dispute it too hard right now. [laughs]

**Molly:** Totally. I also have [00:53:00] seen both *Heathers* and *Mean Girls* and they're nothing alike. So, I can't actually say that about *Clueless* either. But anyway, nobody knows anything about Harriet. Now, she is pretty in a way that Emma "particularly admires gay."

**Becca:** Gay.

**Molly:** She's blond haired, blue eyed, plump, and sweet faced.

**Becca:** I always liked this description because that's straight up just drives me. [laughs]

**Molly:** Yeah, it is. You are Harriet. In manners, she isn't too shy. She's very engaging, but she's not pushy. She's humble, very proper, and she's very impressed by their house and comments on it a lot. And Emma just simply loves to be complimented and she loves to be seen as superior. So, when she gets compliments on her house, she thinks, this girl knows what's up.

Emma thinks that Harriet shouldn't be wasted on the inferior society of Highbury and its connections and that the common folk there are just too unworthy of her. Now, Harriet has just come from the Martins, who rent a farm from Mr. Knightley and she knows that Mr. Knightley thinks highly of them, but Emma assumes that they must be coarse and unpolished, because they rent a farm [00:54:00] and they're not worthy of Harriet. I don't love Emma so far.

**Becca:** Okay. Yeah, we're going to talk about that in the study questions.

**Molly:** Totally. Emma has a popular moment. I'm going to read this. When I say, popular, I mean from wicked.

**Becca:** Popular.

**Molly:** She thinks to herself, "She would notice her, she would improve her, she would detach her from her bad acquaintance and introduce her into good society. She would form her opinions and her manners. It would be an interesting and certainly a very kind undertaking, highly becoming her own situation in life, her leisure and powers."

**Becca:** Yes, very much Jane Austen making a point there.

**Molly:** Yes. And also, it's very [unintelligible [00:54:38]].

**Molly and Becca:** [unintelligible [00:54:40]]

**Molly:** There's one line in particular where she says, "I know that's what makes me so nice." [chuckles] She's just Emma.

**Becca:** You have to understand that Emma Woodhouse-- We'll go into it a bit more in the study questions is one of the first popular [00:55:00] girls.

**Molly:** Totally. Now, the evening just flies by because "Emma was so busy ""admiring those soft blue eyes." Gay.

**Becca:** So gay.

**Molly:** So gay. At dinner time, Mr. Woodhouse is stressed, because he loves to have company and he loves to set the table and everything, but he hates putting food in front of people, because it's so unwholesome and he has for himself a bowl of thin gruel, and he tries to get people to eat soft boiled eggs. He's like, "Just a small one or just a tiny little slice of apple tar. But don't worry, the apples are fresh. There's no preserves. And maybe half a glass of wine but poured into a glass of water and that'll be okay." While he's talking, Emma just keep serving out actual good food and he just doesn't seem to notice or care. And she really just wants to make Harriet happy.

As for Harriet, she was so nervous to meet Emma, because she's so well esteemed in town. But Emma treats her so well and even shakes hands with her. So, Harriet goes away happy.

**Becca:** Oh, Harriet.

**Molly:** I like Harriet.

**Becca:** Protect Harriet.

**Molly:** Protect Harriet at all costs. Harriet and Miss Bates, [00:56:00] love them both.

**Becca:** Oh, amazing. That actually ends Chapter 3, does it not it?

**Molly:** It sure does.

**Becca:** That brings us to the study questions.

**Molly:** Becca's study questions.

**Becca:** Oh, missed these study questions. All right, let's start out. What are your impressions of Highbury? What do you make of the world we've been placed in here?

**Molly:** It's interesting, because Emma is not a reliable narrator here and she makes Highbury seem like a terrible town to live and that her estate is the only good place to be. I imagine it's a normal town and I like the people in it. It's a gossipy place like we've seen in the past. But everyone that we've met seems pretty cool. I like that her dad likes company.

