

Molly: Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we want to give a huge shoutout to our newest patrons, Alexandra, Alessia, Sarah, Marina, and Marines. And a very special shoutout to our patrons, Valgerdur and Kara, who upgraded their pledges. Thank you so much for your support. If you want to be like these awesome people and get access to bonus content like our notes, outtakes, and to hear us talk about stuff that we're reading that isn't 200 years old, head on over to patreon.com/podandprejudice. And now, enjoy this week's episode covering Chapters 6 through 8 of *Emma*.

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

Becca: [humming the podcast theme] This is Becca.

Molly: This is Molly.

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

Molly: We are here specifically to talk about Chapters 6 through 8 of *Emma*.

Becca: *Emma*

Molly: *Emma*.

Becca: Listeners, those of you who have not joined this podcast before, I, [00:01:00] Becca, have read many Jane Austen books in my life.

Molly: And I, Molly, had never read any Jane Austen books before starting this podcast.

Becca: And we are currently making our way through Jane Austen's canon together piece by piece, chapter by chapter, movie by BBC masterpiece.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: If you want to hear us go through *Pride and Prejudice* or *Sense and Sensibility*, you can check out Seasons 1 and 2 of our podcast respectively. But that is not what we're doing here today.

Molly: No. Today, we are talking about our problematic fave, *Emma*.

Becca: [laughs] Have you ever watched the show, *Never Have I Ever*?

Molly: No, but I want to.

Becca: I love that show. It's so good. Anyway, the main character is very much an antihero. And I saw someone post online that was like, "We love our problematic fave. Makes the wrong decision at every turn, every single point. It's impressive."

Molly: That's basically *Emma*.

Becca: Yes. Anyway, [00:02:00] today, listeners, I made Molly read through a lot of hoopla, because I made her read three chapters of this book, Chapters 6 through 8.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, Molly, are you ready to talk about the hoopla?

Molly: Yeah. That's a perfect word for it. I texted Becca and I was like, "Okay, I finished the chapters. And boy, do I have thoughts."

Becca: Oh, yeah. I knew. I could feel your anger just emanating through my phone as I got that text message. I was like, "Ooh, okay, we're going to have a spicy one this time."

Molly: Yeah. Emma is just so-- Argh.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: I say this while I'm smiling ear to ear, but she is so awful.

Becca: Deliciously so.

Molly: Yeah. Should we talk about it?

Becca: Oh, we should talk about it.

Molly: So, starting out with Chapter 6. Emma is feeling great about how Harriet and Mr. Elton are feeling about each other. Mr. Elton says that Emma has made Harriet so much better. He says, "She was a beautiful creature when she came to you. But the attractions you have added are infinitely superior to what she received from nature." [00:03:00] Emma is like, "Oh, I really didn't do that much." And Mr. Elton tries to contradict her, but she won't let him.

Now, throughout these chapters, I have a prediction-- the proof that I am using to back up this prediction starts now with him being so piling on the compliments for Emma, not really for Harriet. I think that Mr. Elton actually likes Emma, because every single compliment that he's giving to Harriet is actually saying something good about Emma, like how she's improved Harriet. He says of how she's handled Harriet "skillful husband, the hand." So, we'll come back to that throughout the chapter, but I'm putting it on the record right now.

Becca: What am I going to do?

Molly: Neither confirm nor deny.

Becca: I will neither confirm nor deny.

Molly: Emma suggests that she'd like to have Harriet's picture and Mr. Elton agrees. They ask Harriet if she's ever sat for her picture before being drawn and she's like, "Definitely not." And then, [00:04:00] she goes out of the room. And while she's gone, Emma says that she actually used to have a great passion for portraiture or at least, that's what I'm assuming taking likenesses means.

Becca: That's correct. She's the Instagram hoe of the-

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: -19th century. She's out there with her phone and her Vesco going crazy, having a great time with a ring light. But basically, it's skills work. It's the type of accomplishment that a woman of this era should have, painting portraits of people. But I love her descriptions of how she paints everyone.

Molly: I know. She goes on and on. I think we get into that in a little bit. But she basically is like, "I used to be really good at that and I would love to try on Harriet." And Mr. Elton is like, "Of course, you should try it on Harriet. You're so good at art." He says, "Let me entreat you to exercise so charming a talent in favor of your friend." Again, she's thinking that he's excited about Harriet getting her portrait taken.

Meanwhile, he is [00:05:00] actually saying that Emma has really talent at art, just throwing that out there. Emma thinks to herself that he should keep his raptures to Harriet's face. And she says that, "Harriet has delicate features that will be difficult to capture." And Mr. Elton is like, "Well, I have no doubt that you'll succeed." I just wanted to say though, that I don't want to get fully caught up in reading this one way, because we know how that turned out with my Colonel Brandon and Elinor shipping.

Becca: Are you talking about the fact that this is gay, the way that Emma talks about Harriet?

Molly: No. I'm talking about my reading of Mr. Elton having a crush on Emma. I just want to play the devil's advocate for myself. However, now that you've pointed it out, I should say, the way Emma talks about Harriet is [crosstalk] gay.

Becca: Oh, I'm sorry. I was reading a little ahead in your notes. That's on me. [chuckles]

Molly: Okay. Fair, fair, fair.

Becca: I was like, "Are you really going to actually predict that Jane Austen went through a queer love story?" Because I'd be into it.

