

Molly: Hey everyone, this is Molly. Before we begin today, we wanted to thank our newest patrons Kayla and Lauren. While we're here, we also wanted to give a shoutout to Amy who wrote in an awesome email, giving us some information on things that we asked about last episode. First off, field sports, which we thought meant croquet, actually refers to hunting and shooting. Another thing that I can't really picture Darcy doing. In terms of Mr. Darcy's patronage and the church, Amy thinks that this means that he has the right to appoint clergy to living. So, if he married Lizzie, he might do something for Collins and Charlotte, in terms of Darcy's first name. This is exciting. According to David Shapard's *Annotations*, it was common among the aristocracy to give the oldest son, the mother's maiden name for his first name, especially if she was rich or titled.

Basically, Darcy's parents don't want anyone to forget who his mother's family is as his father had enough money and status to marry the daughter of an earl. Thanks, Amy. This was so informative. For everyone else, if you ever hear us saying something wild on the show or **[00:01:00]** asking a question that you know the answer to, please, please email us at podandprejudice@gmail.com. We'd love to hear from you. Enjoy this week's episode.

Becca: Hi, I'm Becca.

Molly: Hey, I'm Molly.

Becca: Welcome to Pod and Prejudice.

Molly: We're going to talk about Jane Austen with you today.

Becca: We are indeed. How is everyone doing today because I--

Molly: They can't answer us, Becca.

Becca: Well, I was going to say because I--

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

Becca: If you are listening to us for not the first time, you may notice that we sound a little bit different today. That is because we were both cursed, and by cursed, we mean hit with viruses, because New York City is a petri dish.

Molly: It's disgusting.

Becca: If our dulcet tones are not quite as dulcety as they usually are, please blame influenza virus on my behalf and I believe--

Molly: Just a cold.

Becca: The common cold on Molly.

Molly: The common cold, but if you know me, you know that I'm a miserable sick person. If I'm sick, no one will hear the end of me. I just wail about it. **[00:02:00]** I'm actually really impressed with myself the

past few days, even though I've been sick, I've been taking really good care of myself and also went to like six auditions.

Becca: I am so proud of you. I've done literally nothing but complain about how sick I am. Everyone in law school, to be fair, I had like--

Molly: Like you went to law school? Like you went and did--

Becca: I did.

Molly: But I usually don't do anything.

Becca: I had a really busy week in law school, and they told everyone I was like, "I got this work done, as I was lying in my bed with a fever," and everyone was like, "I feel so bad for you." And I was like, "Yes, feel bad for me."

Molly: They don't feel bad enough, honestly.

Becca: [laughs] Pity me more.

Molly: Yeah, we're insufferable. Welcome to our podcast where we're going to read Jane Austen for the first time on my part.

Becca: And Jane Austen for something time on my part.

Molly: Then we're going to talk about it with you. Today, we are discussing--

Becca: Chapters 12 and 13 of Volume II of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Molly: Volume II, Chapters 12 and 13. Just to catch you up where we're at, what just happened. Darcy proposed to [00:03:00] Lizzie.

Becca: Did we call it Proposal Armageddon the last time we spoke?

Molly: I think it was a Proposal Armageddon. This was a disaster of a proposal. He just totally--

Becca: "Despite all of my best instincts, and despite how much you suck, I love you. Take my hand in marriage."

Molly: And she was like, "Um, no."

Becca: "You're the last man on earth I could ever be prevailed upon to marry."

Molly: Wow, that was exactly what she said. Becca's read this book a lot of times.

Becca: That is a very famous line from this book. I just know it off the top of my head because I can physically hear Keira Knightley saying it. “You are the last man on earth I could ever be prevailed upon to marry.”

Molly: Wow, Keira Knightley.

Becca: Keira, if you want to come on the podcast when we do the *Pride and Prejudice* movie, we’d love that.

Molly: Oh, my God!

Becca: But Molly can't handle it, so maybe not.

Molly: No, I can do it. Chapter 12. Lizzie wakes up the next morning and she's still thinking about this proposal, which is very relatable.

Becca: Every time something really dramatic happens, I can't sleep afterwards. I'll just be lying there [00:04:00] and playing it over in my head and be like, “And I didn't get to say this thing,” or, be like, “I said that thing so well.” You know what I mean?

Molly: Mm-hmm. That's what I did last night after this audition, and I've been sleeping. I was like, “Molly, you're sick. You have to fall asleep” and I was like, “But what if I had said it this way instead?”

Becca: Oh no.

Molly: I think it probably went fine. Anyway, so Lizzie can't think about anything else, so she decides to go for a walk to distract herself. But she remembers that Darcy sometimes walks at her favorite walk, obviously, because he's in love with her. So, she decides to walk a different way.

Becca: Oh my God. This is such a mood. Have you ever had a really bad hookup, and then you've decidedly tried to go places you don't think they'll go?

Molly: It's been so long since I've been in the same area someone I've hooked up with because of college.

Becca: Yes, that's true. Our college was a big breeding ground for these types of avoidances. They feel very real, but since then, I live in New York City although this is 100% true. A guy I hooked up with in college, I saw him on the subway. He made eye contact with me, walked into the subway, [00:05:00] saw me, ran to the next car over. I have seen people sit in the New York subway with poop in the car. But this guy saw me and ran.

Molly: That's unreal. That's the testament to something.

Becca: I am so desirable, guys.

Molly: So desirable. But Lizzy and Darcy didn't hook up. They merely proposed marriage. There was the marriage proposal.

Becca: Yeah, just a proposal.

Molly: She just walks up and down the lane alongside the park. Then, she's like, "Oh, it's such a nice day, I'm going to stop and look in the gate." She mentions at this point that she's been in Kent for five weeks, and that the time has started to affect the verdure of the trees. So, I looked that up because I didn't know what that meant. And it means that they're lush and green, so that means it's summer.

Becca: Spring.

Molly: Spring. What month is it?

Becca: I think it's April if I had to put a date on it. I think we're in April. She left Longbourn in March.

Molly: Okay, that would make it like mid-April.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: All right. She's about to keep walking [00:06:00] when she sees a man.

Becca: And she's like, "No, it's him!"

Molly: She thinks is probably him, so she's she turns around, she starts turning away.

Becca: This is so relatable, I can't- [crosstalk]

Molly: And then, he goes, "Lizzie!" and she just turns right back around and waits for him to come talk to her.

Becca: She's like, "Oh, hey! didn't even see you there."

Molly: Yeah, like, "Ooh--" [crosstalk]

Becca: It's so awkward.

Molly: Lizzie, you can leave. She could have just ignored him. Couldn't she have?

Becca: We're glad she didn't.

Molly: We're glad she didn't for the sake of the book, but--

Becca: But also like, at that point, you're caught. How far is she going to run? He's faster than her, I'm presuming.

Molly: She's like standing in the gateway, like admiring and she sees him coming towards her. And she goes, "Oop," and she turns around and doesn't even pivot. She's like, "Pivot!"

Becca: Yeah, [laughs] I'm sure that's exactly what happened, but I'm picturing Darcy as being a tall gent with those long legs. When you are a woman--

Molly: Oh [crosstalk] close the gap.

Becca: Yeah, exactly. When you were a woman in this time period, you have petticoats and a corset to worry about. So, you're [00:07:00] running and it's not going to go as well for you as it is for him.

Molly: She turns back around, and he gives her a letter, which she takes and then he says with haughty composure.

Becca: Elizabeth!

Molly: "Elizabeth, I've been walking in the grove for quite some time hoping to bump into you." And then he says, "Please read this letter," bows and runs away.

Becca: So awkward. He practiced that one too. He's standing in front of the mirror being like, "Okay, she needs to know." But you're not going to be able to articulate this to her in person because you can't speak to her.

Molly: He wrote her really long letter and I love him. Oh, no. She opens the letter, and I think it's two pieces of paper, but it might be four pieces of paper written all the way through, like front and back.

Becca: I think she said two pieces of paper, but I'm assuming he did front and back and all the words are really--

Molly: Really, really tiny writing, so it's long.

Becca: Caroline would be so impressed after her complimenting his letter-writing abilities.

