

**Molly:** Hey everyone. Before we begin this week's episode, we have a few things we'd like to say. We received an email this week from listener Page with some important corrections that we wanted to share. First, even though we looked it up, we still pronounced Jennifer Ehle's name wrong. Fair warning, we prerecorded all of the episodes covering the 95 versions. So, we're going to say Ehle every time, apologies in advance, it's Ehle. Not Ehle. No disrespect to our girl Jennifer.

Second. We also called this version, the BBC Masterpiece Version and will continue to do so for the next 10 episodes. However, this is not the BBC Masterpiece version. Masterpiece Theater presented *Pride and Prejudice* in 1980. So, when the BBC produced another mini-series in '95, Masterpiece passed on it. Instead, it was presented on the American side by A+E Networks and as its own entity on the BBC. I know that's all very confusing. We were confused too, which is why you've heard and will continue to hear us refer to it as the BBC Masterpiece Version. Thanks, [00:01:00] Paige, for pointing this out.

And lastly, we just like to plug our Patreon page once more. For the price of like half a cup of coffee in New York, you can get access to our notes, screenshots of our group chat, bonus episodes and outtakes. Check us out at [patreon.com/podandprejudice](https://patreon.com/podandprejudice) to learn more. And now, enjoy this week's episode covering the first half of Episode Two of the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice* miniseries guest-starring, Evan Tess Murray.

**Becca:** Yeah, it's definitely true that Molly has a lot of typos in the notes and nine times out of ten, I can tell exactly what Molly is talking about. But every so often you make a typo and I'm like, what--

**Molly:** My favorite one that I've done so far is where I spelled Caroline kind of like, what's his spaces child where it's like, X-A-E-12. [laughs] And that's how I spelled Caroline Bingley. It was like--

**Becca:** Elon Musk's precursor's Caroline Bingley. Actually, honestly, Caroline Bingley would a 10 out of 10 marry Elon Musk.

**Molly:** Oh, my God, yeah.

[00:02:00]

[intro]

**Becca:** This is Becca.

**Molly:** This is Molly.

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

**Molly:** We are here to talk about Jane Austen, and we have with us today our second ever guest, and it's very exciting. We have Evan Tess Murray with us today.

**Becca:** Welcome, Evan.

**Molly:** Woo-woo.

**Evan Tess:** Thank you. I'm so excited to be here.

**Molly:** Do you want to give yourself a little intro and let our listeners know where they may have heard your voice before?

**Evan Tess:** Sure. I actually lend my voice to a lot of projects a tiny bit at a time. So, if you think you've heard me in an audio drama, you might be right. My show that I create is *This Planet Needs a Name*. It's a science fiction hopepunk audio drama that I write and act in. I have another one that I cocreate with a couple of friends called *Light Hearts*, which is again with the hopepunk. Apparently, I just do hope. But it's a queer sitcom set in a haunted gay bar.

**Molly:** A haunted gay bar.

**Becca:** Ah, that's incredible.

**Evan Tess:** Yes, there's a lot of ghostly hijinks and absolutely no stakes. [00:03:00] Every single episode, every potential conflict is resolved by the end of the episode.

**Molly:** We love that. We really need that in our lives right now.

**Evan Tess:** Yes, that's why we started it. So that's *Light Hearts*, which is just about to release its second episode. And it's just an absolute blast to do. Those are the two shows that I write and direct on. In general, I just enjoy doing audio. I enjoy doing interviews, all of that. And I've been a Pod and Prejudice fan since fairly early on, actually.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Yeah.

**Molly:** One of the OGs.

**Becca:** Well, welcome to our little corner of the podcast world. We're so excited to have you, and as you are a guest on this show, it's very important that we let our listeners know how you interact with Jane Austen. How you came to Jane Austen, and then what character in Jane Austen that you identify with. Now, if you haven't, read Jane Austen that can be who you identify with based on [00:04:00] our takes on Jane Austen.

**Evan Tess:** So, I started reading Jane Austen far too young to understand what any of it meant. I read a lot of-- so in my childhood, I read my way through all the libraries. And then, my parents would get discarded books and stuff. So, I read all this Edwardian and Victorian children's literature as well when I was 10 and 11, and I was also reading Austen at that point. I didn't understand any of it, I didn't understand why you would wear gloves at teatime or what teatime was, or why you would be very worried that mama would be very rough with you for getting your gloves dirty. None of that made any sense to me at 11. But it does mean that the language of Jane Austen is embedded in me.

My vocabulary is bizarre. And every time you start the podcast, you're like, "We looked up this word," I'm like, "But why? That is a normal word in common parlance." And then I'm like, "Wait, common parlance isn't in common parlance. What am I doing?"

[laughter]

**Evan Tess:** So, I love Austen, in general. The language works for me. I love her wit and [00:05:00] a lot of what she's doing in her books, I absolutely adore. Characters, in this one, I really hate to admit it, but I'm just like straight-up Fitzwilliam Darcy. He's too sincere all the time. He cannot stop being too sincere and honest and honorable and he's just can't help himself, and he can make-- I'm better at small talk now, but I used to be terrible at it. And so, the whole like, "I have said my one small talk and now I will flee because you're pretty is like my life," that is my life.

**Becca:** Listen, we stan our little disaster human Fitzwilliam Darcy. So, we have no choice but to stan Evan if you are also a human disaster.

**Evan Tess:** I just connect so hard with like, "I'm real sorry, but I don't know how to lie."

**Molly:** He's so sweet in this episode when he's like, "I wish you would not try to parse out my personality right now."