Molly: Listen, I'm not predicting that. I'm just going to point it out every chance that I get.

Becca: I really appreciate that, because reading this book, again, it's something I'm picking up on. I'm [00:06:00] like, "Damn, Emma's got a thing for Harriet."

Molly: The way she says my intimate friend like 17 times in these chapters.

Becca: And the way she's pure Instagram boyfriend on this entire thing.

Molly: Yeah, she really is. She's like, "Let me just capture your beautiful eyes."

Becca: Yes. And I say this knowing very well that Emma is a character that adores her female friends. I love everything that happens with female friendship there, but it's a little gay.

Molly: It's a little gay. But no, in this moment, I was talking about Mr. Elton having a crush on Emma. I just wanted to note that when Emma says that Harriet has an interesting shape of her eyes and the lines around her mouth, he agrees and he repeats the shape of her eyes and the lines about the mouth, which could be also read as him appreciating Harriet's beauty, though that's not how I'm reading it. I'm reading it as like offhanded, like just repeating what Emma says.

He says the portrait is going to be an exquisite possession and Emma points out that Harriet is too self-conscious and thinks nothing of her own beauty. It will be hard to convince her to sit for the picture. Mr. Elton says that they can [00:07:00] persuade her. And when she comes back, they in fact do. So, this is where Emma pulls out her portfolio and starts flipping through all of her drawings and not a single one of them has she ever finished.

Becca: Ah, I love this. I love this though because it's me. It's me with cross stitching.

Molly: Okay. But you've finished a lot of cross stitching.

Becca: I know, but I never find the right frames for them. I'm really bad at finding frames. I love cross stitching, but I hate finding frames for my cross stitching.

Molly: In 2019, listeners, Becca cross stitched me Baby Yoda and it was the sweetest birthday gift I've ever received. And then, I put it into a frame that came with one of my college photos that had a weird-- like you could slide it in and I was wiggling this cross stitch into this frame.

Becca: That's incredible. See, this is what I mean. I love doing the cross stitches, but I can never find the right frames for them.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Some people leave them in the hoops, but I reuse my embroidery hoop and it's not pretty. So, I'm like, "Mmm." Anyway, back to Emma, our iconic friend who does not finish her hobbies.

Molly: Yes. She has a lot of [00:08:00] hobbies and she's never really committed to any of them. The things that she's made the most progress in were drawing and music. She had a very, "If I had ever learned vibe" from Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

Becca: Oh, yeah, because those are the richest women we interact with regularly.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: They're like, "Oh, I can do whatever I want. And I do-- If I don't, it's not that I'm bad at it. It's because I'm just not in the mood. I would be great."

Molly: Right. And for Emma, that's the case with these things. She has a lot of natural talent and she just doesn't practice. She is aware that she isn't as good as she could be at these things. But she really accepts the praise, anyway. It says, "She was not much deceived as to her own skill, either as an artist or a musician. But she was not unwilling to have others deceived or sorry to know her reputation for accomplishment often higher than it deserved." I love that.

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Molly: Every drawing in her portfolio had some merit. [00:09:00] They're all pretty good. But Elton and Harriet would basically have been as obsessed with them, if they had been amazing or if they had been terrible, because they're both obsessed with Emma. Then, Emma goes through the portfolio showing them the pictures of her father, Mrs. Weston, her sisters, her sister's babies. She is going through this and she comments that Mrs. Weston was her kindest friend. And I just wanted to note that she doesn't have a ton of social awareness. You've got this girl next to you, who worships you and right now is your only friend. And you're showing her pictures, you're like, "Oh, yeah, this is my best friend. This other girl."

Becca: Yeah, that doesn't translate well nowadays.

Molly: Yeah. Well, it doesn't translate well then. It's rude.

Becca: Yeah, but at the same time, it's also her decades old babysitter.

Molly: True. True. I will concede on that. Also, on the picture of the baby, I wanted to note the word cockade, which I think in this sense means head. She's talking about how nice his cockade is or [00:10:00] cockade. It's actually a badge of ribbons that goes on a hat. But I don't think that's the context that it's meant in here.

Becca: Oh, I'm sure it is.

Molly: The baby is wearing one?

Becca: Yeah. The baby might just be wearing some ribbons.

Molly: All right.

Becca: It's Instagram.

Molly: [laughs] Fair enough. The last picture is her brother, Mr. John Knightley. Now, I know that you warned me-- [laughs]

Becca: About the Knightley conundrum?

Molly: Yeah, but I read this chapter twice, because I read it once forgetting that I didn't have a pen on me and then again, when I had my pen on me. And the full first time that I read it, I thought we were talking about Knightley.

Becca: No, we were talking about John Knightley.

Molly: I hate it.

Becca: [laughs] I know. But there's nothing to do about it.

Molly: Yeah, come on, Jane Austen. Anyway, yes, it is in fact, Mr. John Knightley. This is the last likeness she ever took, because she had been so certain that it was so good and that it was only too handsome and too flattering. And then, she showed it to [00:11:00] Isabella who was John Knightley's wife and her sister. And Isabella was like, "It doesn't do him justice." And she was like, "Well, that's it. That's the end of that for me." She got one bad review.