Molly: I just gagged myself. [00:08:00]

Becca: So did Darcy. Anyway.

Molly: The letter, he starts by saying, "Don't worry, I'm not going to propose again. I don't want to embarrass myself. I would much rather forget the events of yesterday, but please read this letter." This is a long letter. I've tried to do my best to summarize the events of the letter, but my notes on the letter are probably as long as the letter itself. So, he begins by saying she's accused him of two offenses of very differing magnitudes. One of the lower magnitude, detaching Bingley from her sister. And the other, ruining the prospects of Mr. Wickham which he thinks is much, much worse and a much graver accusation.

Becca: I think that's fair.

Molly: I think so too. It's petty as shit for her to be as angry about--

Becca: Well, I think that it is totally okay to be mad about the Jane thing, partially because she's biased and we stan Jane at all costs, and Jane was so devastated, but Wickham's life was legitimately ruined in his version of events, which as we now see, we'll get there, [00:09:00] but oof!

Molly: Yo, fuck George Wickham. Fuck it.

[imitating trumpet]

Becca: Fuck George Wickham.

Molly: For those of you who like me have never read this book, buckle up.

Becca: It's going to get dicey. It's going to get dicey-Darcy.

Molly: Becca, sit down.

Becca: I'm so sorry.

Molly: He's going to tell us everything starting with the Bingley situation. He begins by saying that he's sorry.

Becca: [in a sing-song voice] These are my confessions.

Molly: He knew immediately that Bingley loved Jane. But his first cause for alarm was when he was at the ball specifically while he was dancing with Lizzie.

Becca: I want to pause here for a second because we learned something about Bingley in this letter. He basically says, "Bingley is the kind of guy who falls in love with everyone," but he realizes it's actually different with Jane.

Molly: He says it's different with Jane. He says he knew automatically when he saw the way that Bingley looked at Jane that this is not how he is with other girls, like he feels something real for her.

Becca: Yeah, I thought that was sweet. My Jingley heart sings [00:10:00] a little bit for it to be like, "Oh, he's the kind of guy who gets really excited about every girl, but this girl, this one girl, he had these serious feelings for." It's very nice.

Molly: Yeah, my Jingley heart kind of died, but it's okay because maybe it can come back, but while he was dancing at the ball with Lizzie-- he reminds her they danced together, which is good. He remembers that Sir William came up to them and revealed that Bingley's affections had made people, in general, think that he and Jane were going to get married. From that moment, Darcy started watching Jane and he thought she was "cheerful and engaging as ever, but without any symptom of particular regard." Now, he didn't think that Jane liked Bingley back, which I thought at first, I was like, "Idiot," but then I remembered--

Molly and Becca: Charlotte said--

Molly: --that.

Becca: -the same thing!

Molly: I went to go find it. Charlotte said this at some point to. What he says is, "The serenity of your sister's countenance and air was such as might have given the most acute observer a conviction that, however amiable her temper, her heart [00:11:00] was not likely to be easily touched." On page 22 of this book in Chapter Four or some shit.

Becca: I think this was Chapter Six, because it's the same chapter where Darcy starts lusting after Lizzie.

Molly: Yes. So, this is in Chapter Six, you're right, where Lizzie and Charlotte are talking-- and they're gossiping [unintelligible [00:12:12]]. It says, "She considered with pleasure that it was not likely to be discovered by the world in general since Jane united with great strength of feeling, a composure of temper and a uniform cheerfulness of manner which would guard her from the suspicions of the impertinent." Basically, Lizzie at this point was thinking that nobody would know that Jane liked Bingley.

Becca: It's absolutely true. What Lizzie particularly notes is, if I didn't know Jane, I wouldn't know she liked him but because I know Jane so well, I can tell she adores him. This was hinted at so early on in the book.

Molly: So early on, and that's when Charlotte says, if a woman conceals her affection with the same skill that she was just talking about from the object of it from Bingley, she may lose the opportunity of fixing him, and she did. [00:12:00]

Becca: Shouts to Charlotte again for being amazing. She's so smart.

Molly: I can't believe. Back to the present. Darcy says he definitely hoped that she didn't like him back because of her connections and all the same reasons he was talking to Lizzie about the night before. But he tried to view her feelings impartially. Basically, he was just wrong. He made a big dumb mistake, and he feels a little bit of regret about that. Then he goes on to just viciously--

Becca: Oh, eviscerates her family. Remember when we were at the Bingley ball, and Mrs. Bennet was on cloud wine and Mary tried to sing and everyone was just making a whole big mess?

Molly: Oh, yeah. I do, and Lizzie was a little embarrassed about all of that.

Becca: Yeah, that was so crucial to why things fell apart between Jane and Bingley.

Molly: Yes, I will read what he says. "The situation of your mother's family, though objectionable, was nothing in comparison to that total want of propriety so frequently, so almost uniformly betrayed by [00:13:00] herself by your three younger sisters and occasionally even by your father, pardon me."

Becca: I did not appreciate bringing Daddy Bingley into this.

Molly: Oh, no. I said, Yeah, pardon you? Pardon you? Don't you dare touch daddy Bingley.

Becca: I mean, the thing is daddy Bingley gives no fucks, whereas Jane and Lizzie give fucks. I think maybe that's why he occasionally breaks decorum, but it's so charming.

Molly: Then he goes on to say that don't worry, "You and Jane are still great. Nobody thinks that of you." Then he explains exactly what he did, which is what I have wondered the most about, because how did he have anything to do with this? He says that all he really did was point out the certain "evils" involved in marrying Jane. He doesn't think that he would have succeeded in actually putting off the marriage except for the fact that he also told Bingley that Jane didn't like him, and we all know that Bingley will agree with whatever Darcy says. "Bingley has a great natural modesty with a strong independence [00:14:00] on my judgment than on his own," and I wrote, "And also the judgment of 11 other people."

Becca: I do want to point out the fact that Bingley liked Jane so much that even though he needs 12 opinions on everything, he would still have married her, even if everyone disliked her if he still thought she loved him.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Oh, Molly. Molly just broke inside when I said that.

Molly: Yeah, he really loved her.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: And Jane really loved him.

Becca: Yeah. Darcy done bad here.

Molly: I think that they'll get back together.

Becca: I'm not going to confirm or deny that.

Molly: I know, you're not going to confirm or deny, but I'm just saying for our listeners, I think they're going to get back together.

Becca: That is a prediction of the record.

Molly: Yes. Darcy overall doesn't blame himself for what happened because he was acting in what he thought was the best interests of his friend, which I guess he was, but he regrets one thing, not telling Bingley that Jane was in town even though he knew that she was. This means that he also lied to Lizzie when Lizzie asked him if he knew that Jane was in town, and he had said no, he didn't know.

[00:15:00]

Becca: It also means Caroline was actually hiding.

Molly: Yeah, Caroline has no redeeming qualities.

Becca: Yes, we love hating Caroline Bingley.

Molly: Caroline Bingley fucking sucks. Who plays her in the movie? Don't tell me.

Becca: I'm not going to tell you.

[sniffing sounds]

Becca: I'm already naming this just the flu episode.

Molly: Oh, wait. For our patrons, if you want to support us on Patreon, you can head on over to patreon.com/podandprejudice for recordings of us packing up phlegm.

Becca: Or also for like fun things, like we do Fun Facts About Jane Austen.

Molly: Yeah, for \$7 a month, you can get a fun fact, you can get blooper reels, you can get my notes for only \$3 a month.

Becca: Yeah, and you can get the text messages Molly sends me which are hilarious when she reads something funny in the book.

Molly: Yeah, I'm pretty funny. [crosstalk]

Becca: You're hilarious.

Molly: Check us out. Back to the book.

Becca: Darcy was trying to act in the best interest of his friend. Now, we're going to touch on this in the study questions as well. But I think it comes in at two angles, one is good and one bad. One is that he clearly has this class seg, [00:16:00] and he's trying to pull his friend out of marrying someone with low connections, and not just low connections, but specifically low connections that are badly behaved.

Molly: Yes, the badly behaved part is the big one.