**Evan Tess:** Because it's not going to be great for either of us.

**Molly:** Yeah. And then he just walks away. But we'll get there.

**Evan Tess:** We will.

**Molly:** We will get there. **[00:06:00]** Last question before we jump into Episode Two of the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice*. Do you have any Austen hot-takes to give?

**Evan Tess:** Oh, I at this point do not. I'm sorry. I think I'm genuinely something resembling an Austen stan. Definitely, there's a lot of stuff going on there that, but we look at her position in the world and what she was trying to do, I just fucking love her.

**Becca:** We also do.

**Molly:** Yeah, we do.

**Becca:** That is why we do the podcast.

**Molly:** So, we start out with Elizabeth Bennet walking through the fields, looking up very thoughtfully at a pack of-- pack--

**Evan Tess:** **[laughs]**

**Becca:** A flock>

**Evan Tess:** A flock is usually the word.

**Molly:** **[chuckles]** At a flock of birds. And I guess that's supposed to symbolize like the changing of the seasons. I don't know. But anyway, jumps right into scene one. And this is where we find out that a guest is coming to Longbourn. Mrs. Bennet **[00:07:00]** automatically assumes it's Bingley and she's like squealing and she's so excited in typical Mrs. Bennet fashion. And Lydia and Kitty are giggling about like, "Oh, will it be an officer?" which doesn't make sense because he just said it someone he's never met.

**Becca:** Well, Daddy Bennet is pretty anti-social. So, it's possible he hasn't been going to the events where the officers are.

**Molly:** That's true. But when they're squealing about this, Mr. Bennet does a single blink. You know when someone's looking at you, and you're saying something that they're annoyed by and they just go blink, blink? He just blinks once, and they shut up, and sit down and listen to what he has to say. And it's phenomenal. And this is where you find out it is, Mr. Collins.

**[onomatopoeia]**

**Becca:** **[chuckles]** That is the correct sound effect for Mr. Collins. One of the things that isn't like-- I don't know if you remember this from the book part when we first got introduced to Mr. Collins, but the way he's describing the book, **[00:08:00]** is almost endearing. You're like, "Oh, he doesn't know how to interact with people." But the moment Mr. Collins hits the story here, you're just like, "Oh, no."

**Evan Tess:** Yes.

**Molly:** Correct. He is grody. So, they do this nice little fade-in from Mr. Bennet reading the letter that from Collins to Mr. Collins reading a letter from Collins, and he is greasy.

**Becca:** I was watching this with my boyfriend who does not read *Pride and Prejudice*. And he was looking at the screen and he just goes that man is the human personification of sweat. And I was like I'm really angry that I wasn't the person who thought of that first.

**Evan Tess:** I was watching it with somebody who hasn't read the book or watched anything about it but is seeing a lot of gifts that's on Tumblr. And we got to the end of the letter and she just looked at me and I said, "Oh, no, no, he really is that bad."

**[laughter]**

**Molly:** He really is, and we see him like talking about Catherine de Bourgh [00:09:00] and we watch him interact with Catherine de Bourgh a little, and he literally shoves someone out of the way so she couldn't get out of the church.

**Becca:** Do you notice how he says Catherine de Bourgh?

**Molly:** Catherine de Bourgh!

**Becca:** Evan, can you give us a little Catherine de Bourgh?

**Evan Tess:** Catherine de Bourgh!

**Becca:** Oh, that is incredible.

**Molly:** He's talking about how he's going to get from his residence to Longbourn, which I think they added from the letter in the book, if I'm not mistaken. He didn't describe the bus system, where he was like, "I'm going to catch this carriage at this time and then beat you by," whatever. But while he's talking about the carriages, he gets in and the carriage takes off and he falls over because he has no sense of stability in life, I guess.

**Becca:** Nope.

**Molly:** None. So, he arrives. And this is the main thing that I need to take away from what this film has done, is that whenever he talks or does anything, [00:10:00] Mary swoons. They latched on to that and ran with it.

**Becca:** Yes. Oh my gosh. First of all, this is a damage to our whole plot of Mary is a gay out of place.

**Molly:** Yeah, unfortunate.

**Becca:** Which sucks, but at the same time, if Mr. Collins were to be paired with any of the Bennet girls, it obviously makes sense that he would be with Mary. They both love the Bible. They both have no social skills. And they both are introverts. So, I feel they would be good together. And Mary agrees, and you can just see her little heart flutter every time he walks by.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Evan Tess:** Yeah, this version of Mary, they went all in on the-- Look, he's overlooking the actual perfect match.

**Molly:** Yeah. She checks her hair when he gets out of the car, I mean, the carriage. Then, we go to dinner that night. And [00:11:00] Mr. Bennet asks him to just talk about Lady Catherine de Bourgh. And he does this whole-- I remember in the book, they described him as being very formal and kind of reverent and stuff when he talks about her. And he is like, [in a breathy voice] "Catherine de Bourgh. Oh, yes, and her beautiful daughter. Eh, duh." And it's gross.

**Becca:** Lizzie is such a mood in the scene. This is the end of scene one. So, we have a few starting questions. And the first is, in the book, we only really get to see how Lizzie and the authorial narrator are acting or reacting to Mr. Collins and Mr. Bennet as well. But here, you actually get a little take on each Bennet sister in their first interaction with Mr. Collins. So, I wonder if you could do the little rundown of how each Bennet is reacting to Collins.

**Molly:** Well, Lizzie has a napkin in front of her face and can't stop laughing, which was phenomenal. Mary was obviously enraptured [00:12:00] by him hanging on his every word.

**Becca:** I believe that adjective you're looking for is thirsty.

**Molly:** Oh, sorry. Yes, Mary's thirsty.

**Becca:** And Lydia keeps snorting.

**Evan Tess:** Yeah, she doesn't hide it at all.

**Molly:** No, she's so rude. Jane is trying to be chill. She's giving little smirks and things, but she is the most polite one probably, and Kitty, I don't think does anything, does she?

