

Becca: It is fucking classic that we switched to my apartment to avoid the airport near your apartment.

Molly: It's true.

Becca: That we record 10 seconds of silence and as we're recording it, for the first time ever I hear an airport out my window. **[crosstalk]**

Molly: Yeah. I mean, it was probably more likely if that was a car starting up but--

Becca: I guess, but it sounds like an airplane, didn't it?

Molly: It sounded like the same thing that we get in front of my apartment. We are here in our new location, Becca's room.

Becca: Yes, it is a little cozier.

Molly: Yeah, we're sitting on her bed, which is nice.

Becca: Yes, I have a very nice duvet cover. But primarily it's nice because the reverb is a little better in here.

Molly: So, you're ready to hear my story?

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Okay. So, I have a story about what I did last night. As you know, Becca, you don't know listeners. I was feeling a little under the weather. So, I was invited to a party and I didn't go. **[00:01:00]** And my roommate, who also has been my best friend since we were five, was like, "Let's watch a movie." And so, we got hot chocolate, we got popcorn, and we watched *You've Got Mail*.

Becca: A movie that has not aged the most gracefully.

Molly: It's a great film, I have no qualms except this. Do you know how many *Pride and Prejudice* references there are in that movie?

Becca: You know, I'd forgotten.

Molly: It's like a whole plotline. And the first moment it's mentioned, Hannah and I looked at each other and I put my hands over my ears and I just started screaming and she started screaming, we're just like **[loud screaming]**.

[laughter]

[intro]

Molly: Hi, everyone. I'm Molly.

Becca: I'm Becca.

Molly: And welcome to Pod and Prejudice.

Becca: We're going to talk some Jane Austen specifically. If you're joining us now, I'm just going to go through it really quickly. Molly's never read Jane Austen novels. I've read a lot of Jane Austen novels. We're reading *Pride and Prejudice*. Get on board.

Molly: Today, we are finishing out Volume the First. **[00:02:00]**

Becca: Volume the First of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Molly: I've begun my notes on these by calling these "The what-the-fuck chapters" because I texted Becca so many times just, "What the fuck?"

Becca: Molly often texts me while she's reading the book and I try really hard not to respond. It was particularly difficult to not respond to Molly's texts this time, because they were highly emotional.

Molly: Very.

Becca: But I have been waiting since I think Episode Two, at least for these chapters. They have been in the back of my mind as we've been doing this podcast, so I'm really excited to get talking about them. And for Molly to vent all of her feelings about what's happening in these chapters.

Molly: I am shook. Let's begin. Chapter 21 begins with the discussion of the big proposal, Mr. Collins' proposal to Lizzie, having almost died down. I hadn't realized that at this point. It had only been a day. It's **[00:03:00]** still all in the same day. He proposed, there was all this drama. Charlotte came over and now it's probably mid-afternoon to evening.

Becca: Yeah, remember he proposed at the breakfast table.

Molly: Yeah. So, it's been a long day. Everyone's tired.

Becca: It's a very emotional day in the Bennet household.

Molly: Yeah, and Mr. Collins is just walking around ignoring Lizzie. And I was very surprised. I thought he would have left by now.

Becca: Well, again, he lives kind of far enough that it's not easy for him to just leave. Like if you're sitting with your friend in Chicago, and you have a fight, you can't just up and go home. But still.

Molly: Right, but still get a horse and go. That's my opinion.

Becca: **[unintelligible [00:03:42]** on a horse.

Molly: Yeah. Instead of talking to Lizzie, he just talks to Charlotte who is still there and has no reason to be rude to him and so she listens to him very civilly. And everyone is relieved, especially Lizzie, that he's not talking to them instead.

The next day, Mrs. Bennet is still very angry [00:04:00] specifically, they say that she's in ill humor and ill health. And I think Mrs. Bennet could benefit from therapy.

Becca: She literally has made herself sick with anxiety, that's what happened.

Molly: She's so stressed and she's like, hair's falling out.

Becca: I'm basically picturing she can't get out of bed and she's just fanning herself like [struggling noises].

Molly: Yeah. She's very stressed. Same with Collins. He's still angry. Lizzie, like I hoped that he would have left by now but he planned to stay till Saturday. Till Saturday, he shall stay. The girls go back to Meryton to see if Wickham is back, which he is. And it says that he meets them at the edge of town. Was he just waiting there?

Becca: That's a good question. I don't think he was.

Molly: I assume he wasn't. But it's interesting that they went to go ask if he was back in the first person they bump into is him.

Becca: Well, he's been loitering around this town because, I mean, he's got a little--

Molly: A little crushy-crush.

Becca: A little croosh.

Molly: And so he'll hang out near her aunt's house.

Becca: That's what you do when you have a croosh.

Molly: That's what I do. [00:05:00]

Becca: Apparently, it works for Wickham because there's a certain level of hot a person can be where any move works. Do you know what I mean?

Molly: Oh yeah.

Becca: And Wickham is pretty hot as we've established many times. Also, just for our listeners' sake, this is an ASMR-themed episode because Molly and I are drinking some tea right now.

Molly: Shall we sip?

[slurping sounds]

[laughter]

Becca: So, if you at any point in time hear a weird slurp--

Molly: That's us.

Becca: --that is because we have some warm peppermint liquid in our hands. And it is making us happy because this is a very cold room.

Molly: And in fact, New York is cold now.

Becca: New York just is suddenly so cold.

Molly: It is freezing. So, he meets them at the edge of town and walks with them to their aunt's house. When they're at their aunt's house, he gets some talky-talk time with Lizzie and assures her that he didn't go to the ball by choice. It was his own choice. He didn't want to make a scene and he didn't trust himself not to make a scene. **[00:06:00]**

Becca: What a messy bitch.

Molly: Truly.

Becca: Honestly. But I like that you say they were talky-talking, when in reality they are--

Molly: F-lirting.

Becca: Oh yeah.

Molly: It's described as the commendation which they civilly bestowed on each other.

Becca: Wait. Do you want me to pull up the--?

Molly: Yeah, I brought my book but it's over there.

Becca: Do you want to grab it really quick?

Molly: Yeah, I should get it.

Becca: They're flirting is described as such.

Molly: They had leisure for a full discussion of it and for all the commendation which they civilly bestowed upon each other.

Becca: Lizzie, you sluttly little bitch.

Molly: So civil.

Becca: So civil. No, I'm kidding.

Molly: Wickham and another officer walk them all the way back to Longbourn, which Lizzie seems is prime because she wants to introduce him to her parents, but then we don't even get a Wickham-meeting-the-parents scene.

Becca: Well, some other things supersede that. But basically, Wickham and Lizzie are just in really early modes of courting each other.

Molly: For sure.

Becca: So, there's time for those things. **[00:07:00]** And other things take precedent.

Molly: Other things happen to happen at this point, which is Jane gets a letter from Netherfield. And Lizzie watches her read it and starts to notice a shift in the vibe. Jane tries to be cheerful when she re-enters the conversation, but Lizzie notices that she's kind of distracted.

Becca: So, have you ever had a friend get a disturbing text message in class or a group hangout?

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And you immediately know something happened?

Molly: Yeah. They just get really quiet and are looking at their phone.

Becca: Yeah. And this is one of those times where if Lizzie had a cell phone, she would have texted Jane, "You okay? You went quiet." And then Jane would have texted back like, "Talk later." But instead, what we have is that Lizzie's just distracted even from her little--

Molly: Boo thang.

Becca: Little boo thang.

Molly: Yeah. She's distracted. And as soon as boo thang leaves--

Becca: **[laughs]**

Molly: Jane and Lizzie go into another the room **[00:08:00]** and Jane tells her that Caroline has written to tell her that they have all left Netherfield and are never coming back.

Becca: Yeah, it's like a full stop. It's a record scratch.

Molly: It's me texting Becca, "What?"

Becca: That is what happened. Also, I saw in your book that you just wrote, "What?"

Molly: Yeah, very large. Very, very large.

Becca: Never coming back. So, back in Episode One, you and I had a discussion about how they've leased Netherfield. And I didn't want to give anything away.