Becca: Yeah. The other one is that he genuinely was trying to save his friend from marrying a woman who didn't love him.

Molly: Which is so fucking funny because she loved him so much, and he's such an idiot. But also, she wasn't showing it.

Becca: Listen, Darcy still thought it was a good idea to propose to Lizzie at this point in time because Darcy is not the best judge of character or emotions.

Molly: I have a really big soft spot in my heart for this dumb numb boy.

Becca: He's so peak dumb, but he's great.

Molly: Now, we move on to the weightier accusation. This would be the Wickham accusation.

Becca: And the tea is going to--

Molly and Becca: Spill.

Molly: He says he doesn't know exactly what Wickham told her, so he's just going to tell her everything. He starts by telling us everything that we already know that Wickham's [00:17:00] dad was a very respectable man who took care of the estate. We learn that the reason he was poor was the extravagance of Wickham's mother, which was interesting, Mama Wickham.

Becca: Yeah, Mama Wickham has some bad qualities, especially bad qualities for someone who's not of the higher classes because you're allowed to be extravagant if you're Caroline Bingley, but you're not allowed to be extravagant if you're Lady Wickham.

Molly: Right. Darcy's father put Wickham through school, he was his godfather, and he intended to provide for him in the church should he choose that as his profession, this is key. Now, Darcy says that for a long time, now he's thought of Wickham in a different manner. He thinks that Wickham couldn't hide his vicious propensities, his want of principles from Darcy, who saw him in his unguarded moments which Wickham would hide from Darcy's father.

Becca: Which means that Wickham was basically Darcy's dick friend.

Molly: Yeah, he's an asshole.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Darcy says that, "In the will, he particularly recommended it to me to promote his advancement in the best manner that his professional might allow. [00:18:00] And if he took orders, desired that a valuable family living might be his as soon as it became vacant." Now taking orders meaning taking orders of the church, right?

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Yes. If he took orders of the church, give him the family living. There was also a legacy of 1000 pounds to be given away.

Becca: Yeah, like a baby inheritance, but just like a comforter.

Molly: Little--[crosstalk]

Becca: If Wickham had wanted it, he gets to be a member of the gentile class, as a member of the clergy and he gets this small little fortune, a pretty good life. Pretty boring, though.

Molly: But Wickham wrote to Darcy to inform him that he would rather study the law--

Becca: Same.

Molly: --as Becca does, and he hoped instead of the living to get some money, he resigned all claim to the assistance in the church. Darcy gave him 3000 pounds as a way to be like, "Okay, go study the law. I know 1000 isn't going to do it for you in the law. Here's 3000 pounds, and you resign all claim to this living." Done. Wickham gave up the law or perhaps never even went to study the law. [00:19:00] Darcy isn't sure.

Becca: Yeah, it's unclear whether or not he tried, and then decided it was too hard, or whether or not he literally just took the 3000 bucks and blew it.

Molly: Yeah, Darcy says that he lived a life of idleness and dissipation. What does dissipation mean?

Becca: To dissipate is to squander or fritter away, so he's spending his money recklessly.

Molly: I picture him at the brothel.

Becca: Think of the time period. I am picturing not just a brothel. I'm picturing alcohol, opiates, loose ladies.

Molly: Asshole.

Becca: An asshole because he's doing it with Darcy's money that was supposed to be for his law degree. I'm getting one of them. They're expensive and they take a lot of work.

Molly: Yeah, he writes to Darcy again and says that he found law to be an unprofitable profession.

Becca: No kidding.

Molly: Yeah. He was absolutely resolved on being ordained. Bitch said he didn't want it.

Becca: Of course, he didn't want it. So being a member of the clergy is considered a little bit boring by a lot of the upper class. He didn't want it because it was boring and he could be a lawyer instead, but then he didn't do that and he's like, [00:20:00] "Well, now I'm broke. Maybe it just be good to be in the church."

Molly: Yeah, but Darcy says no because he resigned all claim to it. Yeah, I would if I was Darcy too.

Becca: Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, no inheritance.

Molly: Right. Wickham gets mad. Then, we get some new information that we did not have.

Becca: This is a doozy.

Molly: My notes in this part of the book are just like a bunch of question marks and like, "What!?"

Becca: Oh, it also has exclamation points as well.

Molly: Yeah, exclamation points, question mark, question mark, question mark, question mark. A lot of circled words.

Becca: Yeah, you really didn't see this one coming.

Molly: No.

Becca: And it made me so happy.

Molly: I had no idea. Honestly, now that I've seen it, I guess it makes sense, but get ready y'all. Darcy brings this up as a circumstance which I would wish to forget myself. He asks Lizzie first to not tell anyone.

Becca: This is a big deal because it can ruin a woman's reputation, this sort of story.

Molly: Yeah, Baby D.

Becca: Georgiana [00:21:00] Darcy.

Molly: She was put in his and Fitzzy's custody as we know.

Becca: Yep.

Molly: And then, a year ago she was taken from school.

Becca: She was in school in London. And then-- you know how I told you a lot of upper-class ladies go study privately somewhere else?

Molly: Okay, so she went to go study privately at Ramsgate, studies with a woman named Mrs. Younge. Mr. Wickham followed her there, and I guess he was friendly with Mrs. Younge, and all of the Darcy's were received in Mrs. Younge's character.

Becca: Yeah, I basically think that Mrs. Younge was basically put in charge of taking care of Georgiana and Darcy blames her for being too taken in by Wickham. We've seen how Wickham operates, so he's really good at taking people in.

Molly: He's flirty and charming.

Becca: And hot.

Molly: And hot. So, he comes to Ramsgate, and he recommends himself to Georgiana Darcy.

Becca: Aka he tries to seduce a--

Molly and Becca: 15-year-old girl.

Molly: She's 15, [00:22:00] and she believes herself to be in love because, of course, you do have this beautiful man comes and says that you're in love with him.

Becca: And they knew each other growing up, too. So, she may have idolized him.

Molly: Yeah, it's terrible. She agrees to elope with him. Darcy goes to visit few days before the marriage is supposed to happen. And she tells him everything because he's her best friend, and he's like, "Are you shitting me, Georgiana Darcy?" This was recent, was it not?

Becca: Oh, this was about a year ago.

Molly: This was recent. Less than a year ago is when Wickham appeared in--

Becca: That summer.

Molly: Yeah, that was right before.

Becca: Mad fresh.

Molly: It was not like this had been like years of stewing. This had just happened, and then he dares show his face around Mr. Darcy.

Becca: Not really though. He doesn't dare show his face around Mr. Darcy.

Molly: Right. Darcy didn't want to publicly expose everything because he didn't want to ruin Georgiana's reputation, but he writes to Wickham telling him, "Get out of here," and Wickham leaves. [00:23:00] He knows that Wickham was after Georgiana Darcy's fortune, which was about 30,000 pounds, which is a lot.

Becca: A lot today, but in that time was like--

Molly: More than Wickham ever had though.

Becca: Yeah, huge amount of money.

Molly: Yeah. And he was also looking to revenge himself on Mr. Darcy. Now, Darcy says, "Unless Lizzie rejects all of this as false. He hopes that she will acquit him of cruelty toward them," which I can, I can acquit him personally. He notes that there was no way for her to have known all of this before and the only reason that he didn't tell her everything last night was because he was too much in a heat.

Becca: What he is basically saying here is, "I don't have the capacity to speak with you, because I'm too into you. So, I had to write it down."

Molly: He couldn't figure out how to say it, what to do. It's very endearing, which I hate. Then, he offers up a witness. He says, "If you don't believe me and you can't listen to me, go to Fitzy, he will confirm everything. He's also on the will, he also is in custody of Georgie. Go to him, and he'll tell [00:24:00] you." Then at the end he says, "I will only add, God bless you." Heck.

Becca: Mr. Darcy, you have written a letter that has changed the entire trajectory of this book.

Molly: It's really a lot. Chapter 13.

Becca: Aka Lizzie responds to the letter.

Molly: In real-time.

Becca: In real-time.

Molly: This chapter is so brilliantly written. This is like in the seventh Harry Potter book when things from the second Harry Potter book start being important.