**Becca:** Kitty is just sick. I also think you see Jane being a little bit more disdainful of him than you see in the book, which I love for her. You see her smirk and make eye contact with Lizzie whenever he talks and she's being polite about it, but she's clearly on board with yikes as of concept for Mr. Collins. You guys know what I mean?

**Evan Tess:** Yeah, it's nice to see Jane not just being nice and kind and perfectly understanding of everyone but being like, "Listen, I'm not going to be mean to the guy but do you hear him?"

**Molly:** Exactly. [00:13:00] Yeah, because in the book, I did get kind of bored of Jane. In general, I was like she's just "good" and she's just a good person, but I think they definitely give her a bit more of a personality in the film version.

**Becca:** Absolutely.

**Evan Tess:** Lizzie has to have somebody to make eye contact with so that they can both smirk. Jane gets to do a lot more of that.

**Becca:** Yeah. And she also does it with Mr. Bennet, which I liked, as I always do.

**Molly:** Mr. Bennet has his glasses like falling off the tip of his nose. He's looking down them so hard. So, question number two, is there any difference between how Collins operates in the first part of the book when he comes in, and how he's operating in the first part of this movie version when he comes in?

**Becca:** He's definitely grosser. When I was reading the book, I was picturing Kenneth Branagh because I was mostly picturing Gilderoy Lockhart because he's so over the top, but I was picturing him at least being [00:14:00] handsome. I think that what the movie is doing very clearly is it's automatically-- I guess they did this in the book too, but it's very automatically he's looking for a wife here.

**Evan Tess:** My idea of him actually matches this movie version reasonably well, although I always imagined him as kind of a sweeter, more bumbling. Bumbling, socially inept but with good intentions and a little less obsequious. Although it is pretty-- I mean he name-drops Catherine de Bourgh just as much in the book, so it's not like that's an addition. But my version of him that I imagine from the book is somewhat more likeable. This one is just-- he just, I--

**Molly:** Yeah, exactly.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Molly:** Exactly that because in this, he's like-- it almost seems malicious and I know that it's not but it but-- we'll get to his proposal, but it seems malicious. [00:15:00] And not just that he doesn't understand, he kind of understands.

**Becca:** It's like peak negging.

**Evan Tess:** I actually wrote down. Oh my God, I didn't realize Austen invented negging.

**Becca:** Austen invented negging.

**Molly:** Yes.

**Becca:** She did. So, I also think the one thing I'd point out is that in the books, there's a little bit more that happens at Netherfield before this part of the story. And Collins comes into sort of create a new piece of the drama, but I think here he does something extra. He throws into the Bennet household, someone who makes the rest of the Bennets look good.

**Evan Tess:** [chuckles] Yes.

**Molly:** That's so true.

**Becca:** The first episode, Mrs. Bennet is borderline unwatchable. And here, you can hear her voice drop and you can hear her say normal things. And that is only in comparison to Mr. Collins.

**Molly:** Yes. Because also when they talk about him arriving, she says, "Oh, please don't talk of that odious man." And I'm like, "You're calling him odious?" But then, yeah, [00:16:00] she almost seems sensible.

**Evan Tess:** How many times can you talk about a fireplace before people are just like, "Do you have to? Do you have to?"

**Becca:** I wrote that down. He literally brings it up twice in two scenes right next to each other.

**Evan Tess:** I know it's terrible.

**Becca:** We know it's 800 pounds.

**Evan Tess:** It must be very large.

**Becca:** We know. Let's get into scene two, I guess.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, now we're outside and we are getting a little look at all of the Bennet girls doing their thing. And Kydia is playing horseshoes and I loved this--

**Evan Tess:** Quoits.

**Molly:** What?

**Evan Tess:** It's Quoits.

**Molly:** It's what?

**Evan Tess:** Quoits. Q-U-O-I-T-S. It's a game where you throw rings of things. I told you I read these way too young.

**[laughter]**

**Evan Tess:** I recognize the game. Anyway, keep going.

**Molly:** Wait, that's amazing. Is it the same as horseshoes except--?

**Evan Tess:** More or less. It's rings. You throw rings at things. It's a little more ladylike, I think, was the idea.

**Molly:** Okay. Fascinating. Well, we love those good **[00:17:00]** gendered games.

**Becca:** We love that trivia. I was never going to pick up on that.

**Evan Tess:** I just was delighted. I'm like, "Oh my God, I know that game," because I read these books and I have a weird vocabulary.

**Molly:** Amazing. Well, they think it's the funniest shit they've ever done in their lives. They're laughing after they throw every single ring, which is clearly just supposed to be a montage of us seeing what they're doing. But it was pretty funny. Jane and Lizzie are laughing and talking about, I don't know what, and then Mary is standing there reading. And Collins and Mrs. Bennet are on a walk, and he says that he thinks that Jane is hot. And she says, "Oh, Jane is going to be engaged soon. But my other daughters, now they're-- no prior engagement on their part."

**Becca:** And then, the camera just does a little bachelor numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 for Mr. Collins.

**Molly:** And he's like, "Nope, nope, nope." And Mary is like reading and she looks so disinterested, and then he lands on Lizzie. And then Lydia and Kitty are like, "Oh, we're going to go to Meryton." And Mrs. Bennet is like, "Collins, **[00:18:00]** you should go with them." And he's like, "Oh, yes." And Lydia is like, "Argh," out loud. She's the worst and the best, I love her so much. And then he asks Lizzie to walk with him. We panted them walking to Meryton. And we hear as **[panting]** he walks because it's Mr. Collins.