Molly: Is this to say that their lease is up?

Becca: Well, yeah, they don't have to go back out there, I think.

Molly: Well, it seems like they're not coming back for the winter is what everyone keeps saying. So, I was like, "Are they going back eventually, or no?" Have they given up their lease?

Becca: Well, that I'm not going to tell you.

Molly: So, they don't have to stay there. And they're not, like they're renting. And now they're like, "Alright, done with that." That makes sense. I'm surprised.

Becca: I feel this moment is heartbreaking in a big way. Oh, it gets worse. [00:09:00] It gets so much worse.

Molly: Poor Jane! She's so dumb.

Becca: She's not just dumb. It's so easy when you are flirting with someone, courting them, and you really feel you've sensed a connection. And then, they rip the rug out from under you. It is so easy to feel like you were the fool and that you made it all up. I'm not speaking from personal experience.

Molly: Are you not, Becca?

Becca: No, I am. We all are. It's happened to everyone.

Molly: It has.

Becca: We all break hearts and get our hearts broken. That is why these books are still relevant today. The way Jane goes about interpreting this is so heart-wrenching because she's just not willing to accept that anyone could have harmed her.

Molly: She is so trusting.

Becca: And also, she's so insecure.

Molly: Yeah, she doesn't think that she's worth it.

Becca: Yeah. And she's just like, "Well, I guess he never wanted me to begin with," which is a [00:10:00] tough sell considering Jane Austen, every other second of the First Volume of this book, has been like, "Meanwhile, Jane and Bingley were in the corner making eyes at each other."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Lizzie noticed how much they loved each other.

Molly: Yeah, it's not accurate and it gets worse. So, Caroline has written that the only thing she regrets leaving behind is Jane's society and hopes that they will write to each other frequently. She refers to their dialogues as delightful intercourse. And Lizzie listens to all of this with a deep sense of distrust, but she also doesn't really see any loss in them having left because she hates those sisters and she believes that Bingley will come back anyway to visit or to stay. "Do you want to stay for dinner? Do you want to stay forever?"

She tells this to Jane and she adds that the delightful intercourse that they've known as friends will soon be restored as sisters when Jane and Bingley get married, all tied up neatly with a bow. Love that. But, wait, there's more. Caroline [00:11:00] says that they've all gone with Charlie so that he won't have to stay in a comfortless hotel and that she wishes Jane could come but she's sure Jane can't come. Jane can come if she wants.

Becca: It's like, [in a girly voice] "Oh, but I know your parents aren't going to let you go with us on this trip. Like, so sad."

Molly: Yeah, exactly. It's just throwing it in her face that they're off, they're having fun without her. She hopes that her holidays will be the best and, "That your beaux," as in your pleasantries, I suppose, "will be so numerous as to prevent your feeling the loss of the three whom we shall deprive you." So, she is doesn't even count Darcy or Mr. Hurst at all.

Becca: Well, I mean, Darcy is not really society. He's just grump.

Molly: He's just there. Mr. Hurst is just there.

Becca: Yeah, he's just met. I did talk to someone recently who told me that it's pretty heavily implied that Mr. Hurst is just a straight-up lush, which now that I think about it makes so much sense.

Molly: He's a what?

Becca: Alcoholic.

Molly: Like a?

Becca: Like he's drunk all the time.

Molly: Oh, alcoholic. I thought you said something else.

Becca: Lush, what did you think it was?

Molly: Oh, no. Then you said alcoholic and I thought you said, "a colic," [00:12:00] and I was like, color?

Becca: [laughs] Yeah, he's just shitting his pants.

Molly: And I didn't understand here.

Becca: Someone told me that apparently, it's heavily implied, and I can see that now. And I'm glad that our listeners are participating in the dialogue.

Molly: Ooh. So, Jane derives from this that clearly Bingley isn't coming back this winter. And Lizzie says what's clear is that Caroline doesn't think that he should not that he won't. And Jane says that he is his own master and it's his own doing. And I say to that Jane, Bingley is the least his own master in this entire book.

Becca: That is so true.

Molly: He is so codependent.

Becca: I know.

Molly: There's no way he can make this decision for himself.

Becca: I remember vividly in Episode One, you said something to the effect of, I relate to Bingley because he needs like five people's opinions before he makes any move.

Molly: Yes, specifically 12 people's opinions.

Becca: Yeah. And that is so accurate, and I was just going to sit there buttoned up and be like, "He's not the master of his own."

Molly: He's not. [00:13:00] So still, more to come. This is all Caroline's letter. Darcy is eager to see his sister whose name we learn is Georgiana. I'm going to call her Georgie.

Becca: I'm down with that. That's a good Georgiana nickname.

Molly: Yeah. Everyone in the party is equally as eager to see her because she is the most beautiful, elegant, and accomplished woman. And Louisa. Did we know that her sister's name was Louisa Hurst?

Becca: I think we named her something else.

Molly: Yeah, we named her Leanne.

Becca: Louisa Leanne, potato-potato.

Molly: Potato-potato. That Caroline and Louisa are so hopeful that she will become their sister. And to that, I was like, "Oh, obviously because Caroline wants to marry Darcy and that would make Georgie their sister." No, that's not what she meant. [crosstalk] She explains that her brother, Charlie, has already admired Georgie greatly and she believes that Charles is the most capable of engaging any woman's heart, basically saying that she wants Charlie to marry Georgie [00:14:00] Darcy.

Becca: What? This is particularly cruel.

Molly: It was just so out of left field.

Becca: I think it's one of the most brilliant lines from Caroline Bingley so far in this book. She is a mean girl, and she is a mean girl that is effective to a point. This is her most tactile attack.

Molly: Oh, she was planning this.

Becca: This is a very real move that is used by mean girls to this day to just casually mentioned somebody else involved.

Molly: Yeah. Be like, "Oh, he likes that girl."

Becca: It's like, "Oh, he's been so hung up on her for years." I've heard that.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I'm sure you've heard that.

Molly: I have.

Becca: It's really devastating and very easy to do. And the worst part about the attack is that you can claim ignorance, but we know Caroline's not ignorant.

Molly: Oh, there's no way she could be.

Becca: Well, we literally have read portions of her talking to her brother about this girl.

Molly: Right. So, it's just so bitchy, and it's so aimed [00:15:00] at Jane to make herself doubt and we all know that Jane does that enough already.

Becca: Honestly, I think we're all Lizzie Bennet in this moment just being like, "How fucking dare you!"

Molly: Yeah, it's like that meme where it's that boy and he's holding all of the Luke Skywalkers and it's like me when I see the *Last Jedi* trailer and he's holding all the Luke Skywalkers and a gun.

[laughter]

Molly: That's I was just like, we're all holding Jane in our arms.

Becca: Or that Kevin Hart meme where you're just holding him and you're pointing the gun at the other person. I saw that with C-3PO with the recent trailer. We're not going to go there.

Molly: We're not going to go there yet. Jane is like, "Lizzie, isn't it clear? Carolina's telling me that Charlie doesn't love me." I'm calling him Charlie, but we all know I'm talking about Bingley. Right?

Becca: Oh, yeah, we know what you're talking about Charles Bingley.

Molly: "Caroline is telling me that Charlie doesn't love me. And if she even suspects that I kind of like him, she's trying to put me most kindly on my guard." This was not kind, Jane. "Could it possibly mean anything else?" And Lizzie's, like, "Yeah, it could. Caroline [00:16:00] knows that Charlie loves you and she wants him to marry Georgie. And she's followed him in town to keep him there and he's trying to convince you that he doesn't love you." Put very upfront, just this is what it is, and Jane doesn't believe it at all. And Lizzie's, like nobody in their right mind couldn't see how Bingley feels about you. "Could she," meaning Caroline, "have seen half as much love in Mr. Darcy for herself, she would have ordered her wedding clothes."

Becca: Seriously?