Becca: Yes. It really does take you back to the very beginning of the book and makes you question the entire book.

Molly: Yeah, also something that's very real is Lizzie in the course of this chapter will read the letter, like seven times. Every time that she reads it, she reads it with a different mindset and she gets more out of it each time. It's so real that you get out of something that you're reading what you want to get out of it. You get out of these interactions, what you want to get out of them, when you hate a person, everything they do is going to bother you. If love a person, [00:25:00] everything they do is going to be like, "Aww."

Becca: We've talked about how Lizzie has bitch cracker syndrome, which is basically just prejudice.

Molly: We get that a lot in this chapter too. It begins with that, it's all in caps. Lizzie's reaction. She hadn't known what to expect from this letter, it excited a contrariety of emotion. I loved this word. So, I looked it up, even though I could tell what it means. It's contrary opposition or inconsistency between two things, meaning her emotions are all over the place.

Becca: Obviously, this is a lot.

Molly: She begins to read with a strong prejudice against everything he might say. She's amazed that he even believes himself capable of an apology.

Becca: Lizzie!

Molly: First, her response to everything about Netherfield. She read this part with an eagerness which hardly left her power of comprehension, and from impatience of knowing what the next sentence might bring was incapable of attending to the sense of the one before her eyes. She's not even paying attention.

Becca: She's just going through it so quickly that she's like, "I want to know what happens. I want to know what happens."

Molly: She's blindly going into this. [00:26:00] She is prejudiced against him, so she's not going to be on his side, obviously. She decides immediately that he's lying. He's not showing any remorse for what he'd done, which on my first read, I agree. Then, she moves on Wickham, and she reads this part a little more carefully. She's stressed because this story resembles Wickham's story so closely and so there's a possibility that Darcy is telling the truth.

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Molly: I loved this. Her feelings on this part of the letter were more acutely painful and more difficult of definition.

Becca: There's a lot to unpack here with how Lizzie's feeling about this because she really justified a lot of her hatred towards Darcy later on based on how he treated Wickham. She also was so enamored with Wickham. The feeling that you trusted someone and even had feelings for them, and that person is a garbage person is one of the most embarrassing and painful feelings that you can possibly feel, especially when it means that you hated somebody [00:27:00] on their behalf who didn't do anything wrong to them.

Molly: Yeah. She's running around just exclaiming out loud that it's all lies. She stuffs the letter away without even barely reading the last two pages. She keeps walking, but she can't think of anything else, so she takes the letter back out and reads it again, just the Wickham part, and she examines it even more closely trying to be impartial, weighing the possibility of each side and she starts to think it's possible that Darcy is telling the truth and is actually blameless in all of this. She looks in particular at the claim to Wickham's quote, general profligacy, which means recklessness and extravagance. She realizes that she can't prove Darcy wrong. I wrote that I just wanted to read this--

Becca: Oh, it is so good.

Molly: -because it's so good.

Becca: It's so good. And you as the reader are realizing this as Lizzie's realizing it. I'm sorry, guys. I just laughed because Molly just wrote, "He's fake!"

Molly: All caps, "HE'S FAKE. GET READY." "As to his real character had information within her power, she had never felt a wish of inquiring. His countenance, voice [00:28:00] and manner had established him at once as in the possession of every virtue. She tried to recollect some instance of goodness, some distinguished trait of integrity or benevolence that might rescue him from the attacks of Mr. Darcy, or at least by the predominance of virtue, atone for those casual errors under which she would endeavor to class with Mr. Darcy had described as the idleness advice of many years' continuance, but no such recollection befriended her. She could see him instantly before her in every charm of air and address, but she could remember no more substantial good than the general approbation of the neighborhood and the regard which his social powers had gained him in the mess."

Becca: Lizzie was taken in by a hot guy.

Molly: He was hot, he was charming, and he was fake.

Becca: So fake. Listen, Lizzie, Elizabeth, we've all been there. There are men out in this world, and you know what? There are women as well. Really beautiful people--

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: --who find a way to use their unbelievable charm and their beauty to hide the fact that they are [00:29:00] basically skating through life and hurting people around them. Now, this is not all beautiful people, obviously, there are some incredible--

Molly: There are some really nice beautiful people like Jane.

Becca: Yeah, there are the Janes of the world and there are the Wickhams in the world. There are two ways to be upper level beautiful.

Molly: Caroline is probably hot.

Becca: Yeah, but Caroline's not as hot as those two.

Molly: You're right.

Becca: Those two are the ones that you hear about them and the first thing anyone says is that person is really good looking. They're so good looking.

Molly: Yeah, and this is especially if you're like in high school, there are really hot people in high school that everyone is like, "They're so hot. They're so popular." Assholes everyone, and they use it to like get people to date them and get a lot of social status.

Becca: This is a PSA. If you're extremely hot, be a Jane. Don't be a Wickham.

Molly: Yeah, don't be a Wickham, that's our next t-shirt.

Becca: Yeah, but I think it is really real that someone is smart and discerning and perceptive as Lizzie is getting taken in by the scoundrel. I shouldn't have said scoundrel.

Molly: It made me smile-- [crosstalk] [00:30:00]

Becca: I just watched Harrison Ford pop into Molly's eyes.

Molly: How did you know? Oh my God. It was like, she said scoundrel and I was immediately on the Millennium Falcon with Leia and Han. She's like, "I happen to like nice men."

Becca: He goes, "I'm a nice man." It's so hot.

Molly: Oh, man, it's so hot.

Becca: That's a different podcast.

Molly: That's a whole different podcast. Now we move on to Baby D. She had received some confirmation from what happened the morning before when she was walking with Fitzwilliam. What did he say?

Becca: Oh my gosh! He said something about her being malleable to other people's opinions. Didn't he? Pull it up, I want to be sure. Lizzie hints something about Georgie's character to Fitzy.

Molly: Right. "I am joined with him in the guardianship of Miss Darcy." "Are you, indeed? And pray what sort of guardians do you make? Does your charge give you much trouble? Young ladies of her age are sometimes a little difficult to manage, and if she has the true Darcy spirit, she may like to have her own way." "As she spoke, she observed him looking at her earnestly, and the manner in which he immediately asked her why she supposed [00:31:00] Miss Darcy likely to give them any uneasiness, convinced her that she had somehow or other got pretty near the truth." Maybe he's like, "Does she know?"

Becca: Yeah, because does translate if she wants to marry Wickham.

Molly: Yeah, so that happens. Then, she notes that Darcy said that she could talk to Fitzy about it. And a few times, she almost decides to go talk to him, but then she decided that, one, it would be too awkward. Two, she doesn't think that Darcy would have urged it so confidently if you didn't think that Fitzy would back him up. She decides that Darcy is telling the truth about all of that.

She then goes to think back on all the conversation she's ever had with Wickham in the same way that now she's thinking in a different light, and she's suddenly struck with the impropriety of such communications with a stranger, meaning that he's very flirty off the bat, he reveals too much off the bat.

Becca: Oh, yeah, I was going to say what I take away from that is very much that he reveals way too much immediately. I mean, it is also true that he's way too flirty.

Molly: For the standards of the time.

Becca: Oh, absolutely. Remember, [00:32:00] the first time he talked to her, you and I picked up on this as well. He's like, "Oh, I could never speak ill of Darcy," and then all he does is shit-talk Darcy.

Molly: Yeah. She thinks back on that too. First, she remembers that he boasted that he had no fear of seeing Darcy, and Darcy could leave if Darcy wanted to leave. Then, Wickham's the one that doesn't show up to the ball.

Becca: Yeah, because he doesn't have the balls to face Darcy.

Molly: Right. Two, she remembers that before Darcy left Netherfield, Wickham had only told the story about Darcy to her, but once Darcy's gone, he's like all over the place telling everyone who would listen that Darcy is the worst and blah, blah, blah.

Becca: Yes, exactly.

Molly: Now, his attentions to Ms. King seem purely mercenary.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: I love that word.

Becca: Yeah, he's trying to turn on that charm and get that fortune.

Molly: She also thinks about his attentions to herself. Either he must have been mistaken about the level of her fortune, or he was just stroking his own ego and thought that like, "Oh, she might like me a little bit," even though Lizzie thought she was concealing her feelings well, so he just was looking for attention.