**Becca:** They really make the experience of walking with Mr. Collins a full-body experience. You can hear him. You can see him. You can almost smell him.

**Molly:** The embodiment of sweat.

**Evan Tess:** It's really true.

**Becca:** I was really taken with how Lizzie is acting while Mr. Collins is talking with her. And I remember describing when we were reading the book, the face that a person makes when a man is talking to them in a specific way, and your eyes have to bug and you just go, "Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm." And she is making that face the entire walk. She's just going, "Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm." **[00:19:00]**

**Molly:** This Lizzie's facial expressions are prime the whole way through.

**Becca:** Jennifer Ehle is--

**Molly:** Hot. Sorry, I just objectify her so hard. I love it.

**Becca:** It's okay. She's also permanent resting, not bitchface, but resting done-with-the-patriarchy face.

**Evan Tess:** Yeah, or resting I'm-secretly-judging-you face, it's right there. It's right there.

**Molly:** Yeah, right behind the eyes. Kydia is wearing matching outfits. They look like little red riding hood.

**Becca:** Yes, they do.

**Evan Tess:** They also match the regimentals.

**Molly:** Oh.

**Becca:** It's a very smart costuming choice to put the Kydia in the bright colors next to the red coats.

**Molly:** So, they get into Meryton and Kitty sees a hat in a window and she's like, "Lydia, I want this hat. Don't you think I would look good?" And Lydia is like, "Not as good as me. Let's go find Denny." And she turns when she sees Denny with someone else who is not wearing a uniform. **[00:20:00]** And they're all like, "Oh, who's that man with Denny?" And they're like, "Oh, he's frightful handsome, isn't he?" And Lydia says, "Not as handsome as he would be in regimentals." And it's interesting that they have Lydia noticing this man here and thinking that she doesn't think he's anything without regimentals.

**Becca:** Mm-hmm.

**Molly:** Mm-hmm.

**Evan Tess:** Mmm.

**[laughter]**

**Molly:** Lydia calls them over in her cute little voice and Denny introduces them all. And he ends by introducing Lydia. And I took note of the way that he says Miss Lydia Bennett, because it says so much about how she is viewed by the officers and also how she presents herself. She is Miss Lydia Bennet.

**Becca:** Yeah, I think the thing that film does really well from the get-go that the book saves for later, is establishing Lydia's reputation in the town.

**Evan Tess:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Almost immediately, you're like, "Oh, **[00:21:00]** this girl is known as the flirt. She's the easy rider."

**Molly:** Yeah. And I don't hate it. I think that I know that she's supposed to be annoying and everything, but I just looking at her in this episode particularly I've noticed, is that she just seems very fun and very carefree. And she's 15, and I remember being 15, and feeling flirting with-- this is funny because now I don't flirt with boys. **[laughter]** But when I was 15, I would flirt with boys. And it was like the most fun thing to be like that girl.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah, definitely. I also think that in the books, it's just one of those things where you feel it from Lizzie's perspective and how it's ruining her life. But in the film, when you say you're like, "Oh, this isn't that bad," she's just like--

**Molly:** Having a good time.



**Becca:** She's just like a stupid teenage girl.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Evan Tess:** It really emphasized for me-- well, and also, they pulled more stuff out for Kitty. Kitty got to talk and she's just not Lydia and they seem slightly different, which is nice, but also [00:22:00] it really drove home for me, she's a pretty normal 15-year-old girl who should probably have a parent telling her not to do this.

**Molly:** Right. And she doesn't.

**Evan Tess:** And she does not. And so, it takes some of that onus off of her. She's a kid. And I really like that compared to Elizabeth always being annoyed with her for the choices she's making.

**Molly:** Yeah. And I think also the officers are just normal 20 somethings, although I don't know how old Wickham is, I forget. He's like 28.

**Becca:** He's Darcy's age.

**Molly:** He's gross. But we're not at him being gross yet.

**Evan Tess:** But I think Denny and the other young one, I can't remember, I think they're kids. I don't know. But I think they are not a lot older.

**Molly:** So, it's like they're just flirting, having a good time.

**Becca:** Yeah, this is basically just normal teenage shenanigans. It's just that in the context of Austen, they have different stakes.

**Evan Tess:** Yes.

**Becca:** Which brings us to Mr. George Wickham.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, he [00:23:00] introduces Wickham. Yeah, pinches the brow of our noses. He is not that hot.

**Becca:** Yeah, this is a genuine problem that I have with the *Pride and Prejudice* adaptations all across the board, except with a notable exception that we will get to later. And I will talk about it when it happens. But know that the general norm when we adapt *Pride and Prejudice* is that they always make Wickham less hot than Darcy. And I'm like, that is not canon.

**Molly:** Not canon.

**Becca:** I think this actor is quite handsome. Don't get me wrong, but Colin Firth is so hot. And part of the point of the story is that Wickham is this dashing, extremely handsome, charming guy that gets away with absolutely everything because he's a beautiful person. Physically, not emotionally. Emotionally, he's a garbage fire. But it's one of those things where it's like, Lizzie is entranced and fooled by a hot guy.

**Molly:** Yeah, but what this guy does have going for him [00:24:00] is his voice.

**Becca:** Oh.

**Molly:** He's got a really good speaking voice.

**Becca:** Oh yeah.

**Molly:** And really kind of kind eyes that make it easy to listen to him say things.

**Evan Tess:** He's very much a conman. Instead of being the hot guy, he's a confidence man. You trust him. He's soft. He comes across as gentle. Yeah.

**Molly:** Yeah. They invite him to Mrs. Phillips' house, and he's like, "Well, if Mrs. Phillips invited me, then I'll definitely come. But I don't have an invitation yet." And he's just soothing, and he seems humble and all of that.