Molly: Then very blatantly. Lizzie says, "The case is this. We are not rich enough or grand enough for them." Boom. Caroline wants Bingley to marry Georgiana Darcy because she thinks that the chances of her marrying our boy Darcy would be increased if there is already one intermarriage, but I think that's creepy because then they'd be in-laws.

Becca: I think it's less creepy than the cousin thing.

Molly: Sure, but cousin seems like this time period, everyone's marrying their cousin.

Becca: So that makes it chill?

Molly: No.

Becca: I think this is way more chill. [00:17:00]

Molly: What is chill about Caroline Bingley? Please tell me.

Becca: Oh, nothing is chill about Caroline Bingley. I simply mean that marrying your brother's wife's brother is not physically like blood incest. It has its creepy elements. But I am way more willing to remove those elements for the time period than the cousin element. For our listeners, this is a debate you're welcome to engage in. Cousins versus in-laws, which is creepier?

Molly: Love that for us.

Becca: This is a good journey for us to go on.

Molly: Yeah, I will say that Caroline is really pulling on a lot of strings here. And I think that's what bothers me the most.

Becca: Lizzie also says that she thinks that this plan would work except for Baby de Bourgh--

Molly: Baby de Bourgh.

Becca: --ruining everything.

Molly: Ruining everything. If you are joining us now for the first time Darcy and Baby de Bourgh are basically set to be married at some point.

Becca: Yes, betrothed by rumor.

Molly: But Lizzie says that she doesn't think that just because Bingley admires Georgiana Darcy, [00:18:00] doesn't mean that he likes Jane any less. And she doesn't think Caroline could ever convince him not to like Jane. Jane says that Caroline is incapable of lying.

Becca: This is where I lose a little patience with Jane.

Molly: A little?

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Jane, you're so dumb. I love you. I love her. But she is ignorant.

Becca: Yeah, but we all have our friend who undervalues yourself and she's like, "No, I must be at fault."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: It just gets aggravating when it gets to this point.

Molly: I do have friends like that. And I do yell at them. I'm like, "Shut up."

Becca: You make your friends look at the facts!

Molly: Yes, this is the facts. You are denying them.

Becca: It's like, "I'm going to force you to love yourself!"

Molly: And Jane doesn't, and she hopes that Caroline is just deceived herself and that she's wrong in believing that. And Lizzie's like, "Okay, believe that if you will, and now you can forget about it." She's deceived. And Jane says, "But how could I ever be happy accepting a man whose sisters and friends all wish for him to marry someone else?" Which is real. [00:19:00]

Becca: She's so selfless.

Molly: She is. And also, everyone's approval in these things matters to everyone. You can say you don't care what people think. But you do.

Becca: That is true except basically like, Mary. [unintelligible [00:19:12] Mary does care what other people think.

Molly: Well, Mary doesn't really care what other people think.

Becca: She does because she's trying to prove herself in some way, shape, or form.

Molly: She is.

Becca: I feel like the only person who really doesn't give a shit is Daddy Bennet.

Molly: He really doesn't.

Becca: He honestly doesn't give a shit.

Molly: And then, Lizzie says, "You must decide for yourself if you could live that way." And I noted that I think that Lizzie seems the only one in this novel capable of deciding for herself. Except maybe Kidia and Mary.

Becca: So, like four out of five sisters.

Molly: Yeah. So, Jane needs to decide for herself a little more.

Becca: Jane needs to read some self-love books. She needs to read Jameela Jamil's Instagram feed.

Molly: Oh. We love Jameela Jamil on this podcast--

Becca: Jameela Jamil, if you'd love to come on this podcast, we would adore to have you. [00:20:00]

Molly: We would probably die.

Becca: Yeah. Can we handle it? Unclear.

Molly: Unclear. So, Lizzie tells Jane if she deliberates and finds that she would be more upset over disobliging his sisters than she would be happy over being his wife, then by all means, she should turn him down. And Jane says, "How could you even think that even though I'd be upset, I could never deny him." Huh! Swoon! Sounds like she's already made up her mind. But she won't have to decide anyway she says because he's never coming back. Lizzie says that's just a suggestion of Caroline's interested wishes, and that she doubts that those wishes could influence a young man so totally independent of anyone.

Becca: Which is just an ominous thing for Lizzie to say.

Molly: Well, yeah. And again, a young man so totally independent of everyone, he needs to have opinions.

Becca: He needs them.

Molly: He's the least independent person. Why is it ominous?

Becca: Well, to say he's so independent, of course-- [crosstalk]

Molly: Oh, yeah. I'm sensing some foreshadowing.

Becca: Well, it's already foreshadowed [00:21:00] into the next two chapters we read.

Molly: Yes, which is the only reason I do sense the foreshadowing because I have read the next few chapters.

Becca: When you first read this, did you just think that it was obvious Caroline had just made this up?

Molly: Well, yeah. Because-- No. Here's the thing, my first thought was that Caroline is still just harping on Darcy. Then, when she said the whole thing about him and the other one, Georgiana Darcy, that has me a little bit questioning their family ties, because they're very close family friends. So, there is a possibility that has been planned out at some point. I know that Caroline knows that Bingley and Jane have feelings for each other. So, that is definitely fake that she's pretending she doesn't know. But the potential for them to get actually married, Georgie and Charlie, like that's a possibility--

Becca: Team Georing-- no, no.

Molly: Team Charogie.

Becca: Bingleyanna. [00:22:00] Team Bingleyanna Darcy.

Molly: I'm not Team Bingleyanna Darcy. I just want to say. We're not on that board.

Becca: We're not about this base.

Molly: No, not about that base. Jane tears up though and they decide that they're only going to tell Mrs. Bennet that they left but not the whole story. They're not telling them anything about Georgie Darcy. And the potential not coming back thing, even just knowing that they left, she bewailed, which is my new favorite word.

Becca: This is a tough couple chapters for Mrs. Bennet.

Molly: She's really struggling.

Becca: She's having a time.

Molly: Especially that Mrs. Bennet didn't even like the concept of him leaving for like a day back in chapter two or whenever, where she was like, "Oh, my God, what if he's always away on work? And my daughter is alone in the house," and blah, blah, blah. Now he's gone gone. She's upset.

Becca: Yep.

Molly: Which brings us to Chapter 22. The Bennets go to the Lucas' to dine, and Charlotte once again occupies Mr. Collins' time, because apparently Mr. Collins is invited wherever the Bennets are invited.

[00:23:00] Everyone is thankful. And Lizzie especially again is super thankful, and Charlotte's like, "No biggie, no biggie, I can talk to him because--" **[sigh]** Big surprise here.

Becca: Possibly an even bigger plot twist.

Molly: I couldn't even type straight writing these notes.

Becca: There are so many typos in Molly's notes in this-- **[laughs]**

Molly: Charlotte apparently has some sort of weird thing for Mr. Collins and wants him to marry her.

Becca: There's a really good line about this in there, which is basically like she knows he's not clever and she knows that he's not pleasant, but she knows that she has a shot at scoring him as a husband, so she's going to put on the charms.

Molly: And she does and all of her charms lead to him getting up early the next morning, sneaking out of Longbourn and throwing himself at Charlotte's feet.

Becca: Which is just a little dramatic.

Molly: Well, he sneaks out because he doesn't want anyone to know what he's up to until he is successful because he's feeling a little embarrassed **[00:24:00]** about what happened the last time, two days ago when he tried to get married.

Becca: And this feels like less of a **[unintelligible [00:24:04]]**. I'm going to go into this later but this proposal is a little like different than the Lizzie proposal in a lot of ways.

Molly: Because he has no reason.

Becca: Well, yeah, he just wants a wife.

Molly: Poor baby.

Becca: I mean, did we already forget last chapters?

Molly: No, he really wants a wife.

Becca: Oh, he was not great.

Molly: He's not a poor baby. We don't like him. So, Charlotte sees him coming running to the house and immediately sets out to "meet him" accidentally in the lane. Charlotte, you sly dog.

Becca: Girl, Charlotte fucks!

Molly: She does.

Becca: Charlotte knows what she's got going.