Becca: Here's where [00:33:00] I think there's a little debate here. I think this is also something that many Austen fans debate, but I actually think Wickham was into Lizzie.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: He wasn't in love with her, but she says, "He's only talking to her to stroke his ego." I think that Wickham genuinely enjoyed the fuck out of her and thought she was really hot.

Molly: Well, she is really hot.

Becca: I mean Lizzie is the best. Who wouldn't want Lizzie?

Molly: But it doesn't make him a good person.

Becca: No, no, that's not what I'm saying.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: I'm saying that Lizzie is saying, "Oh, he didn't want me."

Molly: Lizzie needs some confidence boost.

Becca: To be fair, this entire chapter is just Lizzie ripping apart her own confidence and everything she based.

Molly: Yes. Oh, fuck, I wrote that I need to read this, too. This part is also--

Becca: If only Jane Austen weren't so good at writing and we could rephrase it better than her.

Molly: So, this part is literally-- we are finding in real-time that Lizzie is starting to see the good in Darcy. Get the fuck ready, folks. "Every lingering struggle in his favour grew fainter," that's about Wickham, "and in farther justification of Mr. Darcy, she could not but allow that [00:34:00] Mr. Bingley, when questioned by Jane, had long ago asserted his blamelessness in the affair; that proud and repulsive as were his manners, she had never, in the whole course of their acquaintance, an

acquaintance which had latterly brought them much together, and given her a sort of intimacy with his ways, had seen anything that betrayed him to be unprincipled or unjust. Anything that spoke him of irreligious or immoral habits; that among his own connections he was esteemed and valued, that even Wickham had allowed him merit as a brother, and that she had often heard him speak so affectionately of his sister as to prove him capable of some amiable feeling, that had his actions been what Mr. Wickham represented them, so gross a violation of everything right could hardly have been concealed from the world. And that friendship between a person capable of it, and such an amiable man as Mr. Bingley, was incomprehensible." Ah!

Becca: That is such a big admission from Lizzie, that's a moment of, "This guy has actually not been that bad to me."

Molly: She's realizing that her own feelings have been coloring every interaction with him, but she actually can't pull any proof that he's not a good person.

Becca: Yeah, [00:35:00] I mean, he's got his flaws for sure.

Molly: But we all do.

Becca: Yeah, this is what I'm saying, is Wickham was such the basis for her belief that Darcy was the scum of the earth, but it really all comes back to a feeling she had when he rejected her the first time at a ball.

Molly: That's amazing. Then she says first, "She grew absolutely ashamed of herself of neither Darcy nor Wickham could she think without feeling she had been blind, partial, prejudiced, absurd."

Becca: Prejudice is in the title. Go on.

Molly: Yes, it is. Then she goes on to think about how despicably she's acted and all this stuff. "Had I been in love, I could not have been more wretchedly blind. But vanity, not love, has been my folly. Pleased with the preference of one," Wickham, "and offended by the neglect of the other, on the very beginning of our acquaintance," Darcy, "I have courted prepossession," meaning prejudice, "and ignorance, and driven reason away, where either were concerned. Till this moment I never knew myself." Lizzie. Oh, my God!

Becca: Can. You. Imagine?

Molly: That's it, right there. [00:36:00] That's the book.

Becca: That is the entire book in a sentence.

Molly: Wow, she really was hurt that first time that he said that thing about her.

Becca: Yeah. I did not want to give her away how hurt she was.

Molly: But you did say it a few times, and I was like, "It doesn't matter a lot."

Becca: I was like, “You can see that this planted seed-

Molly: It's like planting a seed.

Becca: -and it's going to grow.” What actually happened is that little seed turned into a fucking tree of hate.

Molly: A tree of hate.

Becca: None of it really mattered except for-- well, his treatment of Jane. We'll get there.

Molly: Then, she starts thinking back on Jane and Bingley, and she rereads that part of the letter too, because she realizes that she didn't fully absorb it, which good, Lizzie, you're smart. The effect of reading it was different now that she's thinking of Darcy in a better light. She realizes that Jane actually was not showing her feelings, like we talked about with Charlotte and that whole part. She gets then to the part where it talks about her family and rather than feeling angry, she feels embarrassed because she was just as humiliated by her [00:37:00] mom that night at the ball on cloud wine, and she realizes that as much as Darcy thought that that was bad, she also thought that it was that bad.

Becca: Yeah. I remember reading that passage and trying to be like, “Bingley's not seeing this, but what's the significance of the Bingley sisters and Darcy seeing this moment?” It's really bad. This is a thing of the Austen times, what your family does reflects on you.

Molly: Right. I feel like Lizzie knew that this whole time because her reflections on it in those earlier moments were those of trying to push it under the rug, trying to be like, “Mom, shut up.” Trying to be like, “Lydia, what are you doing?” Stuff like that.

Becca: Mary, stop singing.

[chuckles]

Molly: Yeah. Mary, stop singing.

Becca: Go back to simple planning your room, Mary.

Molly: This whole time, Lizzie has been really aware that if she didn't care what other people thought truly, she wouldn't have done that. If she didn't think it herself, she wouldn't have done that. But she is different [00:38:00] than them. And so, that brings us to the compliment that he pays to her and Jane and she says that it doesn't actually help. It makes her feel a little bit better, but she still feels more depressed than she ever has before in her life.

Becca: Ooh.

Molly: Yeah. She walks around for two hours in this way, reading and rereading a letter.

Becca: That's such a mood, though. When you're just dealing with all of your shit and having a basic existential crisis and you're like, “I can't speak to anyone. I can't watch anything. I need to be by myself

and feel everything that's happening to me.” Although nowadays, I'll have my headphones on, and I'll be listening to really sad music as I do it. You know what I mean?

Molly: Yeah, I did that last night. It was not intentional. I just happened to be listening to sad music and then get in a mood.

Becca: I have a playlist on my phone called My Ice Cream Playlist, which basically means that it's the mood that you're in when you're stress-eating or depress-eating ice cream, and it's the saddest songs, all of them.

Molly: Nice. I love that. After the two hours, she realizes she should probably go back to the house. When she returns, she is told that Darcy stopped by for a moment to take his leave. Does that mean he left?

Becca: Yes.

Molly: He's gone. [00:39:00] Say goodbye. Darcy came by for a moment said, goodbye Fitzwilliam.

Becca: Fitzy.

Molly: Fitzy came also and hung around for an hour hoping to get to say goodbye to her. And she is like, “Oh no, so sad. I missed him.” But really, she's happy she missed him, because Fitzwilliam was no longer an object. Meaning she's no longer interested in him.

Becca: Nope.

Molly: She could think only of her letter.

Becca: And that's the end of Chapter 13.

Molly: That's the end of Chapter 13. I don't know what y'all wrote at the end of your chapter, but at the end of my chapter, I wrote “her letter” and a heart.

Becca: Oh, God.

Molly: It also says, “Oh, God,” because I don't know she wants to go up to her room and reread this letter from Darcy? That's all I'm going to say there. So, let's move on to the study question.

Becca: Let's move on to the study questions. We're going to break this down part by part.

Molly: Great.

Becca: There are three things that Lizzie is dealing with that could be indictments of Darcy. One is Jane and Bingley in terms of Jane's feelings for Bingley. I want to talk about Darcy's [00:40:00] actions and whether or not you think he was in the right, how in the right he was, and what it says about Darcy's character that he did that.

Molly: This part will never cease to baffle me that such a big misunderstanding, or even such a small misunderstanding caused such a big uproar because really, it all comes down to the fact that Darcy thought Jane didn't like Bingley back. I think it's hilarious that in Jane Austen, which I have always thought of as this like, very proper thing. It's really just as much as like, "Oh my God, does he like me?" "Oh, my God, does she like me?" Does she like him? She doesn't like him.

Becca: I told you from day one, this is a rom-com.

Molly: I know. It's just so funny to me that it really just is. I think that he did act in the right, in his right. He was wrong in what was going on there, but he thought that he was acting in his friend's best interests.