**Becca:** And that is huge for Wickham as a character as well. It's not just that he's hot.

**Molly:** Yeah. There was that, and then Bingley and Darcy appear. And I was very disappointed to see that they were riding on two separate horses.

**Evan Tess:** Thought of you.

**Becca:** I literally wrote that down too. I was like, "Oh, sorry. Sorry, Molly."

**Evan Tess:** Me, too.

**Molly:** Because [00:25:00] my canon is that they're on one horse, but it's okay. This was interesting. The whole conversation happens between Bingley and Jane. And Lizzie is watching Wickham and Darcy, and what the movie changed from the book was that Wickham tips his hat, acknowledges Darcy's presence. And Darcy turned away and walked away on his horse, or his horse walked away. I suppose he was sitting, but that was different. That sends a very clear message that I think Lizzie was right to assume that Wickham was trying to be kind and Darcy was being a dick, when in reality, Wickham is as conniving-- I don't know.

**Becca:** SOB.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, I think that was smart, is interesting.

**Becca:** Absolutely. So, that actually brings us to the end of the scene and the study questions I have are twofold. And we'll start with the first one just because we're on the subject anyway, which is, the Darcy and Wickham drama plays as much more obvious here and I think it has to be because you're getting Lizzie's perception of a very [00:26:00] tiny interaction but here you see Darcy openly snub Wickham.

**Molly:** It's like in the Harry Potter movies when they added Barty Crouch, Jr. as a character because otherwise there would be no way for the audience to get that. Is that a way stretch?

**Becca:** No, I get what you're saying. It's sometimes in books things happen in characters' heads and history is given by an authorial narrator. And when you're putting it onto film, you need to be a little bit more obvious about it. The thing I think about is *The Handmaid's Tale* because if you watch that, because most of it takes place inside of Offred's head. It's a much darker book in terms of literature than anything Jane Austen's ever written. But the book has a lot of like, what Offred is thinking about the Gilead society in her own head, but she can't say it loud or she'll die. But she actually has to say it out loud on the TV show, because otherwise the audience doesn't get it.

**Molly:** It's like when they made *The Giver* into a movie. [00:27:00]

**Becca:** I didn't read *The Giver*.

**Molly:** Oh, never mind.

**Evan Tess:** I was going to say it's like when they make *Coraline* into a movie and they had to invent Wybie out of whole cloth because otherwise, the whole book is just one 12-year-old girl by herself having experiences and she would have no reason to talk out loud or say anything.

**Becca:** Exactly.

**Molly:** Whoa. I didn't know that *Coraline* was a book.

**Evan Tess:** Oh, yes, it's a book.

**Molly:** I should read that.

**Evan Tess:** It's by Neil Gaiman.

**Molly:** Oh.

**Becca:** Oh, a true icon and a legend. The other thing I had is, we're seeing the flirtations actually happen. How does Collins' flirtation with Lizzie form how we think of Collins and Lizzie? Because we just get that he's talking a lot in the book. It just is Collins talks a lot, but you actually see him talking here.

**Molly:** Yeah, I guess as opposed to talking into the ether, he's talking to Lizzie and she is not really receiving.

**Evan Tess:** It kind of underlines the fact that he is so bad at reading what other people-- He talks, she doesn't want to hear it, and he never notices. **[00:28:00]**

**Molly:** She's like, "Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm." And she's not saying anything.

**Evan Tess:** And he does the whole, "I am very good at fitting in everywhere and I've made an art of it." All of that, I'm like, "No, you're terrible. She can't tell you that and you still aren't seeing it." And it's half oblivious, but also half just like disrespectful is how it reads to me. You are not interested in other people's experiences, are you?

**Becca:** Oh, definitely not.

**Molly:** Not at all. And I will definitely get into that with the proposal because that was worse than anything I could have ever imagined.

**Becca:** Oh, yes. So that brings us to scene three, at the Phillips's.

**Molly:** At the Phillips's.

**Becca:** Before we get into anything. What do you think of how Mrs. Phillips is characterized here?

**Molly:** So, I pictured her as being kind of dumb, and I think that they tried to do that, but I actually really liked her because she seemed a little bit sarcastic. We get to see her and Collins talking and him talking about how her home reminds him of a small summer breakfast room at Rosings. **[00:29:00]** And she's really offended. And Jane is like, "No, no. Rosings is very grand." And she says, "Oh, I understand." I read it sarcastic. I don't know if that's what they were intending.

**Evan Tess:** No for real. She was like, "Of course, now I could not possibly be offended." It was a, "You idiot! You poor fool! Fine."

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** Everyone's just like clenching a jaw around Mr. Collins.

**Evan Tess:** Yeah.

**Molly:** She asked him to play whist with her. And then, she yells at him because he can't play very well. He's like doing the wrong thing. And she's like, "Collins, hearts are trump cards." And he's like, "Oh."

**Evan Tess:** I think she only asked him to play whist with to get him to stop talking. And then, she got stuck playing whist with him.

**[laughter]**

**Molly:** Yes, absolutely.

**Becca:** There's just no way to interact with Mr. Collins to make it at all enjoyable for yourself. Unless you are taking the Mr. Bennet approach and mocking him in a way that he does not understand.

**Molly:** Which is a plus-plus.

**Becca:** Amazing. Best use of **[00:30:00]** Daddy Bennet's ability to annihilate people.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Becca:** So, the other thing is that my boyfriend had one more hot take that I feel I very much needed to share which is, he was like, "Are Wickham and Denny fucking? They're staying in the same quarters together and they're hanging out all the time. They fucking"

**Molly:** I love that hot-take because I think Denny can definitely do better and he does exude a straight energy, he also-- when they were talking about how Wickham was joining the military, he was saying how Wickham was going to look so good in his regimentals and he was like, "Out swagger us all, eh, Wickham?" winky-winky.