Molly: Charlotte sees him coming and he launches into his usual speeches. And, “As short a time as his long speeches would allow, everything was settled between them.” Basically, he’s like, “Pick a date to make me the happiest man alive.” And she is just like whenever, because she knows that he’s too stupid to be charming is what she then reasons. [00:25:00] But she’s accepting on the basis of the pure and disinterested desire for an establishment.

Becca: Yeah. As I realized they say basically every episode here, the economics of dating in the Jane Austen world. Charlotte was destined for spinsterhood. And she saw an out and she took it, and this is so juxtaposed against Lizzie’s desire for love and companionship. And Jane’s fantasy with this sweet, sweet man who she adored so much. You have Charlotte basically saying, “Yeah, I’d be economically destitute or a leech on my family. So instead, what I have going for me, is this kind of stupid guy will give me a comfortable home. I’ll have an income.” Isn’t that great? It is a different way of looking at things and one that is hard to judge Charlotte for but one in which I feel even Lizzie pities her in the moment, but I feel nowadays is one where we as ladies of the 21st century can really look at the sobering reality of [00:26:00] being unmarried in this era.

Molly: Yeah, well, I have some thoughts on what Lizzie thinks about this, but we’ll get to that. Sir William and Lady Lucas are also very pleased that their daughter’s going to have this income. And Lady Lucas immediately starts calculating with more interest than the matter had ever excited before, how much longer Mr. Bennet has on this earth. I like to think that they’ve thought about it before though because it says that it never excited before.

Becca: Well, it’s never been exciting before but maybe it’s just topic of topics--

Molly: Which makes me think that maybe he doesn’t look quite like Zachary Quinto and maybe he is a little bit closer to Santa Daddy.

Becca: Santa Daddy?

Molly: Santa Daddy.

Becca: Ooh. That is a rough phrase.

Molly: Yeah, I don’t like it. And additionally, I’m still going to go on picturing Zachary Quinto maybe with a little salt and pepper hair.

Becca: Yeah, that’s exactly what we’re talking about here.

Molly: Yeah, question though. Is Sir William not rich from having been knighted and all that because I thought he was a philanthropist?

Becca: I mean, they’re all like kind of rich, including the Bennets. But he’s not like Darcy rich or Bingley rich. He’s not of the high money classes. [00:27:00] He’s just a knight.

Molly: But he’s not as rich as even Collins.

Becca: I think he is richer than Collins, but only because Collins hasn't inherited yet. But this is also very much the fact that Charlotte would have been destitute.

Molly: Right. And she's already 27.

Becca: Yeah, exactly.

Molly: They're just happy for her to have found someone.

Becca: And it's not the same exact situation because the Lucases do have sons, so they have people who will inherit their property. But the little baby boy Lucases would have had to take care of Charlotte in her old age as spinster--

Molly: That's why they say the thing.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I thought it was just funny because then the younger girls are all very excited that they might get to enter society a little sooner, and the boys were relieved from their apprehension of Charlotte's dying an old maid. And I thought that was just funny. But now I see that they would have had to be taking care of her.

Becca: Yeah, they would have been obligated as her brother.

Molly: Forgot about the women thing.

Becca: Okay. I know I talk a lot about the rich and the poor, and the dating and the Austen and all that. But I thought I was overkill again, but it turns out, no, I still [00:28:00] need to drill this into your head.

Molly: Yeah, tell me more about the woman thing.

Becca: So, women in Jane Austen need to marry for their income.

Molly: It's funny because you're saying this, I can hear it echoing in my head in the cavernous chambers of my brain, but I was like Charlotte's going to inherit money, but she has brothers. I think that's maybe what I was forgetting. Because with the Bennets, we don't really have to think about that because they're all women.

Becca: Well, that's why it's a panic with the Bennets. If they had a brother--

Molly: Yeah, I got that. Because if they had a brother, he would inherit the estate.

Becca: Yeah. He would.

Molly: But it's entailed.

Becca: Yeah, it would be entailed to their brother. It is entailed to the next male heir.

Molly: Is every estate entailed to the next male heir?

Becca: Not every estate. It's complicated, but the general rule of thumb is it passes by males.

Molly: Is the estate entailed because they're all women?

Becca: It's entailed because that's the nature of the estate. It passes by fee tail, which is like a--

Molly: Becca is a lawyer.

Becca: I'm a lawyer and the economics of dating in Jane Austen, [00:29:00] the two themes of this podcast. A fee tail is a created device. Think of it a deed, it is enshrined, and it basically says, "This passes by male heir." And you can't sell the property, it has to stay-- when you've inherited the property, you cannot sell it. So, the next person who will inherit it also cannot sell it. And the males are the ones inheriting.

Molly: Got it.

Becca: So theoretically-- like I said, this doesn't exist in America. If by the inheritance-- like Bennet sisters couldn't inherit the estate, but there were no fee tail, then theoretically, Mr. Collins would inherit the estate, but they could scrounge up a bunch of money and buy it back from him.

Molly: I think I get it. I'm just confused that a law like that could exist.

Becca: It preserved the higher classes in the UK for centuries.

Molly: It's bullshit.

Becca: Yeah, I don't know if it's still legal today. But I do know that's how the upper classes kept their wealth. And I also know that's how they kept women from inheriting.

Molly: Why, though? I mean I get it. We're in a different time period. [00:30:00] But I don't understand.

Becca: I think you understand but you are incredulous as to the way this works.

Molly: I also don't want our listeners to think that I'm ignorant of the injustices that women and many other groups of people have gone through all these years. I get it. I know what's happened here, but I just am frustrated by it.

Becca: Oh, yeah. No, it's very different to know the history of England, but then also be reading these characters and caring about them.

Molly: Right. You get to know them. And you're like, "Wait a minute. Charlotte's so great."

Becca: Charlotte's brilliant, and she's smart, and she's such a good companion to Lizzie. And who cares that she's 27 and single? That's how we want to be. But in reality, Charlotte is trying to look out for her own life here.

Molly: She's pretty indifferent about the fact that she's marrying this man. She doesn't really think very highly of him or men or of marriage in general. But she's always had the goal of eventually getting married because it's "the only honorable provision for a well-educated woman of small fortune." Which is her. [00:31:00] She was never very pretty but now she feels all the good luck of a pretty girl.

Becca: She is so practical, but I'm glad she's at least getting some good feelings in because apparently, like I said Charlotte fucks! Yeah, she has abilities to woo a really ridiculously stupid man.

Molly: Yeah. And she did it in a day.

Becca: Attagirl.

Molly: He threw himself at her feet.

Becca: He was on the rebound. I'm going to talk about this more, but it's still impressive.

Molly: Yeah, she's very nervous to tell Lizzie, who is her best friend. And I get that because if there is such a thing as a girl code, she done broke it. But she wants to tell herself and she tells Collins not to mention anything when he gets back to Longbourn, which is very hard for him. Since when he gets back, everyone immediately asks him where he was and I'm imagining specifically Kidia meeting him at the door and saying, "Where were you?"

Becca: I feel like yes, but I also feel like they have no interest in him as well, but they're just bored.

Molly: They have zero interest in him but everyone directly asks him where he was. And he's being mysterious. I love--

Becca: [crosstalk] --to be like not proposing If [00:32:00] that's what you thought.

Molly: Yeah, that's exactly what it is. And he's leaving the next morning finally. So, they have to say goodbye to him that night. And Mrs. Bennet to be polite, so she hopes he'll visit them again at Longbourn soon. And he says, he will. And they're all like, "What?"

Becca: They are like, "Lizzie offended him. Why would he come back?"

Molly: Right. And Mr. Bennet says, "Won't Lady Catherine be upset if you leave again? You'd better neglect your relations than run the risk of offending your patroness." And Collins doesn't see what's happening there and he's like, "Oh, thank you for your friendly caution. I will be sure to clear it with her." And Mr. Bennet says, "Well, if it's at all likely she will be upset, which I'm sure it's very likely, we won't be offended if you don't come."

Becca: They're just like, "Please don't."