**Becca:** Yeah, we're already dropped into this world, where we already have formed a large amount of the community around Emma.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** We're meeting a lot of characters very quickly. And in *Pride and Prejudice*, it was similar in that we got dropped in the world and it was immediately like, these are the Lucas', these are the Bingleys, these are the Bennets, this is everybody you're going to meet for a [00:56:00] while.

**Molly:** Mrs. Long.

**Becca:** And the introduction of the town of Highbury really is in that same vein, although, this is the first story we have, where we have just the family is quite small we're following.

**Molly:** Quite small and quite rich.

**Becca:** It is indeed. My next question is, what do you think of how Jane Austen starts the story and how does that form the tone of the story?

**Molly:** It's pretty fast paced. I feel we've already, like you said and met a lot of the people that we're going to meet. I like that it starts with a wedding, and I like that the tone set around the wedding is like, "Oh, darn."

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** [laughs] But I do like all of the female friendship that has already taken precedent and is important to Emma. I like that we've already had a lot of dinner parties and gatherings. I like the banter. Story wise, this always happens, but I feel the stories already, like, how is it going to go on for another have many volumes there are in this?

**Becca:** Yeah, we really open up at the end of [00:58:00] one story in the beginning of another. And so, right now, things feel calm, because we feel we just got the happy ending, which is interesting. It keeps the story very light and briskets first, but also, it does create a little bit, just enough conflict to drop us into a new story that needs to be resolved. Only a little bit, only a drop. But mostly, everyone's happy.

**Molly:** Everyone's happy and there have been hints of like, there's the hint of Harriet, there's the hint of Frank, who I think is going to come back, and these things all-- Everything seems low stakes. I guess, because we're coming from *Sense and Sensibility*, where everything was high stakes. Here, it's like Emma wants to have some fun and putts around and people's love lives, and that's going to be the main event as far as I know. So, it's much lighter and more fast paced.

**Becca:** Absolutely. So, my next question is one I think I'm going to ask you every single episode of this book.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** What do you think of Emma?

**Molly:** Oh, my God, I hate her.

**Becca:** All [00:59:00] right, talk.

**Molly:** But I love her too. She's so annoying, and so entitled, and so snobby. And so, she does not care that she's rich, and she has all this privilege, and she doesn't acknowledge that. And I know that she doesn't have to, because of the time period that she lives in.

Listeners, I'm sorry if you haven't read this book, but we just read *Accomplished* by Amanda Quain and we released an interview with the author and that was all about like a modernization of Georgiana Darcy. And in that, Georgiana has to reconcile that she's grown up wealthy and has had everything come easily to her whole life with the fact that not everyone has had everything come easily to her. And I don't think that Emma knows that everything hasn't come easily to her. So, that's what I'm thinking of right now is the entitlement of not recognizing that everything has come easily to her her whole life. It even says in the narration is that Emma's downfall is that everything's come too easily to her. She's never [01:00:00] had to work for anything.

But on the flip side of not liking how she moves through the world, she's funny, she's witty, she loves her dad, and she loves her friends, and she loves her family, she loves a party, she loves to metal. She's a fun character. And I like her personality. I like how she acts. I just don't like how she thinks. Does that make sense?

**Becca:** Yes, and I am so excited, because this is something that-- I'm going to do my very best to discuss all of this without talking about later parts of the book. But Jane Austen immediately throws in your face that this character, while awesome, is super flawed. And in some ways, I find Emma such a refreshing character, because she doesn't have to be perfect. She is not a perfect character and she's still charming and likeable, despite the fact that she is deeply problematic in a lot of [01:01:00] ways.

And I think that Jane Austen is really doing that on purpose here. There's a great quote that I will not read until you are done with this book that Jane Austen wrote about her character, Emma. And I cannot wait to share that with you. And I would also say, this is another question I have. How is she different than our other heroines?

**Molly:** Well, for one, she's rich and our other heroines so far have not been. The Dashwoods were and then they weren't. How is she different? She's an only child. No, she's not. She has a sister. She lives along with her dad. I feel she doesn't need to marry.

**Becca:** That's it.

**Molly:** Oh, my God, I'm so proud of myself.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** I was sitting here, I was thinking about it, and then it popped out of my mouth, and Becca's eyes lit up.