Becca: Yep. That's the case. Emma is what you would call a 19th century brat.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: Yeah. [laughs]

Molly: Mm-hmm, precisely. But after showing them this, she's like, "Since there are no husbands and wives in the case at present, she will break her resolution." And Elton repeats, no husbands and wives in the case at present indeed. And Emma is like, "Who? Should I leave them alone right now and let them get to it?" Because it was the repeating of the app present that makes her think that maybe he's thinking Harriet and himself one day. Who knows? Who's to say?

Becca: Whomst, if you will.

Molly: Yeah. She starts drawing and Mr. Elton is standing behind Emma fidgeting and watching her draw the whole time and she's like, "Okay, he's standing where he can watch Harriet without looking

creepy about it." I want to just beg the question. Is he watching [00:12:00] Harriet or is he watching Emma draw Harriet? It's different. She decides to ask him to read aloud to them. So, he does. And every so often, he comes over and just admires her work. And the next day, he does the same thing and Mr. Elton is just enraptured about the painting or I guess, drawing watercolors, painting.

Becca: I think it's a painting.

Molly: Starts with drawing and then fills in with color?

Becca: Yeah, I think it's a painting. I don't know what kind of paint she's using.

Molly: I think they said watercolors, because they said it was the same as Mr. John Knightley and it was going to be a full body length thing.

Becca: Which is honestly, a lot of work.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: That's excessive.

Molly: Have you seen the gay one? Oh, fuck.

Becca: Which gay one, Molly?

Molly: The gay period piece in French, where-- [crosstalk]

Becca: *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*.

Molly: That one.

Becca: A gay one. [laughs]

Molly: But this is that, right?

Becca: Yeah, I haven't seen *Portrait of a Lady on* [00:13:00] *Fire*.

Molly: [gasps]

Becca: I know, I know, I know. Here's what happened. The pandemic happened.

Molly: [chuckles]

Becca: I was watching. I think it was *Parasite* in theaters back in 2019 and I saw the ad for a *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* and I went, "Oh, that looks stunning." And then, I never got around to watching it, because the world melted down. [chuckles]

Molly: Fair enough. Fair enough. Well, highly recommend. Mel showed it to me.

Becca: Not you and Mel watching a movie about lesbians painting each other together.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Anyway, this is that a little bit. And that took weeks for her to get it right. The fact that Emma does this painting drawing in two days is impressive.

Becca: Yes. Iconic, if you will.

Molly: Iconic. When it is done, Mrs. Weston points out that Emma made Harriet look a little better than she actually does. And Mr. Elton is like, "No, no, no, it's a perfect resemblance." Then Mr. Knightley says, "You made her too tall." In my mind, I was like, "Of course, Mr. Knightley says, you made her too tall."

Becca: I [00:14:00] fucking love Knightley. He's so grumpy.

Molly: He's so hot.

Becca: Ah, yes.

Molly: I have a little crush.

Becca: You have to.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: It's really important to have a crush on Mr. Knightley for your mental health.

Molly: Yeah, I'm really glad, because I had heard of Mr. Knightley obviously, because there's t-shirts that are like Mr. Darcy, Mr. Bingley, Colonel Brandon, Mr. Knightley, those name t-shirts.

Becca: Yeah. [crosstalk]

Molly: I knew of him, but I didn't know if he was going to be the guy that I like right away or hate right away. And turns out it's both.

Becca: [laughs] I fucking love Knightley.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: He's such a fucking asshole and I love him so much.

Molly: He's a daddy, if you will.

Becca: Oh, he's so daddy. And also, I should clarify. He's "an asshole," not in the way Darcy is the beginning of *Pride and Prejudice*. He's just such a grump.

Molly: He's blunt.

Becca: It's just like, vrugh.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: That sound effect like, vrugh.

Molly: [00:15:00] Emma knows that she in fact did make her too tall, but she says nothing. And Mr. Elton is like, "Well, you can't actually tell that she's too tall, because she's sitting. So, she's probably

exactly the right height." And then Mr. Woodhouse says, "He thinks it's perfect. His only problem with the painting is that she appears to be outside," which makes him worry that she'll catch a cold. And Emma is like, "But look, I put a tree behind her. It's supposed to be summer."

Becca: Also, once again, Mr. Woodhouse, our iconic anxious man--

Molly: Iconic. He's like, "It's never safe to go outside."

Becca: Yes, of course. "You put her outside, she will be cold in the painting."

Molly: Right.

Becca: Obviously.

Molly: Right. I'm worried about her health in this fictional world. Mr. Elton, meanwhile, is like, "Oh, I think it's nice to imagine her sitting outside. It's such a good picture." Then they need to get it framed in London and Mr. Woodhouse won't hear of Isabella going to do it, because it's December and she will go outside and catch a cold as previously mentioned. So, Mr. Elton offers to do it, following Colonel Brandon.

Becca: "Except, instead of going to grab your mother as you're dying, [00:16:00] I will take this painting to get it framed in London."

Molly: Yeah. I could go to London on my horse anytime, I swear.

Becca: Again, Colonel Brandon did it for-

Molly: For love.

Becca: -dying Marianne.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Mr. Elton's like, "I'll get this painting framed."

Molly: Totally, totally. Emma is like, "Well, I don't want to inconvenience you with it," even though she secretly does. And the word she uses there is incommode and that means inconvenience. And he's like, "No, you couldn't possibly. I couldn't be inconvenienced enough." So, he goes and Emma is left thinking that he is too profuse with his sighing and his compliments and that she could never endure that herself. But she thinks, "Well, it's all for Harriet" and she would love that. But I think, is it?