Molly: Please, please don't come. And he and Collins are having this war of manners, trying to see who can be more cordial. And Collins is like, "Oh, thank you very much for having me." And Bennet is like, "Please, please don't come back. We don't want you to offend anyone." And Collins is very thankful and says he'll be [00:33:00] writing a letter of thanks as well. But now he wants to wish all of his cousin's health and happiness, even Elizabeth.

Becca: Dark.

Molly: Dark! And just out loud, he says this. And then everyone withdraws. Mrs. Bennet thinking maybe he wants to come back again soon so that he can try to court Mary, which I think is a great idea.

Becca: It would have been a really good pairing.

Molly: It would have been awesome.

Becca: There's some adaptation out there where the lead-up to all of this as Mary just thirsting after Collins, which I love as a conceit. Again, I love picturing Mary as our beautiful, closeted lesbian in the time period.

Molly: Oh, yeah. So gay.

Becca: She's so gay.

Molly: But she would do well with Collins. They would be good friends, maybe beards for each other.

Becca: Oh, I would love that fanfic.

Molly: Please write that for us.

Becca: Somebody write that.

Molly: And Mary thinks more highly of him than anyone else though he is by no means as clever as her. She thought maybe if she encouraged him to read more and improve himself by her example, [00:34:00] he could be okay. So, I really wish for that.

But the next day, Charlotte comes over and tells Lizzie everything that has happened. And Lizzie is just aghast. She says impossible. And Charlotte is a little bit taken aback by this very abrupt reaction from Lizzie. But she says, "Why so surprised? Do you think it incredible that Mr. Collins should be able to procure any woman's good opinion because he was not so happy as to succeed with you?" And I think that's fair. Lizzie collects herself and then tells her she's happy for her. And she says the prospect of their relationship is grateful to her.

Now, I'm kind of seeing where Charlotte's coming from here. And I have some thoughts on what Lizzie might be feeling because it's like, she turned down the guy who didn't seem good enough for her and someone immediately scoops him up and is now talking about how she's all set for life. And I feel Lizzie might be feeling a little bit of like, shit, maybe not, maybe I don't know, Lizzie well enough. But I feel like

if it were me, and I always [00:35:00] feel if I see someone I once turned down dating someone else, I'm like, "Damn, they're happy. Maybe that could've been me."

Becca: Oh, it's so annoying, where you're like, "Oh, man, even the person I didn't want found somebody." It's so bad. It's a very unhealthy instinct. I do not encourage this instinct. We should just let people be happy if we don't want them. But it is an instinct.

Molly: It's an instinct. And I think that Lizzie is experiencing that based on how over the top she rejects the idea.

Becca: I think that's true. I also think there's an element to it that's basically, first of all, again, goes to the fact that it means Charlotte is the heiress of Longbourn.

Molly: Which I didn't think about until they mentioned it in the next chapter. I didn't even process that.

Becca: But I also think it speaks to the fact that Lizzie is young and beautiful. And Lizzie has prospects. So, one of the things that I think is true about Lizzie, despite her independent girl power persona is that she assumes she'll find a good husband. She's not on a level of thinking, she's going to end up like she Charlotte [00:36:00] does at 27.

Molly: How old is Lizzie again? Did we find out?

Becca: We haven't found out. She's much younger than Charlotte though. She is of a ripe marrying age. She is not an old maid at all.

Molly: I do not plan on being married by the time I'm 27.

Becca: I am 26. What is that line from *Broad City*? "I'm 27. What am I, a child bride?"

Molly: [whispers] I've never seen *Broad City*. Becca is aghast. I've never seen *Broad City*. I just watched *Girls* for the first time.

Becca: Literally, I'm sorry if this is going to offend people, but *Broad City* is way more of a priority than *Girls*. *Girls* is not very good.

Molly: I enjoyed it.

Becca: I did not enjoy *Girls*. But regardless, in this time period, 27 is extremely old. But Lizzie is not an old maid. Lizzie is ripe for the picking for many husbands, but I think--

Molly: Many husbands?

Becca: Lizzie is assuming that she's going to be happy in the end. And she's pretty, she's charming, she's smart as a tack.

Molly: She reads the books.

Becca: Exactly. And she's good at being in society. So, she has the ability to be discerning. But she [00:37:00] does come from this place of privilege that I think she thinks it's going to work out. Charlotte has no delusions of that because Charlotte, she's described as being kind of plain, but also Charlotte has lived the reality of, "I'm going to be an old maid."

Molly: Yeah. And her brothers are probably like harping on her about it.

Becca: I don't know how much British people talk about this shit, but she's definitely someone that the town thinks of as someone who's not going to necessarily marry a guy, and she nabbed a guy with a modest income and a good job. She's going to have all the trappings of life that would have been denied to her otherwise. So, does sort of speak to like, it's really easy for Lizzie to mock when she clearly is going to have other suitors. She even has one suitor she's excited about and one that she has no concept of.

Molly: Yeah. Woo! Forgot about him.

Becca: [chuckles] You forgot Darcy's into Lizzie?

Molly: Just because it wasn't really happening in these chapters.

Becca: Yeah. That is actually true. Darcy has not been in this book for like five chapters.

Molly: Yeah, so we forgot about him. [00:38:00] He's forgettable.

[laughter]

Becca: Clearly, but my point is that she has all these guys who are after her. Charlotte does not. And so, it's easy for her to laugh at Collins and his proposal. It's not so easy for Charlotte to do that. And I think this comes from a little bit of Lizzie being insensitive as well, as a friend.

Molly: Yeah. Oh, shortcomings of our girl.

Becca: Yeah, it's true. Those are shortcomings of our girl. It is also true that Charlotte is absolutely wasting her brilliant mind and her companionship.

Molly: Oh, yeah. But she also has said she doesn't care who she marries. And she said that before. "Early on, she was like, you'll find out the faults of your husband after you marry him. Just get married." So, that's what she's doing, and I like that she doesn't go back on herself like that. She has principles and she sticks to them.

Becca: She's a smart girl. She comes from a very different perspective than Lizzie. And this is where the two shall never meet, and Lizzie realizes that a little in this moment.

Molly: She does. She's surprised that Charlotte has sacrificed her own happiness basically for money, bit of a sellout. [00:39:00] And she thinks it's humiliating for Charlotte to picture them together. She's having a moment. I think this is a little bit of a wake-up call to her. And, yeah, it's all just so strange.

Becca: I think it is a bit of a sobering moment for Lizzie.

Molly: Yeah. Charlotte also brings up the fact that it must be surprising since Collins had just proposed to her the day before, which is for sure. But she reminds Lizzie she's never been a romantic, she just wants a comfortable home. And she thinks that she'll be as happy as she can be being married, because marriage isn't the thing that's going to make Charlotte happy.

Becca: Pour one out for our awesome homie, Charlotte, **[fake pouring sounds]** we are losing to a shitty marriage. If only we still had our tea, we finished our--

Molly: I have water.

Becca: No, don't actually pour any water on my floor.

Molly: So, Chapter 23. Sir William comes by to tell the rest of the family, is this the same day or later that day?

Becca: Actually, I'm not sure. I think it could be the same day.

Molly: Yeah, he comes by to make the formal announcement. Mrs. Bennet immediately was like "You must be mistaken." And **[00:40:00]** Lydia says, "Good Lord. Sir William, how could you tell such a story? Do you not know that Mr. Collins wants to marry Lizzie?"

Becca: This is so awkward.

Molly: It's so awkward. And Sir William Lucas is very kind and tolerant and listens to all of their impertinence very calmly. And Lizzie then tells everyone that it's true. Charlotte had told her herself and she earnestly congratulates Sir William. And Jane immediately jumps in and talks about how excellent of character Mr. Collins is.

Becca: Which only Jane could say with a straight face.

Molly: Yeah, and it's also a lie, Jane. And how nice it is that Hunsford is so close to London. Is Hunsford where they live?

Becca: No, I think Hunsford is where Collins lives.

Molly: Oh, so that's very nice for them to be-- **[crosstalk]**

Becca: She'll be like near to the town.