**Becca:** She doesn't need to get married. Graham, we're going to need a very luxurious Economics of Dating in Jane Austen sting right here. This is the first time that the entire story is not dominated by our heroines [01:02:00] or their sisters needing to find a husband.

**Molly:** Whoa.

**Becca:** This is also a piece of Emma that I adore and makes her a revolution in her time is that she is a character that is wealthy enough and lucky enough in her inheritance that she is not subject to the same tragedies, if her father dies that some of our other characters have been subjected to. And because of that, we see a character that has almost no interest in marrying herself at this point. She does not need to marry, she does not need to secure her position in this world. If she marries ever, it's going to be only because it's what she wants, only because she wants to find someone who will make her happy. She does not need to secure anything for herself or her family. So, her story's a completely different one than anyone we have followed so far.

**Molly:** It must've been so fun [01:03:00] for Jane Austen to write, because in what order did she write? *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, right?

**Becca:** That's a complicated question, because she did write a draft of *Pride and Prejudice* first. But *Emma* did come after both *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*.

**Molly:** She's been writing these characters who are completely dependent on men and now, she gets to write someone who's not.

**Becca:** No, Emma Woodhouse is not dependent on anyone. Emma Woodhouse is meddling in other people's lives, because she's bored and she's way too clever to be sitting alone in a house. But she does not have things to occupy her mind that stress her out, because she does not have stressors on her life than most women do in this time period.

**Molly:** That's exciting.

**Becca:** It's exciting, it's cool, it's interesting, and it makes Emma, a little imperfect as a character. She has not faced enough adversity to be a perfect character. But instead, we get a character who's like, "All right, that's what it is on the side. What now? What am [01:04:00] I doing with myself now?" And it leaves her room to be romantic, but also to decide, "I don't really give a shit about that for myself."

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** So, Emma's a fun character to follow for those reasons. She's frustrating, because of the whole super classist, snotty thing she's got going on. But she's witty, she's funny. She's in her heart of hearts caring about her friends and family as you said, but she's an obnoxious asshole.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** I'm going to ask you after every single set of chapters, what you think of Emma?

**Molly:** I love it.

**Becca:** We're going to talk about it every week.

**Molly:** So excited.

**Becca:** Or, every two weeks, because this is a bi-weekly podcast, not a weekly podcast. Sorry, everybody. We have full time jobs.

**Molly:** Yes, we do.

**Becca:** Okay. Very excited to talk about that with you. This is what makes this book so much. In some ways, lighter than some of her other works.

**Molly:** Totally.

**Becca:** Okay. Predictions about Frank Churchill?

**Molly:** Okay. I've already said my **[01:05:00]** one out-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** Yes, you did. Yeah.

**Molly:** Other than that, I do think that he is going to make a return. I think that possibly Emma will try to set him up with Harriet, because that makes sense. He's a man and he's probably hot. I just picture him being hot. And he's the right age. He's 23-ish. So, that might make sense for Harriet, or she's going to try and set up Harriet with Mr. Elton. So, maybe not Frank. But Frank's definitely going to be a romantic love interest for someone.

**Becca:** Will not confirm or deny that. But what I will say about Frank, which I find interesting, is that we've met two children of Highbury so far and both of them have dead mothers, and they are victims of that circumstance in very different manners-based on the situations of their fathers.

**Molly:** Yes. And then they both ended up with rich families.

**Becca:** Indeed.

**Molly:** Indeed. So, here's another **[01:06:00]** potential train of thought for Frank. He and Emma bond over their mutual dead mothers, because that is a bonding thing and then fall in love. Just a thought.

**Becca:** I will neither confirm nor deny. Okay. What are your current thoughts on Miss Harriet?

**Molly:** She's great. I think she's really sweet, a mystery. I don't understand what that's all about. I think maybe her family-- She's not very high born and so, they just dropped her off on Mrs. Goddard stoop. Maybe that's what happened. But it's a school. So, she would have had to be--

**Becca:** Someone's paying for tuition for her.

**Molly:** Oh, right.

**Becca:** We just don't know who.

**Molly:** Oh, okay. Right. Because you have to pay a reasonable price for reasonable, as I said. Gosh, I don't know. That one really has me stumped. I don't know who her family could be. I think it's fun that we have a mystery character who nobody knows anything about.