Becca: Guys, you can't see this, but Molly's gotten up close to her mic as if she's leaning into a camera and going, "Is it?"

Molly: Actually, someone sent us this on Instagram and I think we have to make it. The meme [00:17:00] from whatever the show is where it's the guy looking really frazzled and he has a bunch of red yarn behind him with-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Molly: And that's like Emma matchmaking.

Becca: It is so Emma matchmaking. By the way, you're talking about this show. It's *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* and that is Charlie Day uncovering the mailroom scheme.

Molly: Yeah, that's me right now also being like, "Is it?"

Becca: That's literally you reading any Jane Austen book. We have done that with you reading something. I think it was *Sense and Sensibility*.

Molly: It was *Sense and Sensibility* and I was trying to get all the John's straight.

Becca: [laughs] Yeah, but that meme is just us all the time or you. I am that Ron Swanson meme, where he doesn't do anything. He's just like, "Ah, meh."

Molly: Anyway, that brings us to Chapter 7.

Becca: I believe this is also known as the Hoopla Part 1.

Molly: Hoopla Part 1 and then Chapter 8 is Hoopla Part 2.

Becca: Hoopla Part 2.

Molly: The day that Elton is supposed to go to London, Harriet runs in sooner than expected and tells Emma that something extraordinary has happened. She had gone to Mrs. Goddard's [00:18:00] this morning and learn that Mr. Martin had been there and had left a package for her, returning two pieces of music that she had lent to his sister and also a letter. And the letter was a marriage proposal.

Becca: Graham, I do believe we need a proposal sound effect here?

[proposal sound effect]

Molly: The letter is very good. It's written like he really loves her and she just doesn't know what to do. And so, Emma takes the letter, and she reads it, and she is surprised with how well written it is. She says to herself, its composition would not have disgraced a gentleman. Hmm, sounds like someone made a snap judgment about someone before she got to know him.

Becca: [laughs] But the disbelief is so insulting.

Molly: This is where I was reading this on the train. I was going somewhere with Mel and a group of her friends. And I looked up and I was like, "Emma is a bitch." And then, I was like, "Oh, I'm sorry for using that word." But Emma is a bitch.

Becca: Oh, yeah. She's so dismissive of Mr. Robert Martin, our boy, [00:19:00] Robbie.

Molly: Robbie.

Becca: Yeah, Robbie.

Molly: Bob. I broke Becca, guys.

Becca: Okay, hang on. It just seemed like an eternity to process Bob Martin.

Molly: One more Bobby?

Becca: Bob is worse. I don't know why.

Molly: I think Bobby suits him.

Becca: Yeah, he's a little bit of a Bobby.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Bob.

Molly: Anyway, the letter is short, but it expresses attachment propriety good sense, delicacy even. And Emma says to Harriet that the letter is so good that she thinks one of his sisters helped him. I almost dropped my book. I was like, "Are you kidding me?" She said, she's never seen a man right like that, but it's also not the style of a woman, because it's too strong and concise. Emma, she just loves to put people in boxes.

Becca: Yes, she's definitely extrapolating here. She's caught flat footed, because this is not what she expected. Obviously, she expected that [00:20:00] Mr. Martin harbored something for Harriet. But she thinks he's going to show up in his fricking muddy overalls and be like, "Hey, wife me?"

Molly: Yeah, she doesn't really know what a farmer does.

Becca: Yeah. Are we sure that Emma knows what a farmer is? Because at this point in time, it just feels she's not aware of what farmers actually do. She just seems to think it's old MacDonald.

Molly: Exactly. That's exactly what she thinks. Ultimately, she says, he must have a natural talent for having good thoughts and putting words to them, because it's a better letter than she thought it would be. And Harriet is like, "Okay, but what should I do?" And Emma's like, "Well, you should answer him." And then Harriet is like, "What should I say?" And Emma says that she has complete faith that Harriet will let him down easily, she'll know exactly what to say and how to make him feel better about the disappointment that she's giving him.

Becca: The fake 'oh' that you get from Emma here, which [00:21:00] is like, "Oh, I just assumed. I'm sorry. I'm sorry."

Molly: Yeah, because Harriet is like, "Oh, you mean I should turn him down?" And Emma's like--

Becca: "No, no, oh, I didn't know you hadn't made up your mind. But if you want my opinion, mm."

Molly: She's like, "I can't give you advice on that. That's something that only you can do." But she's already done it. She's already given her advice by making that assumption.

Becca: Yeah. First of all, here's the thing. There are a lot of class dynamics here and I don't want to dispute them. And Emma is about 10 times more clever than Harriet is. But also, ladies, gentlemen, people of the pod, if your friend thinks that your SO is a dud, really evaluate why your friend thinks that your SO is a dud. Because sometimes, your friends are unreasonably judgmental of your significant other.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: No, personally, not the case with me. Mike gets along well with all my friends.

Molly: [laughs] [00:22:00]

Becca: He's pulling it out on all stops. But I have seen this happen and I'm just like, "Guys, don't let your friends tell you who to date." Friends of people, don't tell your friends who to date, unless you're worried about them. But I understand in this context why Harriet hero worships Emma, if you know what I mean.