Molly: I see. When Sir William leaves, Mrs. Bennet immediately goes on a rant about how one, it can't be true. Two, Mr. Collins has been taken in, meaning, I think that if it is true, **[00:41:00]** they captured him and--

Becca: That Charlotte used her feminine wiles on him.

Molly: Ah, yes.

Becca: Which is true.

Molly: Slutty Charlotte.

Becca: But I mean, it's the idea that she's been manipulating him.

Molly: Which she has.

Becca: But he likes it.

Molly: He loves it. Three, they'll never be happy together. And four, the match will be broken off. And, of course, it is all Lizzie's fault--

Becca: Which it is.

Molly: --which it is. And that Mrs. Bennet herself has been barbarously used by them all, which she has not.

Becca: "Nor did that day wear out her resentment. A week elapsed before she could see Elizabeth without scolding her. A month passed away before she could speak to Sir William or Lady Lucas without being rude. And many months were gone before she could at all forgive their daughter." Woo!

Molly: She is angry. I have to ask months don't actually pass on these chapters. Right?

Becca: I think this is just perspective. Not perspective, it's reflecting the future.

Molly: It's showing what's going to happen.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Jane is surprised but wishes for their happiness. **[00:42:00]** Lizzie doesn't believe that they will be happy, and Kidia doesn't really care. I wonder how Mary feels about it because Mary could have been a suitor for him.

Becca: Well, I think that most of this fanfic that we're writing, a lot of people would say that Mary's pretty upset.

Molly: She's sad. She's holed herself up in her room with her Bible and she's just been reading.

Becca: I was going to say with Simple Plan.

Molly: Or with Simple Plan.

Becca: Or My Chemical Romance.

Molly: Green Day.

Becca: Maybe just Christina Perri over and over again. **[laughs]**

Molly: So, Lady Lucas keeps calling on Longbourn to say how happy she is.

Becca: I have to give it to Lady Lucas for this because Mrs. Bennet spends so much time just being like, "My daughter--"

Molly: Yeah. Oh my God, you're right. Lady Lucas finally gets to be like, "Oh, my daughter."

Becca: I'm remembering Chapter 5 when they go to the Lucas's after the ball. She's like, "Oh, "Charlotte, didn't you dance with him first?" but then he danced with Jane twice.

Molly: But Jane twice. Yeah, and I imagine that Mrs. Bennet is just sitting there with this force **[00:43:00]** smile on her face like, "Oh, I'm so happy for you."

Becca: That's exactly what's happening. And Lady Lucas knows every moment of it, so she's been waiting for years for the moment to just put Mrs. Bennet in her place. This is a whole other story that could play out.

Molly: Yeah, I love this. Lizzie and Charlotte don't really talk about it. And Lizzie's lost all trust for her. She doesn't think that they'll ever really have confidence in each other ever again.

Becca: Sometimes, a friend makes a decision that is so counter to your belief system that is borderline of a betrayal of you, I feel like Lizzie feels that a little here.

Molly: She does. So instead of having any regard for Charlotte, she turns all her regard to her sister because Bingley still hasn't written. I had to put a little note in here about self-love. Lizzie, what about some regard for yourself? Why don't you take some time, write in your journal, and I don't know.

Becca: She **[crosstalk]** reflect. She's doing okay though. Wickham is still thriving at this point.

Molly: It's true, but she does seem to always have to have concern for other people.

Becca: Yeah, **[00:44:00]** she's a very outward projector of all of her emotions, both good and bad. This is actually a really good point because she took all of her guard off Charlotte without even reflecting on how Charlotte must be doing with all this. And then, she puts it all on Jane instead of dealing with like--

Molly: Instead of dealing with how it's making her feel too because there's got to be something there like we've talked about. Jane had written Caroline back but we haven't heard back from Caroline yet. And Collins' letter arrived, thanking them profusely for having him and also letting them know that the only reason he actually wants to come back so soon is so that he can see Charlotte again and that he'd be back on Monday in two weeks, which is *UGH*. Mrs. Bennet wonders why he would come to Longbourn instead of just going to Lucas Lodge, which I also wonder.

Becca: Well, he's going to inherit Longbourn.

Molly: That's true. Oh.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Mrs. Bennet is stressed. It's affecting her health as we have talked about.

Becca: She has literally made herself sick with anxiety at this point in time.

Molly: The word has gotten around to Meryton that Bingley isn't coming back this winter [00:45:00] and that stresses her out even more.

Becca: Well, yeah, there's a line in a chapter earlier where she was like, "I'm going to marry off two of my daughters. Oh my God."

Molly: And then she marries off none.

Becca: Yeah, and the Collins' one we can clock her for being upset about but the Bingley one, everyone knew. That is so bad.

Molly: Ooh, that's going to make their family look bad.

Becca: It's going to make Jane look scorned and pitied. Which is a damn shame because she's Jane, and she's perfect.

Molly: She's so good. Lizzie starts to get a little nervous. Not that Bingley doesn't love Jane because she knows that he does, but that his sisters might actually succeed in keeping him away and "That the efforts of his unfeeling sisters, his overpowering friend," meaning Darcy, "and the attractions of Ms. Darcy might be too much for the strength of his attachment." Lizzie, have a little faith.

Becca: Yeah. But it's tough when you see this playing out the way it is.

Molly: I know it's not fun.

Becca: Looking bad.

Molly: And Jane won't really talk about her feelings. So, she and Lizzie never really talk [00:46:00] about it because, obviously, Lizzie would never say any of these things to Jane. But luckily for them, Mrs. Bennet talks about it enough for anyone.

Becca: Oh, well, I think that's the total opposite because what's so clear, Austen does a really good job of writing this without writing it down. Jane is devastated.

Molly: She's so sad.

Becca: Devastated and brokenhearted. And every day, she has to hear her mother scream about how she's going to kill this guy.

Molly: Like, "How dare he wrong her!" and blah, blah, blah.

Becca: And then, Jane also was going to be pitied and was ill-used. And Jane just doesn't want to deal with any of it because Jane just wants to cry.

Molly: Yeah, poor Jane. I can't wait to watch this movie.

Becca: Oh, my God. Remember, we still have volume the second and volume the third.

Molly: I know, I can't believe. Collins arrives. It's now two weeks from before, and he's too happy this time to really need much attention. The business of lovemaking relieved them from a great deal of his company.

Becca: I don't think he means what that means.

Molly: Right. But it's just [00:47:00] interesting. Jaw dropped because I thought that meant what it meant today, but I'm sure that it means his courting, his courtship--

Becca: It's possible that Charlotte fucks, but I don't think what's happening.

Molly: It's what it is. He's been going to Lucas Lodge during the day, hangs out, courts Charlotte, comes back at night and they don't have to see him, which is nice.

Becca: You know what he's probably doing though? Masturbating vigorously.

Molly: Oh my God. [laughs] He's residing in his room and he pretends that he went to Lucas Lodge but he's just in his room all day.

Becca: Oh, no. I was saying he goes to Lucas Lodge during the day but at night, after dinner, he'll sit in his bed. This might be too gross, but it is absolutely true.

Molly: Oh, so true. So, Mrs. Bennet is rapidly disintegrating.

[laughter]

Molly: Any mention of Mr. Collins and Charlotte just throws her into an agony of ill humor, and she hears talk of it wherever she goes. I imagine that she's doing a lot of that talking.

Becca: No, I think it's the gossip of the town. Again, everyone thought Charlotte Lucas was going to be an old maid. This is big [00:48:00] news. Also, people know Collins is inheriting this estate. And he chose not to marry any of the Bennet daughters. It looks bad.

Molly: It looks super bad, and I didn't even think about it until now in the book where they talk about how this side of Charlotte makes Mrs. Bennet really angry because she's now her successor in the house. It's wild.

Becca: Back to feeling bad for Mrs. Bennet. That sucks.

Molly: It sucks.

Becca: It really sucks. And Charlotte, I think, loves the Bennets and doesn't want to do them dirty.

Molly: It's not her fault. I mean it is her fault, but it's not her fault.