Becca: Absolutely. I do think the other part of this that is interesting, and we haven't talked about [00:41:00] this in a very long time, but you'll remember back to, I think Chapter 6, where Lizzie was like, "Oh, Jane and Bingley shouldn't get married right away, because they should get to know each other and love each other first," that idea of love. And you said back in our second episode, that Lizzie and Darcy have similar feelings about marrying for love.

Molly: Yeah, I did say that. What did I say? I remember saying that.

Becca: You thought it was cute. You hated Darcy at this point.

Molly: I did. I remember this. Lizzie believes that one should get to know their husband before they marry him, like Charlotte said the opposite. Charlotte was like, "Get to know your husband after you marry him," which she does.

Becca: Much to her chagrin.

Molly: Yes. Lizzie believes that you should love someone before you marry them. Darcy also does believe that.

Becca: He says that to Caroline in that chapter. Yeah, it would have been in Chapter 6 because you said your final thoughts for Chapter 6 are Lizzie and Darcy have very similar views on love and marriage. The way that she talks about Jane, not thinking about marriage, just wanted to [00:42:00] live for the heck of it, and boy, he isn't thinking about Mary Lizzie just by hearing her for the heck of it.

Molly: Oh, yeah, here it is. Ms. Elizabeth Bennet replied Ms. Bingley. "I am all astonishment, how long has she been such a favorite and pray, what am I to wish you joy?" Then Darcy says, "That is exactly the question which I expected you to ask. A lady's imagination is very rapid. It jumps from admiration to love, from love to matrimony in a moment, I knew you would be wishing me joy." And then she says, "Nay, if you are so serious about it, I shall consider the matters absolutely settled," blah, blah, blah. Then he's just sitting there thinking about how cute Lizzie is and he doesn't need to think about marriage. So that's where that came from.

Becca: Yeah, that's really important. I think that Darcy does believe at the sort of marry for love thing. Clearly as he so artfully crafted his proposal mageddon to Lizzie.

Molly: Proposemageddon.

Becca: Proposemageddon.

Molly: Proposegeddon?

Becca: Proposegeddon. Oh, I like that.

Molly and Becca: Proposegeddon.

Molly: T-shirt.

Becca: [laughs] Yes.

Molly: [00:43:00] We could sell rings

Becca: Or [singing] *I don't want to close my eyes*. That's from *Armageddon*, the movie.

Molly: Oh, yes. *I want to--*

Becca: *I still miss you, babe.*

Molly: Okay, anyway.

Becca: Yeah, I do think that that is one of the worst sympathetic moments for Darcy. Then the next thing I want to talk about is his reaction to the Bennet family. What you can tell about Darcy's personality from his actions and how bad the Bennets are in society, and is Darcy right or wrong?

Molly: I love the Bennets. The Bennets are so endearing. They're crazy in society. Perhaps he's right. They get drunk at parties and yell about things, and the sisters have a lack of decorum. First of all, don't you dare bring daddy Bennet into this ever again.

Becca: I knew that would really hurt you.

Molly: Yeah. What a fuck? He's never done anything wrong, so shut up, Darcy. As for Mrs. Bennet, I love her. [00:44:00] I love Kidia, Mary's there too.

Becca: Hey, listen, listen. We love our little introvert goth.

Molly: We do and her bug collection.

Becca: And her bug collection.

Molly: Maybe he's right, but I think that's a flaw in society. Not a flaw in them. I think they should be welcoming society.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: That's my personal feelings on that.

Becca: I do think it has a little bit of a flaw in Darcy there. I think this is a flawed society, a flaw in Darcy, and a flaw in Jane Austen a little.

Molly: Yeah, this part hurt. This part and everything maybe talking about like, the money. I know the economics of dating and Jane Austen.

Becca: Yes, we finally got this.

Molly: I understand. I do think that when I read those parts of the letter and when I read this about the Bennet family conduct, it hurt me that was enough to make him want to pull Bingley and Jane apart on its own, that wasn't enough to do it, he admits.

Becca: It made him really happy that he saw no love in her, so he could convince Bingley.

Molly: Exactly. [00:45:00] That hurt. I don't agree with him there. Reading that, I was like, "Darcy, you could do better, you could be better."

Becca: Do better.

Molly: Do better. When Lizzie was reading it, the first time she was really angry, but then the second time, it really hurt her, and she was embarrassed about it. Honestly, that's a little bit of gaslighting, because at first, she was like, "No, I'm defending my family." Then she read it again, and she was like, "Oh, now he hates us," and blah, blah, blah. Seeing bad in her family where there was no bad.

Becca: Her family's not perfect, but the Bennets are a family of love and compassion despite certain flaws. I think that both, Austen and Darcy, are too harsh on them in this moment. But also, I think that is a stamp of the time, just how your family acts in society matters to how you do in society. If Bingley does marry into this family, he has to deal with whatever happens with the rest of the Bennets.

Molly: This makes me think about *Little Women* which I haven't read, as Becca knows I haven't read it, but I did just go see the Greta [00:46:00] Gerwig movie.

Becca: Just to be clear here, I have read *Little Women* like 1000 times and Molly has seen the new movie and I have not seen the new movie and she has not read *Little Women*. And guess, I have seen *Cats*. I somehow have seen *Cats* and not *Little Women*. They're going to revoke my feminist card.

Molly: It's okay, you went to go see the *Cats*, but I also want to-- before I jump into my comparison *Little Women*, I want to bring up our patrons will get to read this entire conversation, that Graham did text me and Becca, saying, "Hey, did y'all know that a *Little Women* was not written by Jane Austen?" [laughs] I honestly, I was like, "I did learn that recently." It is an American Jane Austen.

Becca: I mean, no.

Molly: Well, lots of parallels between *Little Women* and *Pride and Prejudice*.

Becca: They're about women, and there's a lot about sisterhood and class and family and romance, for sure. But there's a 60-year gap in the time. There's an ocean between--

Molly: Listen, this is a whole other podcast, [00:47:00] but all I was going to say--

Becca: These *Little Women*.

Molly: These *Little Women*, their family is not the typical wealthy family and they're not super-wealthy.

Becca: They're actually poor-poor.

Molly: Oh, they're poor-poor?

Becca: They're poorer than the Bennets.

Molly: But they can give money to charities?

Becca: I mean a little.

Molly: So, they're not the typical petticoat wearing family. That's all I can really say. I don't know anything about the economics of this thing. I don't want to sound dumb here, but they are a bunch of goofballs, but the Laurie's-- What's their last name?

Becca: Laurence.

Molly: Laurence. Right, his first name is Teddy. Yeah, the Laurences still are like, "We want to marry you." I don't know. They're like a respected family and they're a bunch of fucking goofballs, and everyone loves these little women, for being a bunch of fucking goofballs and putting on these little plays and running around and pants.

Becca: Some of that is Greta Gerwig modernizing for sure.

Molly: In any event, I just want Bennets [00:48:00] to be able to run around and be a bunch of goofballs and have everyone love them for who they are, the way that people love the *Little Women*.

Becca: This is actually a market difference between America and the UK. We can talk all day about classes in America. There's obviously a lot of issues there as well, but there is a difference in how classes perceived in this time period. In English high society, it was much more rigid. America was much more fluid, so you get someone like Laurie, who doesn't really have to marry for money, he can bring someone in because everyone in America is new money at this point. Not really. But you see what I mean.

Molly: Right, it's a new country. Yeah.

Becca: Also like the idea behind it is like, "Who cares about social class? It's all about money." Whereas in England, social classes are so strict. The people in those social classes are trying to

consolidate wealth and keep it with them. And part of the way they do that is they preserve this society with all these weird cultural norms and etiquettes that the Bennets don't follow, and therefore, they stick [00:49:00] out, and that lowers their favorability rating for the entire class system. Which is why you have relatives like the Gardiners who can blend into society and those--

Molly: Oh, the Gardiners.

Becca: Yeah, you forgot.

Molly: I did. It's been a wild chapter.

Becca: Yeah. Those people have this ability, like Jane and Lizzie, to actually just transcend and move up. But you have to play the game. It's a little different in America. That was a big tangent, but that was actually fun and important. Despite the differences, because obviously the *Little Women* is not written by Jane Austen.