Molly: Well, I don't understand necessarily why she hero worships Emma. Because she hero worships Emma and she comes to Emma asking her, what she should do and I was like, "Oh, well, you should let him down easy." Harriet automatically is going to think, "Oh, I'm supposed to turn him down."

Becca: Well, like I said, we can never forget that there are class dynamics to this relationship. Harriet is of a much lower class than Emma. Emma is smarter than Harriet or Emma is wealthier than Harriet and Emma is about 10 times better connected than Harriet, which all adds to the dynamics of how Harriet sees this relationship. This is a big push, but it's like you become friends with a celebrity. There [00:23:00] are people with very strong character out there, who can have very reasonable relationships with people above them, like, socioeconomically, but then there are the Harriets of the world, the people who just want to impress real bad. They're also the Charles Bingleys of the world as well.

When you hang out with someone who's above your station, sometimes you want to match them, because you want to impress them and be like them and make them think that you're at the same level. And you can see that a little bit from Harriet here. She's learning all these cues from Emma. And even the way that Emma says, "Oh, well, I'm sure you will find a way to let him down gently," is all tangled up in this idea of making Harriet feel stupid. Like she should have known the answer in the first place.

Molly: Exactly. And so, when Harriet is like, "Oh, so, you think I should reject him." Emma's like, "Oh, I had no idea that you were doubting that. I thought you just didn't know how to say it." And Harriet thinks, "Right. Of course, [00:24:00] if I was in this class and knew what to do here, then of course, all I would be doubting was how to say it, not what to say itself." But she wants to say yes, real bad.

Becca: Oh, she does, because Bobby's cute.

Molly: Bobby's cute and she loves him. Well, she didn't love him, but she loves him.

Becca: Well, they're cutesy together. They're into each other. They have chemistry. It's The Economics Dating and Jane Austen with that little edge of love we all like.

Molly: Yeah. She's like, "Okay, well, what do I do?" And Emma's like, "I'm not going to give you any advice. I'm not going to tell you what to do. You have to follow your own heart."

Becca: But--

Molly: But she says, "If a woman doubts as to whether she should accept demand, she should refuse him immediately. If there's any doubt as to yes, she ought to say no." Now, I do agree with Emma here.

Becca: That's a fantastic 21st century take. It is not a great take to give your [00:25:00] friend who doesn't have money.

Molly: Exactly. That's what I'm thinking. This whole time, I was like, "Emma, not everyone has the luxury of just waiting around for the right guy."

Becca: "I'm 27 years old, have no money, no prospects. I'm already a burden on my parents."

Molly and Becca: And I'm frightened.

Molly: Exactly.

Becca: Except that Harriet's still 17. This is a very early offer. She's not Charlotte Lucas. She has something that every woman in this time period really wants. Good looks.

Molly: Yeah. Harriet is still torn and is not really saying much and Emma is like, "Listen, if you like Mr. Martin better than any other man and there's nobody else that's coming to your mind right now, then there's no reason that you should say no. But is there someone else coming to your mind?" And Harriet is like, "Ah." And she's twisting up her letter in her hands. And finally, she's like, "You know what, you're not being any help. I've come to my own decision. I'm going to refuse him. Do you think that was right?" And Emma's like, "Yes, absolutely. Because I would [00:26:00] have dropped you as a friend, if you had said yes to him."

Becca: And Harriet's like, "Oh, well, thank God, I know that, because I would rather be single and be your friend than anything else." Gay.

Molly: The way that she said it to-- I wrote it down. She says, "I would not give up the pleasure and honor of being intimate with you for anything in the world."

Becca: Oof.

Molly: Gay? Emma's like, "Yeah, it would have sucked, but you would have thrown yourself out of all good society. So, I couldn't have been your friend anymore." And she's like, "Can you imagine being stuck with illiterate and vulgar people the rest of your life? That would have been terrible. And Mr. Martin must have thought pretty highly of himself for asking you," Harriet is like, "Well, he's not conceited. He's actually very good natured and she has a regard for him. But just because he likes her, it doesn't mean she has to like him back." And Emma agrees that a woman shouldn't marry a man just because she's asked, or because he likes her, or can write a tolerable letter. Harriet is like, "Yeah, and it's a short letter too." And Emma then feels her friends' bad taste. In my mind, I'm thinking that's because [00:27:00] she knows that it's a good letter. It's not just a short letter.

Becca: Yeah. She sees in that moment that a man shouldn't express himself [unintelligible [00:27:08] firstly. He shouldn't go on forever. He should be brief, clear, romantic, gentle, spirited, and smart. And it turns out that Robert Martin actually did write this really good letter to Harriet and she has to be like, "Hmm, Harriet didn't even clock that that was good."

Molly: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Oh, honestly, Emma wishes someone would propose to her with a letter like Robert Martin did.

Becca: Here's the thing though. Emma doesn't want anyone to propose to her.

Molly: Oh, you're right. You're right. She's so complex.

Becca: Every time we record this podcast so far, Molly has walked in this house like, "I hate them." And I say three words and she's like, "Oh, right. That's a cool piece about Emma."

Molly: Yeah, she is. She's complex. She said a lot of smart things that are way ahead of her time. But they sound ahead of her time, because she's talking about her privilege [00:28:00] of being able to-- she's able to live this free life that we all as women and whoever, but specifically women in society nowadays get to live. But back then, not everyone had that privilege. But to us, it feels like woke.