**Becca:** Ooh, it's a mystery.

**Molly:** It's a mystery. **[01:07:00]** Yeah, but she seems really sweet.

**Becca:** What do she and Emma offer each other?

**Molly:** For Emma, a new potential friend, because she's lost hers to marriage and also a task, because I'm pretty sure she's going to try to set Harriet up with someone. That's another thing that I've read online in my scrolling, because it's impossible to avoid people talking about Emma. So, I'm pretty sure she's going to try to matchmake Harriet. And for Harriet, she offers her an advantageous friendship, because I think that Emma being so rich and Harriet potentially not being as rich, it might be nice to make a rich friend.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah, and it's not just that she's not rich. She does not have connections that people know of. Emma's rich, but also high class.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** The combo is unbeatable as a friend for Harriet. So, this gives Emma, if we're being cold about it a project, she's [01:08:00] bored. She lost her friend. She needs someone to talk to and someone to spin in circles around.

**Molly:** Popular.

**Becca:** Exactly. And for Harriet, it is a life changing thing, where she has the opportunity to get a glimpse into a class that she's not in this moment, although, it's hard to say, because again, we don't know her background. But on another level, you are correct that these are also just two lonely women and this book is-- You could read gay, but also very, very interested in showing us women becoming friends.

**Molly:** Yes, I love female friendship, but the way that Emma talks about Harriet's beautiful blue eyes-

**Becca:** Gay.

**Molly:** -it's just a little gay.

**Becca:** Oh, I read it and I was immediately like, "Oh, Molly's going to think this is so gay" and you wouldn't be wrong. It's very, very focused on Harriet's appearance. I think what Jane Austen is going for there is that Emma is deciding that she's [01:09:00] worthy, because she's pretty which is a very popular girl thing to do. "Popular girls like a misnomer guys," because not most women don't do this stuff in like real life. It's something that happens in middle school in high school, but it does happen. Anyway, that is the last of my special study questions for this section. So, that brings me to my three standbys. Funniest quote?

**Molly:** It's a series of-- [crosstalk]

**Becca:** Yes.

**Molly:** Of course.

**Becca:** Do you want me to read one of the characters?

**Molly:** Yes. How about you play Emma and I'll play Mr. Woodhouse?

**Becca:** Okay. "How often we shall be going to see them and they coming to see us? We shall always be meeting. We must begin. We must go and pay wedding visit very soon."

**Molly:** "My dear, how am I to get so far? Randalls is such a distance. I could not walk half so far."

**Becca:** "No, papa. Nobody thought of your walking. We must go in the carriage to be sure."

**Molly:** "The carriage? But James would not like to put the horses too far for such a little way and where are the poor horses to be, while we are paying our visit?"

**Becca:** Question means [01:10:00] moving forward.

**Molly:** Who does Harriet belong to? I need to know. I also am curious about the outcome of the Westons relationship. I'm curious about Frank. Right now, I'm curious about everything, but mostly, whomst does Harriet belong to? I did write whomst in the margins of my book. So, we have another whomst. If you want to know where whomst originated, listen to Season 2.

**Becca:** Indeed. Who wins the chapters?

**Molly:** I think Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Weston. Miss Taylor, Mrs. Weston comes out on top of these chapters.

**Becca:** Yeah. She rents herself the Woodhouses neuroses and instead, gains a husband, gains a bunch of social class, and is in love. So, good for her. Good for Mrs. Weston.

**Molly:** Good for Mrs. Weston.

**Becca:** Listeners, that concludes this current episode of Pod and Prejudice, *Emma* edition Season 3. If you are following along with us, you should read Chapters 4-5 of the next episode. That's what we'll be covering. So, until next time, stay proper--

**Molly:** --And find yourself a husband.

**Becca:** [01:11:00] Classic. I love it.

[music]

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

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