**Evan Tess:** I could 100% get behind bisexual Denny, gay Wickham, and the whole reason Wickham has done what he has done is that he does not actually care about women at all and just used them as a means to an end.

**Becca:** I would be into this take.

**Molly:** Wait, that is a take because he is trying to marry up so hard that he would marry a woman he does not have any feelings for and keep **[00:31:00]** doing Denny on the side.

**Evan Tess:** I do hate saying maybe he's an evil guy because we have plenty of those. But also, maybe he's an evil guy.

**Molly:** Maybe he's an evil guy, and Denny is a very harmless bisexual. I love Denny.

**Evan Tess:** Yes, 100%.

**Becca:** Listeners, let us know what you think of the idea that Denny and Wickham are getting up their own sort of flirtations on the side.

**Molly:** Oh, I like that. Thanks, Mike.

**Becca:** Yes. So, then we go back to Lizzie and Wickham making the eyes at each other.

**Molly:** Yeah, the whole flirtation thing is portrayed in the films through us seeing people stare at each other across the room.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah.

**Molly:** Which is happening here. And which is also how Darcy flirts in general, but we're not there yet.

**Evan Tess:** I was having a lot of lesbian culture moments like, "Oh, there's a lot of staring at each other," and then thinking that you know what that means.

**Molly:** Right. It's like, "Are you flirting with me? Or are you being my friend? I can't tell." [laughs]

**Evan Tess:** Well, it's our third coffee date. Are we dating?

**Molly:** Yeah. And for me, [00:32:00] usually the answer is no. But for the other person, it's often yes. And then-- this is why I don't date because I'm bad at the thing.

**Becca:** [laughs]

**Evan Tess:** I mean that same.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, they're making eyes. And Wickham comes to sit by Lizzie, and he is like, "I thought I would never escape your younger sisters." And she's like, "Yes, Lydia's very determined." And then, we see Lydia playing cards and being flirty, as one is wont to do at a cards party, I suppose. He says that they're very nice girls and he's generally pleased with the society in this part of the country and says it all in a very soothing voice.

**Evan Tess:** Yes.

**Becca:** Oh, yes. And I also wanted to comment here, this was just a mini-study questions snuck-in. They really change how Lydia and Wickham meet to start. They don't really change it, but they really expand on it in this adaptation, and I wonder if you guys are picking up on the foreshadowing/what do you think of it as a [00:33:00] plot device here.

**Molly:** I literally wrote down foreshadowing Lydia in five places in my notes.

**Becca:** Yes!

**Molly:** Yeah, same.

**Evan Tess:** Okay, three places.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Evan Tess:** Yeah, it was really heavy-handed, but might not be if you don't know where it's going.

**Molly:** Right. It's like it'll be one of those hints that's dropped early on that later you can be like, "Oh, yeah, he was talking to her at that party." And then, she wanted to dance with him and all of that, which I guess it is a little bit in the book. It happens, but not in such a way that we see them together.

**Evan Tess:** When he says, "And she was 16, your sister Lydia's age." And she says, "Lydia is 15." And there's this moment, and that's where I wrote down, foreshadowing Lydia is and then all in caps, "15, STOP SHE IS A CHILD."

**Molly:** She is a child.

**Becca:** Oh, she is a literal child.

**Molly:** I had that same exact thought. I was like, the way Lizzie says that too is like, "Lydia is 15," like stay away. [00:34:00]

**Evan Tess:** You do not flirt with my sister.

**Molly:** At the party, they start talking about how Bingley is not there. And Lizzie is like, "Well, I think one of Bingley's friends might have found this gathering beneath them." And Wickham, then you can see him very carefully treading around the subject of Darcy and asking her how well she knows him. Trying to gauge like, "Does she know about me from him?" And it could be seen as tentative because he doesn't want to talk ill of someone, or it could be seen as tentative because he's an asshole and did something very bad. But this is where he tells her about his whole situation with Darcy and spins it in such a way that he seems like he's the good guy.

**Becca:** This is getting into film nerd territory but one of the things I noticed for the first time after watching this movie a billion times is how this scene is filmed is so smart. So, I wanted to talk a bit about that. They have Lizzie and Wickham sitting relatively close to each other [00:35:00] in every shot is a very close up shot of one of them. You get really in on both of their faces as they're speaking, which is different than the way they've been filming most of the shots in this film. A lot of the shots are wide shots, and capture a lot of different people in the frame. Or you get the really close-up shot of just Mr. Darcy. But there are very few frames that are so tightly shot and so, have the characters sitting so close together.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Evan Tess:** And the cutting back and forth with the tight shot on the face, and yeah, it's like, let's convey a lot of emotion right in this moment through dialogue, and that's not something that the film does a whole lot. It's usually giving us a little more distance.

**Becca:** Exactly. And it creates an intimacy that isn't there in most of the scenes.

**Evan Tess:** And we can see the tears well up in Lizzie's eyes.

**Molly:** Yeah, you also get to see how much Lizzie's falling for this and if you're in on it like we are, the audience, who's read the book, we also get to see how Wickham is trying to decide [00:36:00] what to say. We see his eyes shifting. We see him spinning this tale in his mind and Lizzie falling for it.

**Evan Tess:** It hurts.

**Molly:** It hurts so much. And when she says that Bingley's friend would not have wanted to be here, whatever, he goes, "Really? Hmm." And looks and he's like, "Hmm." And we see that whole moment pass over his face, which was really brilliant. What a gross man.