Becca: Oh, yeah, it's a revolution in her time period, but it's certainly only one she gets to live out, because she has the money to not marry.

Molly: Yeah. Emma says that down the line, his letter writing would have been a small consolation for all the embarrassment he would have given her by being who he is. And Harriet is like, "Okay, well, how do I refuse him?" Emma's like, "Well, I can't really help you with that." But then she basically writes the whole letter. Harriet is so concerned about hurting his feelings, and she keeps rereading and rereading a letter, and eventually, Emma's like, "Okay, take this away from you," because she's afraid that she's going to accept in the end after all.

They write the letter, they send the letter, it is over. Emma decides to bring up Mr. Elton again, but Harriet is still really stuck on Mr. Martin and [00:29:00] she's like, "I'm never going to be invited to Abbey-Mill again." And Emma's like, "Good, because you got to be here at Hartfield" and Harriet's like, "Yeah, yeah, I'm never happy, but at Hartfield," which is pretty sad.

Becca: Very tough, very tough. But it's that thing where he's like, "You don't need them. You have me. I'm enough."

Molly: And then Harriet's like, "Yeah, you're all I need."

Becca: Exactly.

Molly: Gay.

Becca: Oh, boy. [laughs]

Molly: Anyway, Harriet, later on says that she thinks that Mrs. Goddard and Mrs. Nash would be surprised, if they knew she had refused him, because Mrs. Nash is even like, she thinks even her sister's marriage to a linen draper is good. And I'm noticing that a little bit of snootiness is starting to come up in Harriet.

Becca: Interesting. Interesting to track that.

Molly: Mm-hmm. She's like, "Yeah, but she was even proud of her sister's marriage to that linen draper."

Becca: Yeah. Emma's obviously, for all of her good qualities for all of her interesting qualities, she is a classist monster on certain issues. And Harriet's been hanging out with her. And one thing that she's learned is that Emma loves nothing more and then [00:30:00] to shit on other people's class status through marriage. And so, it's this like, "Yeah, I knew this woman who was impressed by a linen draper. Isn't that crazy?" And Emma's going to be like, "Oh, my God, that's so crazy," and Harriet's going to be like, "Point one for Harriet."

Molly: Exactly. Then [laughs] I just want to draw attention to the fact that I had just gotten my booster last night when I was typing up these notes and I wrote, she's starting to get a little high in my head instead of full of herself. I couldn't think of the words for full of herself.

Becca: I like high in the head.

Molly: Emma says that she bets that they would have been envious of this proposal, because they have no reason to expect anything better for Harriet. But she and Harriet both know there's someone else after her. Later on, Harriet starts worrying and thinking about what Mr. Martin and his sisters are doing, and if he's sad, and if his sisters know, and Emma is like, "Let's think happier thoughts. Let's talk about the fact that Mr. Elton is [00:31:00] probably showing your picture around to his family and talking about how much more beautiful you are in person." And Harriet is like, "No way. He left my picture in Bond Street. I'm guessing that's the framing place.

Becca: Oh, yeah.

Molly: And Emma's like, "No, he's going to keep the picture with him all night and he won't bring it to Bond Street until right before he has to come back." And that makes Harriet smile and that is the end of that chapter.

Becca: Which brings us to Hoopla Part 2, AKA a chapter I personally adore.

Molly: So, that's chapter 8, everyone.

Hello, hello, hello, I am so sorry to interrupt, but it's me, Molly, from the future. Here to bring you a segment that we are now calling The Economics of Podcasting about Jane Austen. So, Graham, the sound effect, please. [sound effect]. This week on The Economics of Podcasting about Jane Austen, I'm going to tell you a little bit about Athletic Greens. They have a product that I use literally every day, it's called AG1. As a lot of you know, I'm a vegan and I have to take a bunch of different vitamins and supplements all the [00:32:00] time. So, I started drinking AG1 by Athletic Greens, because I wanted to try one that actually tastes good. And it really does. It's sweet, fruity, and it doesn't really taste like a nutritional drink. What I do is, I like to fill my AG1 bottle with water every night and put it in the fridge to get really cold. And then in the morning, I add one scoop of AG1, shake it up, and drink it. It's super easy, you just take one scoop and you're absorbing 75 high-quality vitamins, minerals, Whole Foods source superfoods, probiotics, and adaptogens to help you start your day right.

I've been drinking it for a couple of weeks now, and I found that I have more energy throughout the day, and I'm able to focus better while I'm at my day job. And right now, Athletic Greens has a special offer for you guys, our listeners. They're going to give you a free one-year supply of immune supporting vitamin D and five free travel packs with your first purchase of AG1. All you have to do is visit athleticgreens.com/whosmt. Again, that's athleticgreens.com/whomst [00:33:00] to take ownership over your health and pick up the ultimate daily nutritional insurance. And now, let's get back to talking about Jane Austen.

Molly: That night, Harriet sleeps over. She's actually been staying over so much that she has a bedroom at Hartfield. In the morning, she leaves for Mrs. Goddard's with the plan to come back that night. But while she's gone, Mr. Knightley stopped by. Mr. Woodhouse had been about to go for a walk and he's super apologetic to Knightley for leaving him and Mr. Woodhouse is like, "I would ask you to come with me" and Mr. Knightley is like, "No, no, it's okay. Go for your walk" and they basically go back

and forth until Mr. Knightley's like, "I'm actually about to leave too. So, don't worry, here's your coat and why don't you get a move on?" And he pushes them out the door and then he doesn't leave. He sits down with Emma and he starts praising Harriet.