Molly: We know. I knew.

Becca: The way my soul transcended my body when those texts came in was interesting. But regardless, I think it does lead to an interesting conversation about this being a very English book in a lot of ways. We're going to move on to Wickham and instead of asking you, "Did Darcy do right?" Because I think we've established that at this point. I want to dig deep into Wickham and talk again about class and gender and Wickham [00:50:00] for a lot of reasons.

One, we have this absolute scoundrel who basically pulled himself out of the gentile class where he had a place. There is a sense that Jane Austen is ragging on the low-class dude a little here, in the story itself, we hate George Wickham. George Wickham is just so you know now because I've been holding this in a while, and this is one of those big spoilers I've been keeping from you. George Wickham is like the fuck boy to end all fuck boys.

Molly: This is a big shock to me.

Becca: I know. One of our friends texted me, like, towards the beginning of the podcast and was like, "Does Molly not get that Wickham is a piece of shit?"

Molly: I didn't know.

Becca: I was like, "She hasn't picked up on it. She really doesn't know Jane Austen." She was like, "Oh my God, that's going to be a big reveal."

Molly: Yeah. Okay. Let's talk about it.

Becca: Yeah, because there's a lot to unpack here.

Molly: Fuck that guy.

Becca: Yeah, but I also think it does reveal that Jane Austen has this little-- she's demonizing the lower-class man.

Molly: Yeah. Well, he chose that life [00:51:00] for himself.

Becca: Absolutely. I'm not talking about him like individually as the character, he absolutely sucks. Wickham sucks. Fuck Wickham. I'm talking as an abstract writing a book, you have this hoity-toity dude.

Molly: Yeah, he's the guy who goes and like, is in the ruffles and is spending all his money, and now he's poor, and he comes back and he's like, "Give me this money that I deserve."

Becca: Yeah. And then he goes and preys on this 15-year-old girl, like, he is not sympathetic for money, but maybe for other things. But I think it's interesting to take those two concepts and pull them apart because I think it's important to critique our authors, even as we love them. Even as Jane Austen is one of the most important writers in history.

Molly: She writes a bunch of rich people.

Becca: She does write a bunch of rich people and her class biases, bleed through a little bit into her plot lines. And this is one of those plot lines that I think her class bias bleeds through a little bit. Does that make sense?

Molly: Yeah, it totally does.

Becca: That being said, fuck Wickham.

Molly: Yeah, class aside, he is using people and [00:52:00] he is lying to everyone. And he talks a big fucking game. He is running around being like, "Oh, I hate to speak ill of a Darcy, but fuck every single one." And he's fresh, fresh from proposing to baby D.

Becca: Yeah. Let's break down this timeline. He ruins his life. He spends all his money. He gets furious. Then basically lives as a scoundrel for years, comes back, tries to seduce a 15-year-old girl.

Molly: And how old is he?

Becca: Darcy's age.

Molly: So late 20s?

Becca: Yeah, late 20s, early 30s, like really disgusting.

Molly: Disgusting, twice her age.

Becca: He's trying to seduce her away from her family. Darcy stops it, calls him out, he runs, and basically joins the military and is traveling. Then a few months later is in Longbourn area in the Shire.

Molly: Months.

Becca: Yeah, months, this just happened. So that moment, that charged moment with Bingley and Darcy on a horse.

Molly: Argh. Yeah, I keep going back to that in my mind. The first moment [00:53:00] that they see each other.

Becca: One turns red, one turns white.

Molly: Which one turned which, now we can figure it out.

Becca: Darcy was angry.

Molly: So, he probably turned-- Oh, I guess it could go either way.

Becca: It could be. I think Wickham paled, Darcy flushed.

Molly: Was like, [angered] Yeah, because Darcy, it's so fresh in his mind like, he's so angry. Did Wickham know that Darcy was there? How did he end up in the same places Darcy?

Becca: I mean, he was just traveling with military. It's actually coincidental.

Molly: That's wild. That is so embarrassing for him.

Becca: I'm going to touch on this one more time. Lizzie Bennet is so smart, and she was so played by Wickham. So played.

Molly: Yeah. She goes back and thinks about it. And she's like, "I was so blind and prejudiced against Darcy."

Becca: Prejudice. Also not just prejudiced against Darcy. She felt so hard for a guy who flattered her.

Molly: That's her vanity, that she brings up. She says it was her vanity.

Becca: Yeah. Then, my next question is about baby D. This is a big one because I've been poking at making sure you follow baby D through this book. First of all, command Darcy [00:54:00] as a brother because that's been the one consistent good thing about him this entire book. He's a great brother.

Molly: Yeah, we love a good brother.

Becca: We love a good brother. I want to break this down a little bit because there are two separate motivations that Wickham has to seduce her, and I want to parse through them a little. There's the fortune that she has, and it is a hefty fortune. There's also punishing Darcy.

Molly: Yes, and he knows that.

Becca: He's vindictive as a person. He's not just greedy. I feel that is an important part of his character.

Molly: That he would go after this man's sister because he's mad at him.

Becca: Yeah, so I want to talk through like, which part do you think wins out stronger? I think they're both obviously present, but which do you think, if you had to predict would be the bigger motivation for him? There isn't a right answer here. I'm literally just trying to parse this through.

Molly: I think probably the vindictiveness that drives it because there are a lot of other women out there, but he's choosing to go to his godbrother, his godfather's [00:55:00] son, first for money, then goes to his sister because he's angry that he didn't get what he wanted, and he could have gone to any other woman who was wealthy. But he was like, "I want to marry back into this family because I want--"

Becca: This was taken from me.

Molly: Yeah, this belongs to me. He's like, "This is mine." No, it's not. You weren't even really a part of this family.

Becca: You're not my real brother.

Molly: It made me so mad.

Becca: It's infuriating and it makes you so protective of Baby D, even though you don't know her.

Molly: Yeah. And I used to not like her. I used to think in my head. I was like, Baby D, what? Like, ah.

Becca: And you're like, "Oh, she's stuffy. Bingley will never like her as much as she likes Jane. She's related to Darcy, she must suck."

Molly: Also, how does that all play into it? Baby Dee and Bingley?

Becca: I mean, I'm not going to comment on that because future stuff. What I can say is that at this point in time, you've just gotten this revelation about her, about Georgiana.

Molly: Literally every single person is trying to get with every other single person in this [00:56:00] play, book.

Becca: Rom-com.

Molly: Yeah, I can't keep it all straight in my head.

Becca: Okay, then the next thing I wanted to do was, I wanted to talk a little bit about elopement in the Austin era. Elopement can be scandalous today. It is hard to overstate how scandalous elopement was in Jane Austen's time, because elopement has a lot of connotations to it. A lot of it is sex, impropriety, cover-ups, scandal, sin, all these things are attached to elopement. Young girls who fall prey to this can squander their family's fortunes, get disowned, ruin the entire credibility of their family.

Molly: And that's what he tried to get her to do.

Becca: Yes. I wanted to sort of just like, get your thoughts on elopement in this time period versus nowadays, because a lot of people will elope now and it's more that people get mad. They're like, "Oh, you didn't invite me," but it still can be scandalous nowadays. It was like crazy scandal in the olden days.

Molly: I mean, I feel you've just said [00:57:00] it. Why did he want to elope rather than marry?

Becca: I mean, he couldn't have married her because then he would have needed Darcy's permission and everything as her guardian.

Molly: Ah, yes. I feel there's some implications here, and I'm trying to figure out what they are. She didn't end up eloping.

Becca: No.

Molly: So that's good.

Becca: But the fear of it, the tension of almost doing it. I mean, it's not even just the eloping, it's the offering to elope because a lot of the time what we're talking about is guys will like ditch the girl after offering to elope with her, but then reputation ruined.

Molly: Oh, plus, what Lizzie was saying with Fitzy about her being easily, like wishy-washed one way or the other.

Becca: Wishy-washed is a great verb.

Molly: Thank you. It makes me want to protect baby D at all costs.