**Evan Tess:** When he was in the middle of that pile of lies, I made some kind of disgusted noise and Kate was like, "Huh," and I paused it and just started shouting. "He is a terrible liar. This is terrible. Let me tell you what he actually did."

**Molly:** Wait, was Kate falling for it too?

**Evan Tess:** I don't think so because she's clever. But she didn't know everything he was saying was complete nonsense, that he was leaving out basically the important bits. It is mostly when he started talking about the sister and how she was fond of me once that I just screamed.

**Molly:** Oh, I screamed too.

**Becca:** Oh, it's so gross.

**Molly:** Yeah. I absolutely [00:37:00] screamed at that part. Then, he is talking about how she shouldn't feel sorry for him because he's at a really good place in his life right now. And Lydia comes over and it's like, "Lizzie, why should you not feel sorry for Wickham?" And then, they kind of look at each other like we're not going to say anything, which is such a brilliant move on the part of the film, I think, because this is putting Lydia totally in the dark. And he says, "Oh, I haven't had a dance in three months." Then, she pulls him away and they're dancing, and Lizzie's watching and they're like smiling at each other from across the room.

**Becca:** Which really does set up like-- it's not exactly a love triangle between Lizzie, Lydia, and Wickham. But there is this dichotomy where they switch off wanting to bang him and Lizzie gets the intimate conversation, but Lydia gets the sexy dance which doesn't translate as sexy necessarily always when you watch it, but definitely is.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Evan Tess:** [chuckles]

**Molly:** Then, we jump to Lizzie telling Jane about all of this that night and I remember this conversation in [00:38:00] the book so clearly. I remember being so irritated at Jane because she said, "It's really distressing, one does not know what to think." And Lizzie goes, "I beg your pardon. One knows exactly what to think." And I was like, "Yes, Jane, stop being so kind and start paying attention to the facts." But Jane's actually being really smart here and we don't know him well enough to believe him yet. So, I just did a total flip-flop on how I viewed this scene, seeing it in the movie, reading it in the book.

**Becca:** Yeah, it's definitely true. I also think what's interesting about the scene is that-- and this is like [unintelligible [00:38:34] question at the end of this is that Lizzie is much more explicit about having a thing for Wickham. You get her thoughts on it. As I said, Lizzie shaved her legs for the ball. But here basically, she's like, "Oh, yeah, I'm definitely into him. I definitely fancy him." And then Jane's like, "Yeah," but also, he might not be totally truthful about Darcy."

**Evan Tess:** You just met him. You can't marry a man you just met. It's a *Frozen* moment.

**Molly:** [00:39:00] Yep, I was about to say for Frozen moment because then he turns out to be evil.

**Evan Tess:** Yes, shock!

**Molly:** Just like in the movie. Wow!

**Evan Tess:** Ladies, if he's charming when you meet him, make sure he's never tried to kill you, anyone around you, or wants to bang your 15-year-old sister.

**Molly:** Eww, eww, eww.

**Evan Tess:** Eww. I do have to say never trust a charming man is a pretty good rubric but also very self-defeating for me. So, never mind. Trust the charming ones.

**Becca:** Never trust a charming man.

**Evan Tess:** Except me.

**Molly:** So, this brings us into scene four, where we find out that they've all been invited to a ball at Netherfield, including Collins. And Collins is very excited, and he wants to dance with all of his cousins. And then, he like zones in-- zones in? Zooms in? Zones?

**Becca:** Zooms.

**Molly:** And he zooms in on Lizzie, but before he's like, "Particularly I'd like to dance with," and then Mary is standing in between them and she looks up so hopefully. [00:40:00] And he's like, "You, Cousin Elizabeth." And Mary is like [crosstalk] hide behind.

**Becca:** She's like, "Just kidding. I didn't want you to dance with me anyway."

**Molly:** Oh, poor Mary.

**Becca:** Poor Mary.

**Molly:** So, that's unfortunate. Then, we see Lizzie and Wickham and Collins walking around the grounds together and Collins is talking again about that chimney that was 800 pounds.

**Evan Tess:** And Wickham just condescending to him while being very pleasant the whole time, it's like, wow. One of you has social skills.

**Molly:** Yep. He was like, "She must be very fond of a big blaze then." And he's like, "Oh, yes."

**Becca:** Also, I think what is also really done well here is the framing of Wickham and Collins in the shot next to Lizzie. First of all, you see two suitors. Second of all, you cannot help but compare them standing next to her and one of them is just charming and in his military regimentals, and the other is human sweat.

**Molly:** Big sweat ball.

**Evan Tess:** But if you judge them based on that-- because we can't stand Collins but he is exactly what he presents [00:41:00] himself as. In no way evil, just gross.

**Molly:** Just gross. At least he is honest. I hate Wickham so much, but I would also be falling for him in this moment probably-- no, I would be falling for Lizzie. If I was Lizzie, I'd be falling for myself.

[laughter]

**Evan Tess:** Yeah, unquestionably.

**Becca:** Very fair.

**Molly:** Oh, she's so pretty.

**Evan Tess:** None of the men are gay enough for me.

**Molly:** Yeah. So, this moment was amazing because Jane comes running up. And this is very different from how it was in the book. But Jane comes up and tells Collins that Mary needs help with passage in Fordyce's Sermons, and can he go help her in the library. So, Jane is playing wingman for Mary on one hand, and for Lizzie on the other hand, trying to get Collins to leave her and Wickham alone. This moment is different from the book because in the book, it was



something like Collins was telling Lydia that she would be much better suited with a passage in Fordyce's Sermons than she would be with a work of fiction.