Becca: I love the energy that Knightley enters the scene with it, it's kind of like, "Hey, Emma, your friend, Harriet, she's kind of cool."

Molly: The energy they handled this scene with is very, "I know something you don't [00:34:00] know."

Becca: Which is so much better, because it's coming from Mr. Knightley.

Molly: Who's the certifiable grump about everything. So, the fact that he's excited about something is just weird.

Becca: It comes from borderline giddy. He's like, "He he he he he he." [laughs]

Molly: There's an episode of *Gilmore Girls*, where Luke is happy about something and everyone's confused about it.

Becca: Luke is a perfect, perfect Knightley comp.

Molly: He starts praising Harriet and he says, "Her character depends upon those she is with. But in good hands, she will turn out a valuable woman." Emma thinks, of course that he was complimenting her and she starts fishing for more and he's like, "Okay, yes, fine. You have improved her." And Emma is like, "Well, I would have been mortified, if I didn't think I'd done some good for Harriet." And she notes that Mr. Knightley doesn't compliment her often. He asks, if Harriet is coming back? And Emma says, actually, she's already late." And Knightley says, maybe something kept her. And Emma is like, "It must be Highbury gossips, those tiresome wretches." And Knightley says that Harriet might not consider ever everyone [00:35:00] tiresome that Emma does, which Emma knows is true. So, she says nothing. And then Knightley is like, "I know something you don't know."

Becca: I love this scene also, because you just know that Knightley like, "It looks like you're not the only one who's doing some matchmaking." [laughs]

Molly: He's just so excited and he's like, "Ah, this part honestly, it broke me."

Becca: I love this scene, because it is simultaneously so funny and so revealing about both of these characters. You have him just walking in there being like, "Ah, yes, my friend, Emma. I think her pursuits of matchmaking are silly, but I'm indulging them on just this one little time."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: This is fun. I'm having a good time. And Emma enters the scene with none of this, like, no context for how Knightley feels about this match at all. And she just simply thinks she saved her friend from a bad match.

Molly: Mm-hmm. So, listeners, if you're listening along and you haven't gotten there yet, we'll tell you what we're talking [00:36:00] about. So, Emma is like, "Okay, who's in love with Harriet" assuming that it's going to be Mr. Elton, because she knows that Elton looks up to Knightley and would definitely confide in him about that. And Mr. Knightley says he has reason to believe that Mr. Martin will be proposing to Harriet. He says he's desperately in love and means to marry her. Emma says, "Is he sure

that Harriet means to marry him?" I was surprised at her restraint here, because if it was me, I would have been like, "Well, he already did yesterday." But she holds out.

Becca: Well, you're noticing here that Emma actually really values Mr. Knightley's opinion on these things. And so, she's approaching it with trepidation. She's reading that he's happy about this and that he has some in knowledge on it. And so, she's gauging a little of what's happening before she has to be like actually knew.

Molly: Right. Mm-hmm. Knightley tells Emma that Mr. Martin considers [00:37:00] Mr. Knightley, one of his best friends and came to ask him, if he thought it was a good idea for him to propose or if maybe Harriet was too young or too high above his station. Thanks to Emma, of course. He thinks that she's high above his station, even though she is literally not above his station. And in my notes, I was like, "Oh, my God, he and Harriet would have been perfect together. They're the same person." Because Harriet ran to Emma being like, "What should I do? What should I do?" And Mr. Martin ean to Knightley being like, "What should I do? What should I do? Is this okay? How's my letter?"

Becca: It's really, really sweet.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And also, just the idea of this little farmer boy-- First of all, he leases his land from Knightley. They're just how they know each other. And Knightley thinks he's a good guy. And so, they chat and everything. You take your advice from your higher-class people and he's like, "Hey, Mr. Knightley, I got this thing for this girl in town and I was thinking that maybe it's time for me to marry. And I just thought maybe you could help me figure out a way [00:38:00] to propose." Knightley's like, "I got you, bro."

Molly: Oh, I turned into a puddle just thinking about it.

Becca: Oh.

Molly: He says that he never hears better sense from anyone but Robert Martin. He says he has no hesitation in advising him to marry. Mr. Martin proved he could afford it and Mr. Knightley believes that Mr. Martin could not do better. He thinks that since he didn't do it yesterday, he's probably detaining Harriet at Mrs. Goddard's right now and she probably doesn't think him at all a tiresome wretch. Emma is like, "Wait, backtrack. How do you know that he didn't do it yesterday?"

Becca: And he's like, "Oh, I guess I don't."

Molly: He's like, "Yeah, I felt I would have heard about it. But wasn't she with you all day anyway?" And Emma says, "Well, she was. And Mr. Martin wrote and was refused." [record scratch] This is where I was like, "Can you say that again, please? "

Becca: The record scratch we get here. We need a full record scratch, because Knightley's face, you can see him just like snap towards Emma and be like, "Excuse me, what?"

Molly: And so, [00:39:00] Emma says it again.

Becca: Yes, she does.

Molly: And Mr. Knightley goes red in the face and he's like basically, "Are you fucking kidding me?" He says, "Harriet is a simpleton then." And Emma's like, "Okay, fine. Yeah, sure. A man always imagines a woman to be ready for anyone who asks her and is so surprised, if she says no."