Becca: It is her fault because I'm sure Mr. Collins would have come back for round two on a Bennet girl if he hadn't gotten Charlotte. But I also can't fault her. She's doing the best for herself.

Molly: She is. And she comes to their house a lot. And whenever she's there, Mrs. Bennet is just imagining that she's anticipating the hour of taking possession of the house and whenever she sees Charlotte and Mr. Collins whispering with each other, she assumes that they're talking about the estate and how they're going to throw out Mrs. Bennet and the daughters [00:49:00] the minute that Mr. Collins dies.

Becca: Mr. Bennet dies.

Molly: [chuckles] Mr. Bennet dies. Mrs. Bennet complains to Mr. Bennet, she tells him how she's feeling about this. And he says, "Let us flatter ourselves that I may be the survivor."

Becca: I like that you have like a low-key crush on Daddy Bennet.

Molly: I have a high-key crush on Daddy Bennet. I'm not even ashamed at this point. Everything he says is brilliant.

Becca: It really is.

Molly: Mrs. Bennet isn't really consoled by the fact that he might be the survivor.

Becca: It's dicey that he's the survivor.

Molly: He's a little old.

Becca: And Collins is 25.

Molly: Yeah, and Mr. Bennet, despite looking like Zachary Quinto, he's just doing well for his age, I guess, but he might die.

Becca: [laughs] The theme of these chapters is Mr. Bennet might die.

Molly: Maybe this is a murder mystery. Who knows?

Becca: Again, that's Agatha Christie.

Molly: Sorry, we've done this already. So, Mrs. Bennet complains then about the entail and says, "If it were not for the entail, I should not mind it." He says, "What should you not mind?" She says, "I should not mind anything at all." And he says, "Let us [00:50:00] be thankful that you are preserved from a state of such insensibility." I love that. But then, she says, "How could one have the conscience to entail away an estate from one's own daughters?" And I say, truly, how could one? Who made the entail? But we've already talked about this, I still don't understand.

Becca: It's very difficult to break a fee tail.

Molly: But who made it?

Becca: Someone way back when.

Molly: So, she asks why should Mr. Collins have it more than anyone else? And Mr. Bennet says he leaves it to her to determine. Which is how Volume the First ends, which seems like kind of a meth way to end.

Becca: Well, not every copy of *Pride and Prejudice* breaks it into volumes. I like that it's broken into volumes here because I think it gives us nice markers to review what we've gone through and give overarching themes to the pieces of this book. But, yeah, that's a dire place to end things. All the Bennets are in disarray at this point.

Molly: Except for Mr. Bennet.

Becca: Who is unflappable.

Molly: He's hot.

Becca: All right, [00:51:00] we're on my study questions now. I've got some good ones this time.

Molly: I'm excited.

Becca: So, I said BINGLEY BETRAYAL in big letters. What happened and what are your predictions for the Bingleys and when they come back if they come back, what actually transpired? And do you buy all of what Lizzie said, or all of what Jane said or somewhere in between?

Molly: I'm on Lizzie's side here. I think that it's all Caroline, and maybe a little Louisa.

Becca: Leanne.

Molly: Leanne. I think that Bingley has nothing to do with this but he probably got called away on business and it seemed like it was going to be longer than a three-day trip. So, they really will all come. Early on, I said the sisters were going to fuck shit up. This is them fucking shit up. And I don't know why because it seems Caroline's bare concern should be her crush on Darcy.

Becca: You would think-- but again, Bingley is inheriting for them.

Molly: Inheriting what?

Becca: The Bingley fortune.

Molly: So, why did they care who he marries? [00:52:00]

Becca: It's about preserving the bloodline of the high class.

Molly: Oh, I see. Do they really want him to marry Darcy's sister? What does Darcy think about all this? These are my questions. I think that Jane is being dumb here. I think that Lizzie is probably correcting that. It's all Charlotte being-- Not Charlotte, Caroline.

Becca: I think there's a little bit in that Jane's being dumb here. But I think that primarily, I understand her instincts pretty profoundly on this. It's a real heartbreaking moment. This is a deep disappointment, and we don't know what's happening. We don't know if he'll be back, when he'll be back.

Molly: Yeah, I don't know if he's coming back. But I do believe that it's the sisters who are keeping him there. I do worry he'll be gone for quite some time.

Becca: Yeah, Graham, we're going to need the sound effect because we have a second proposal.

[music]

Becca: Not necessarily that sound effect, but a sound effect.

Molly: [in a sing-song voice] I can hear the [unintelligible [00:52:54]]

Becca: There's the singing we should have gone for in this episode. [00:53:00] One of the things that I think is interesting is, first of all, we got some back-to-back proposals, which was a bit of a plot twist.

Molly: Very big plot twist.

Becca: But I do think there's a little bit of a difference between the way that Collins goes for Charlotte and Lizzie. And I would argue that Collins developed, if not genuine, at least actual feelings for Charlotte where he didn't for Lizzie.

Molly: I think he did because it actually mentions early on that when she walks into the room, he greets her and asked about her family and stuff in earlier chapters.

Becca: Yeah. And I think it's one of those seeds that's planted beautifully towards the beginning of the book. I don't know how popular an opinion this is but mostly, I think he assumed he was going to be able to just nab one of the Bennet girls, so he nabs Lizzie. He's kind of humiliated and rejected and embarrassed. And then, Charlotte shows him flattery and kindness. And he's so grateful for that, that he's desperate to have her. And the fact that it says he fell to his knees proposing to her, that is a different approach than [00:54:00] "Elizabeth, I'd like to make you my wife."

Molly: That's so true. He was so cordial to Lizzie, and to Charlotte, he was like, "Make me the happiest man alive."

Becca: Exactly. I mean I wouldn't say he was cordial to Lizzie. I would say he planted a bunch of speeches and didn't think he had a shot at losing-- **[crosstalk]**

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Whereas here, there's a sense that he's almost trying for something romantic, and Charlotte is not buying it. But you can tell she actually did listen to him and treat him nicer. Does go to show, everyone needs a friend. And if you are looking for a way into someone's heart, it's not that difficult if that person is really socially awkward.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: Been there. Very dark moments. So, the next question I have. Charlotte's decision versus Lizzie's decision. Charlotte made a pretty pragmatic choice. She doesn't believe in love really in the same way Lizzie does.

Molly: Yeah. She doesn't. She's not a romantic and she knows that about herself, and she says that. I think she made the right choice for her. The only problem with her choice is that his man just proposed to Lizzie, but there's also no stealing **[00:55:00]** your man kind of thing going on because she knows Lizzie hates him.

Becca: Yeah. And it's also again, a little bit of a tragedy because Mr. Collins is so much worse than Charlotte.

Molly: He's so much worse.

Becca: And she's not going to like her husband.

Molly: Yeah. Also, Lizzie is never going to be able to forgive her for turning her out of her own house.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Maybe Charlotte would let her stay. But Lizzie would be miserable there with Collins.

Becca: Well, there's five daughters. They're not going to realistically provide for all five daughters.

Molly: Right. They can't.

Becca: Yeah, it is an inevitability that Charlotte is now tied up in the disinheritance of the Bennet sisters, which is a bit of a tragedy also for these friendships that we have grown to love in these first few chapters of this book. So, that's dark, but we can go on.

I wanted to go to the fact that we are finishing up Volume the First.

Molly: [in a British accent] Volume the First!

Becca: [in a British accent] Volume the First! We started this book with a certain set of expectations set up by the first line. "It is a truth universally [00:56:00] acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." We've basically run out a summer where these girls are trying to get these single men in possession of good fortune or just to interact with them at all. We've seen a trajectory where we've gone from all these eligible single men who we think all these girls are just going to be dating. And now they're all gone.

Molly: They left.

Becca: Yeah, let's unpack this first piece of the story. What are your thoughts on this?

Molly: So, the single men at first, it was all kind of connected to the Bennet sisters in some way. And now, all of the single men have been in their brains promised to someone else. Their family isn't the center of it anymore. Collins is now with Charlotte. Bingley now might be with Baby Darcy. And Darcy might be with Baby de Bourgh. Wickham is still there.