**Evan Tess:** Yes.

**Becca:** So, the original scene in [00:42:00] the book is that, after dinner, one of the first nights Collins is there, he reads from the Bible for them for endless hours and Lydia basically interrupts him and is like, "Ah, did you hear this thing Denny did or Mrs. Colonel Forster did?" And then Collins is like really offended and everyone's really embarrassed that Lydia interrupted him. And he's like, "You could use some Bible passages because you're a loose woman." And so that's how it sets up here. Instead, what we have is Jane using Fordyce's sermons to come in clutch for two of her sisters.

**Molly:** Yes. And I wonder if Mary's actually reading them too.

**Evan Tess:** Probably.

**Becca:** Probably.

**Evan Tess:** And Jane is just so good. Capital G, Good. And Collins couldn't say no anyway, to that request, it would be extremely rude. But also, who could say no to the completely guileless Jane, right?

**Molly:** Right.

**Evan Tess:** She could have no ulterior motive. She's Jane. It's very good.

**Molly:** Right. So, she's using about to her advantage here. Then, Lizzie and Wickham are walking by themselves and [00:43:00] they're talking about how Bingley is a very good guy and Wickham is very grateful that he invited all of the soldiers to his ball. And they talk about how Darcy could possibly be his friend, how would Bingley be friends with Darcy. And Wickham says that Darcy can be very charming when he intends to be and that he can fool people in that way.

**Becca:** Oh, yeah.

**Molly:** Sounds a lot like someone else that we know, huh?

**Evan Tess:** [laughs]

**Becca:** Yeah. Basically, the funny thing about it is all of the flaws that Wickham is trying to imprint on to Darcy are Wickham's own flaws.

**Molly:** We call that projecting.

**Becca:** Yes.

**Evan Tess:** I was about to say we call that projecting. Uh-oh, Molly.

**Becca:** It's so weird to be doing this podcast with just two Mollys.

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Evan Tess:** I wish everyone could see the face that I'm making.

**Molly:** It's an audio medium.

**Evan Tess:** I know.

**Becca:** As Graham always reminds us.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Evan Tess:** [laughs]

**Molly:** Then, Lizzie asks about what sort of person Georgie is, and this is what you brought up earlier, Evan, and [00:44:00] this is where Wickham starts talking about how she used to be very fond of him, and how he was so kind to her, but now she's too much like Darcy.

**Becca:** I really have to give it to the actor in this moment who plays Wickham because I think that what he does masterfully right here, is he is simultaneously so gently charming as he says these things, but it sends a fucking chill up your spine.

**Evan Tess:** Yes, yes, that's it exactly. If you don't know, I don't know what you think, if you do know, you're like you're a predator.

**Becca:** Yeah, it just there's something about the way he speaks about Georgiana and Lydia that-- he doesn't really change his voice. And it's the lines partially but the way he says it just really makes your blood run cold.

**Evan Tess:** [makes shivering noises]

**Molly:** It would be kind of fun to get someone who doesn't know what's going to happen on and see what they think of Wickham.

**Becca:** Oh, yes. I was again watching it with my boyfriend and he has not read the books and he was watching it with me and he just goes, "That's not the whole story. This guy's a bad [00:45:00] actor."

**Molly:** Wickham, not the actor.

**Becca:** Oh yeah. The actor's actually probably a really nice guy and he's a very good actor.

**Molly:** And then, we get the moment where they're looking at Lydia and Kitty being pushed by the officers on a swing, which is very cute. And he says that Georgie is about Lydia's age, 16, and Lizzie says Lydia is 15. And then he looks at Lydia. And he's like, "Oh. Hmm."

**Becca:** Gross.

**Evan Tess:** Yeah, like that made her more interesting to him, not less because it makes her more vulnerable. Yeah, eww.

**Becca:** So gross.

**Molly:** It makes me physically nauseous. Then, Wickham tells Lizzie that Lady Catherine de Bourgh is Darcy's aunt, which Lizzie nods like she already knows, and that Anne de Bourgh and Darcy are engaged to be married or intended to be married and Lizzie's, like, "Oh, poor Ms. Bingley." And then, Wickham laughs along like he knows what she's talking about, but like neither of them-- they're not on the same page here. But anyway.

**Becca:** I think we just have to infer that these two have been [00:46:00] talking and gossiping a lot about that party.

**Molly:** Yeah, that makes sense.

**Becca:** And so, they know that Ms. Bingley is thirsty for Darcy. We know that Darcy and Catherine de Bourgh are related. So, I don't know.

**Evan Tess:** I felt like Wickham was bringing up Anne de Bourgh partly to just throw up one more thing between Lizzie and Darcy.

**Molly:** Yeah.

**Evan Tess:** Just in case. I know you won't be interested because I already made you think he's evil. But even if you were interested, also, he's already engaged. You know?

**Molly:** Yeah, it definitely seems like a tactic there to make sure that they're not a thing, which is the end of that scene, and brings us to our sequence of getting ready for the ball and to then the ball at Netherfield.

Which seems like as good a time as ever to end this episode of Pod and Prejudice. This is Molly from the future letting you know that we talked for too dang long because we were having such a good time. And now, we have another week's worth of material for you covering Episode Two of the 1995 version **[00:47:00]** of *Pride and Prejudice* starring Colin Firth and Jennifer Ehle.

If you want to find Evan on the social medias, their name is Evan Tess Murray, pretty much wherever. And if you google Evan Tess Murray, they're probably the only person that's going to come up. You can follow [@needsanamepod](#) on Twitter to get updates on their podcast, *This Planet Needs a Name*, which is so good. I love it. It's just a whole punk space tale about sweet gays in outer space. So, check them out there. And until next time, stay proper and find yourself someone to talk about Jane Austen for two hours with.

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