Becca: Oh yeah. This is officially Protect Georgie Darcy At All Costs podcast-

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -because poor little thing.

Molly: Poor thing. She didn't know.

Becca: She's a child.

Molly: Yeah, she's Lydia's age. Also [00:58:00] without big of a fortune, she doesn't know what to do with it. She doesn't know that that's the only reason why someone would be after her.

Becca: Also, she's got romantic notions.

Molly: Yeah, she's cutie.

Becca: He's hot.

Molly: He's really hot.

Becca: He's charming, and if he says, "I love you," she's going to feel something.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Piece of shit.

Molly: It sucks that he was willing to just risk her whole reputation for that.

Becca: Yeah. All right. My last question before we get to my standbys is one of my favorite questions I've asked so far. Lizzie has basically been our narrator up to this point. This moment explores the idea that up until now, she's been an unreliable narrator. And that I think, is what makes this passage brilliant and also shifts the entire book for the rest of reading it. You know what I mean?

Molly: Yes.

Becca: I want to talk through your feelings as you read particularly Chapter 13 and went through Lizzie realizing that she was an unreliable narrator, as you realized she [00:59:00] was an unreliable narrator.

Molly: Yeah. As I realized, she was an unreliable narrator, my notes said things like, "Lizzie know." For example, when she narrates basically saying, Lizzie didn't really read this part through and then stuffs led her back in the envelope. I was like, "Lizzie, take the letter back out and fucking read it because you're missing important things here." Plus, the letter has no narrator. We get to read the letter as it is in Chapter 12.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: And I could feel myself forming opinions as it was going.

Becca: You literally went through the same thought process like, "How dare you say the Jane didn't love Bigley? Wait, Charlotte said Jane didn't look like she loved Bingley."

Molly: Yeah. Then Lizzie reading through it and figuring this out and having to read it multiple times, it was like the dawning on her of like, "Fuck, let me think back through this. Let me actually think about it." Then I realized there are so many times throughout the book where Lizzie doesn't think things through. [01:00:00] She goes with her prejudice and her bias against people.

Becca: It's in the title.

Molly: It's in the title. There are so many instances of that in this book and then the real moment where Lizzie realizes it is, "'How despicably I have acted." she cried, "I, who have prided myself on my discernment. I, who have valued myself on my abilities. who have often disdained the generous candour of my sister, and gratified my vanity in useless or blameable mistrust. How humiliating is this discovery. Yet, how just a humiliation. That's her saying, "I've been an unreliable narrator."

Becca: Yeah. She's basically waving to you and saying, "Hey, I was wrong. You're going to need to rethink those chapters you just read." Thinking back on the fact that we've literally been recording you reading this in real-time, thoughts on your prior thoughts.

Molly: Well, I started out hating Darcy.

Becca: You did, you hated him.

Molly: I really did because Lizzie hated him. Even then, there was this voice in the back of my head at that first moment where he said, "She's [01:01:00] pretty, but not handsome enough to tempt me."

Becca: "She is tolerable."

Molly: Tolerable-

Molly and Becca: "-but not handsome enough to tempt me."

Molly: When I read that, I thought, "That's not so bad," but the response in the book was so bad that I was like, "Oh, maybe it was worse than I thought."

Becca: Yeah, you have been so formed by Lizzie's opinions on these things. And we all are. Yeah, we love Lizzie. Lizzie is great, despite the fact that she misconstrued the situations.

Molly: She's so dumb.

Becca: She's so dumb, but she's just a full for boys.

Molly: She is. So, that was from the beginning, and you were telling me that the seed was planted. And I was like, "It seems like a really small seed." And I was surprised by how it got worse. Then I liked Wickham because it was like, we could talk shit about Darcy with him. And that was like, my main reason for liking him because it was fun. Which are all the same reasons Lizzie did.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: So, that's cool. This chapter I just have to say is very brilliantly written because it's in real-time as if like, we read the letter [01:02:00] and then we read the response as she's reading the letter. How did Jane Austen do that? It's amazing.

Becca: Janie, we love you. We think you're brilliant. Specific like the last few chapters, like last episode in this episode really solidify why this is a timeless classic and why she is so good and revolutionary because she writes women so well.

Molly: So well. Yeah, and about her being an unreliable narrator and things popping up from earlier on in the book, I'm sure there's a million more besides that Charlotte one. Listeners, if there are moments that you've been wanting to scream at me about since the beginning that I didn't catch on to that, now I should have caught on to, feel free to send us an email, podandprejudice@gmail.com.

Becca: We would love to hear them. But as we go on, you'll see that Molly will realize her mistakes as Lizzie does. This is going to be a very different book moving forward because we just had a complete 180 with our narrator.

Molly: Yeah. The person that she thought was the bee's knees, [01:03:00] she now hates.

Becca: That is my thoughts as we're going to go through the rest of this book. I'm very excited. We are well over halfway through it. No, we're about halfway through. We've had a complete shift in our narrator. She's a human being with flaws, and she just realized her biggest ones. So, it's going to be really fun moving forward with this plot, but we're going to go to my standard questions that I ask every episode. Funniest quote?

Molly: This is at the very beginning when Lizzie is paused at the gate, and she sees Darcy coming towards her. And he says, "I have been walking in the grove sometime in the hope of meeting you. Will you do me the honor of reading that letter? And then, with a slight bow, turned again into the plantation and was soon out of sight." He's such an awkward little boy. I just thought that was a funny image. It wasn't like a--[crosstalk]

Becca: I mean, my favorite things about this book are the moments that Darcy is a human disaster.

Molly: Yeah, and he's always a human disaster, and it makes me really, really love him. Who would have [01:04:00] thought at the beginning of this podcast that I would ever say that words really, really love him in relation to Mr. Darcy?

Becca: You don't happen to be team Dizzy now? Yes, we did it.

Molly: I'm very team--

Becca: We did it, fam. You're shipping.

Molly: I'm shipping.

Becca: You're shipping. All right, questions moving forward.

Molly: Oh, God. So many. I want to meet Georgie. I want to go there and find out what happened on her side of things. Will we see Wickham again? Will we get any comeuppance against him? Is Lizzie going to go talk to Darcy? Or she is going to stay in fucking Kent? What happens next? Darcy just left without saying goodbye. Oh, my God, I just realized something. Did Fitzzy hang out for an hour because Darcy wanted him to talk to Lizzie about this?

Becca: I mean, that's never made clear.

Molly: But I think so, because he said--

Becca: I think he also wanted to say goodbye to Lizzie. They're bros.

Molly: But at the end of the letter, Darcy said, "So that there's a chance for you to talk to Fitzwilliam about this because I know you're not going to listen to me. I'm giving you this in the **[01:05:00]** morning before we leave."

Becca: Oh, Fitzzy was trying to wingman.

Molly: Yeah, he was really trying to wingman. Anyway, but so, yeah, questions going forward, will Lizzie talk to him? Chase after her boy? I don't know.

Becca: All right. Who wins the chapter?

Molly: Darcy.

Becca: Is that the first time he's won?

Molly: I don't think so. I think he also won the chapter where I first started shipping Dizzy.

Becca: I think you're right, he did, but definitely Darcy wins these chapters. You get his perspective on everything that's been happening. You buy it, Lizzie buys it, the world buys it.

Molly: Fuck George Wickham.

Becca: Fuck George Wickham. Talk about a loser in this chapter.

Molly: Yeah, ugh.

Becca: So glad to have you on the hanging George Wickham train, we can officially let Lickham die.

Molly: Yeah. Oh my God, I can't believe that we ever talked about having t-shirts that said Lickham.

Becca: I mean, I made it a gross term very purposefully. [laughs]

Molly: Good. I can't believe you've been keeping this from me.

Becca: I am very proud of myself. I'm very proud. This spoiler did teach me **[01:06:00]** that I have the capacity to really hide big club points from you.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: So, I can't wait to send you all the memes that have to do with how much Wickham sucks.

Molly: Oh my God, get ready for just a slew of memes this week.

Becca: Yeah, we're going to get there.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: But until then, we want to thank you guys for tuning in. We'll be back two weeks from now. Stay proper-

Molly: -and find yourself a husband.

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

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