Becca: Yeah, Wickham is still there flirting with Lizzie.

Molly: Wickham is still there, and all the opposite is still there, but all the other ones are out with other people now. [00:57:00] So, I'm interested in what Volume the Second does with them.

Becca: That is a very good question, and also begs the question of will we meet other single men in Volume the Second-- [crosstalk]

Molly: Oh God. What?

Becca: I don't know, I'm just speculating.

Molly: That's too many people.

Becca: You're just going to get overwhelmed by the amount of characters. One thing I wanted to bring up because it really struck me in these chapters, vanity versus pride, just a reminder, pride isn't the title.

Molly: Pride isn't the title. And one more thing I'll say about *You've Got Mail* is that one of the words that I did hear, or set of words, was that Lizzie is too proud before I started going [shouts in excitement]. So, I wonder about that. But you ask your question.

Becca: So, vanity versus pride, I think that actually you can look to some of the characters in these last few chapters and see where vanity or pride hits them. The ones I specifically mentioned were Bingley, Charlotte, Collins, and Lizzie.

Molly: Okay. Charlotte, pride because she doesn't care what other people think. [00:58:00] And she wants herself to have good standing and a good life. But I wouldn't say that she's proud. She's actually quite humble.

Becca: Yeah, I would say there's an element of pride that takes on different meaning nowadays because we as 21st century readers see pride not just as thinking of yourself as better than others, but also as thinking of yourself as not worse than others. Being proud of who you are. I don't know if you guys know this, there's actually a big movement called Pride.

Molly: Yes, Pride. I do that.

Becca: So, it is not just the deadly sin, it is also connected to self-worth.

Molly: Self-worth. Lizzie has big pride.

Becca: You can have it to a fault obviously and this book already shows Darcy having it to a fault.

Molly: Darcy has it to a fault. Lizzie has it to a fault. I think Collins has vanity because if someone does not fit Lady Catherine de Bourgh's standards, he is not going to marry them. He is not really proud of who he is so much as proud of--

Becca: People perceive of him.

Molly: --how people perceive him and his standing in life and his status. So, [00:59:00] he's very vain. And I think Bingley is similar to Jane in that he doesn't have a lot of self-worth.

Becca: Well, I don't know--

Molly: Right now, I'm basing it on the fact that his sisters have taken him away and they're telling him what's good for him, and that's what I imagine is happening. But he knows what he wants and Jane knows what she wants, but they're both not very proud. They don't know how to be who they are. Does he? I don't know. He's such a great guy.

Becca: Well, I'm going to no comment that. I was going to say that they both clearly care so much about each other. It should be enough.

Molly: It should be enough. I wonder if he's got any vanity in him.

Becca: I was just going to offer it up as a speculation. All right. predictions for what comes next.

Molly: Oh, boy. Bingley is gone. Mr. Collins is leaving. We are set to never see Darcy again. What comes next? I imagine that Wickham's got to meet the parents. I think that with those other guys out of the way, Lizzie's got some time to bring her story to the forefront, and maybe [01:00:00] give herself a little-- why don't we call it regard?

Becca: R&R?

Molly: R&R. [laughs] I think she's going to have some time with Wickham. I don't think that Mr. Collins is gone. I don't think Mr. Collins is leaving. I think Mr. Collins is going to be around. And so, with Charlotte. Oh, imagine if the story left at Longbourn and we got to see the sisters and Bingley, and Darcy and Lady-- Oh, what about Lady Catherine de Bourgh?

Becca: I'm sorry, that's pronounced **[in a British accent]** Catherine de Bourgh!

Molly: **[in a British accent]** Baby de Bourgh! And Darcy gets some story time. Oh my God. So, just to recap where we're at right now.

Becca: Yes. We're talking about the web. We have Wickham and Lizzie seem to be happily flirting in a corner. Well, Lizzie has rejected Mr. Collins.

Molly: Mr. Collins is now with Charlotte.

Becca: And then, you move over from that Darcy, as far as we know, still lusting after Lizzie.

Molly: Lusting after Lizzie but promised to Baby de Bourgh who lives across off the street **[01:01:00]** from Collins who is now with Charlotte.

Becca: Meanwhile, Caroline is trying to get them all over the Longbourn because she is wanting to get with Mr. Darcy, and theoretically wants her brother to get with Baby Darcy.

Molly: She doesn't want them to go to Longbourn. She wants them to go to--

Becca: Oh, sorry, not Longbourn. Pemberley.

Molly: Pemberley.

Becca: Meanwhile, we have Bingley and Jane who clearly like each other, but something has--

Molly: Something's going on.

Becca: Some wrench has been thrown.

Molly: Something-- what's it called? There's something rotten in the state of Longbourn.

Becca: Yes, exactly. And are we missing anyone? Oh, poor Mary.

Molly: Mary and Kidia.

Becca: Kidia is chillin'. They really haven't had any drama.

Molly: They haven't.

Becca: They're living. They're thriving.

Molly: It would be interesting to see them find someone.

Becca: I'm not going to comment on that. Okay, funniest quote?

Molly: So, this comes right after Charlotte says yes to Mr. Collins. And it says, "Both parents are very excited about the prospect and Lady Lucas began directly to calculate with more interest in [01:02:00] the matter had ever excited before. How many years longer Mr. Bennet was likely to live?"

Becca: Extremely dark. I love it.

Molly: Very dark.

Becca: Questions moving forward? Everything?

Molly: Everything. How? Charlotte and Collins how? What Bingley? Where? When? Come back?

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Why Caroline? What?

Becca: Fabulous, very concise. And then, finally who wins the chapters?

Molly: Oh man. Mr. Bennet.

Becca: I said no one in my notes.

Molly: Yeah, here's the thing. I want Charlotte living her life for herself, but hurt some people's feelings and ruined her friendship with Lizzie.

Becca: Also marrying a guy who's just not worth her.

Molly: Not worth her. Lizzie being a bad friend but additionally, still going with her gut. So, got to love Lizzie for that but I feel she showed some negative colors today. Poor Mrs. Bennet, she doesn't win.

Becca: Yeah. No-- [crosstalk]

Molly: She's losing.

Becca: She's lost the chapters. We can safely [01:03:00] say that.

Molly: Caroline bitch. Kidia wasn't really in it. Mary wasn't really in it. Well, Collins got what he wanted.

Becca: Yeah, but no, we're not giving into Collins.

Molly: I'm sorry I even suggested it. So, I guess the only one left is Mr. Bennet who had a couple zingers.

Becca: Mr. Bennet, you can take this limping victory.

Molly: Yeah. You won by process of elimination.

Becca: You won by not being upset at the end of this.

Molly: Yeah. I think he secretly is.

Becca: He might be.

Molly: Because his estate. They're all wishing for him to be dead.

Becca: That is true. But he's not dead.

Molly: He's not dead.

Becca: That's the dream.

Molly: We've got to remind everyone that Mr. Bennet is not dead.

Becca: So anyway, that is Volume the First of *Pride and Prejudice*. I'm so excited to move forward in this book. I'm excited for what you're going to think about the next volume of this book.

Molly: I can't wait.

Becca: I can't wait either. It's so exciting.

Molly: Is it the same length as this?

Becca: No, this is the longest volume.

Molly: Ah.

Becca: This is page 130. And this book is less than 400 pages. **[01:04:00]**

Molly: Wow.

Becca: So, we are solidly through it.

Molly: Wow. So, that's our time.

Becca: Until next time, stay proper.

Molly: And find a husband or a wife.

Becca: Yes.

[music]

Molly: Pod and Prejudice is edited by Molly Burdick with art by Torrence Browne. Special thanks to our audio producer, Graham Cook, without whom we would sound like garbage fire.

To keep up with the show, you can follow us on Twitter and Instagram @podandprejudice. We're also on Facebook at facebook.com/podandprejudice. If you like what you hear, check out our Patreon at patreon.com/podandprejudice to see how you can support us or just drop us a rating and a review wherever you listen to podcasts. Thanks for listening.