Becca: Yeah, literally, we're seeing him be like, "Oh, my God, she's a fucking idiot." And Emma's like, "What? Would you say that if she were a man?"

Molly: Yeah, Emma is a little feisty feminist, isn't she?

Becca: Yeah. [laughs] Exactly.

Molly: Mr. Knightley simply cannot wrap his mind around the concept of Harriet saying no and he says, he hopes Emma is mistaken. And Emma's like, "Well, I saw her reply and it was very clear." And he goes, "You saw her answer? You wrote her answer to. Emma, this is your doing. You persuaded her to refuse him." And Emma doesn't admit that she did, but she says that, if she did, she wouldn't have been wrong in doing so. She doesn't see Martin and Harriet as equals. She says, it sounds like Mr. Martin even had some doubts [00:40:00] himself and it's a pity that he had gotten over them. Mr. Knightley says, "No, they're not equals. He is superior to her in sense and in situation."

Becca: You see, you know what he means by that.

Molly: He's smarter, he's better off in life. This is where he says that she's the natural daughter of nobody knows who and a lot of our listeners.

Becca: Yeah, guys, this is my fault. I thought it was more under the surface implied that Harriet was a bastard child. I wasn't trying to hide the ball from Molly on this one. I just didn't think it was, like, I didn't know that natural daughter was explicitly meaning child born out of wedlock. I thought it was just something that we're supposed to assume.

Molly: Yeah, but it turns out that natural daughter does mean child born out of wedlock.

Becca: So, y'all, that's my bad. Not the perfect Jane Austen expert all the time.

Molly: Oops. Nobody's perfect, Becca. But yeah, thanks for writing. And [00:41:00] listeners, now, it's told to us right out, because he's like, "We don't even know who her father is."

Becca: Yeah, exactly. I forgot this part. Sorry, everyone. I don't remember this book perfectly all the time.

Molly: It's okay, Becca. [crosstalk]

Becca: I did remember that Harriet was a bastard. But I just thought we knew that she didn't have a confirmed birth. So, what I always thought is just because we don't know who she was born to, we don't know what her situation is. And therefore, we cannot confirm that she's legitimate.

Molly: To be fair, we don't know her situation. And it seems maybe people are saying, she's the natural daughter of someone. Nobody knows who her parents are. They don't know she's born out of wedlock. They can't say that for sure, if they don't actually know who her parents are.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: It's their assumption, because they want nothing to do with her. Yeah, anyway, so, he says that. He says that Emma's infatuation with Harriet blinds her to the actual circumstances of her situation. And it's true. Emma is infatuated with Harriet. [00:42:00]

Becca: Gay.

Molly: Gay. Then Mr. Knightley simply goes off and I just want to read what he says.

Becca: Oh, yes, please do.

Molly: "She is not a sensible girl, nor a girl of any information. She has been taught nothing useful and is too young and too simple to have acquired anything herself. At her age, she can have no experience, and with her little wit is not very likely to ever have any that can avail her. She is pretty and she is good tempered, and that is all. My only scruple in advising the match was on his account as being beneath his deserts and a bad connection for him. I felt that as to fortune in all probability he might do much better and that as to a rational companion or useful help maid, he could not do worse."

Becca: Boom. Yeah.

Molly: Damn, Knightley, you tell us how you really feel.

Becca: Oh, yeah. Yeah, he does not have any scruples about telling Emma how he really feels at any given point in time. And this is a very crucial moment in this narrative so far, because we're getting a fourth wall break right now. Because in our brains, we have been-- Well, we'll [00:43:00] talk about this more in the study questions. But basically, this is just a moment where, like, whatever we think is being immensely challenged, because whatever Emma thinks is being immensely challenged.

Molly: To be fair, though, I haven't really been thinking how Emma thinks yet.

Becca: We'll get to that.

Molly: Yes. And in my notes, I said, "I can't wait to see this adapted into a movie, because I can just see this very sexy man just getting up and just pacing back and forth, and he's so mad, and he's just saying all of this shit." I just can't wait to see it.

Becca: Oh. Yeah, both Lizzie Bennet and Mr. Knightley excel at a roast upon a roast upon a roast.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: And I love it because I think Knightley is our sassiest man so far.

Molly: Definitely sassy.

Becca: I know Darcy is very sassy, but he's a human disaster. So, we cannot present it all the time. Whereas, Knightley has his shit together on a lot of stuff. So, when he gives us sass, it's always like, boom, boom, boom.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: I got you.

Molly: Yeah. He says that he meant Harriet would be okay in good hands. When he said that [00:44:00] before, he meant Mr. Martin's hands, not Emma's hands, which is how she took the compliment. He says that the match would have most benefited Harriet. He even thought that Emma wouldn't be upset, because she would have seen that it was a good match. And Emma then comes back with and you must not know me very well to think a farmer a good match for my friend. For with all his sense and all his merit, Mr. Martin is nothing more. She just simply doesn't know anything about people.

Becca: She has a very simplistic view of Mr. Martin as a person and it's reflective of her simplistic view of the world.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: She's not really great at coloring inside of what something actually is. She's pretty mature.

Molly: Yeah, she really is. She says that even though Mr. Martin has more money societally, he's below Harriet. Because it's not Harriet's fault that she doesn't know who her father is and she shouldn't be held below the level of those with whom she's brought up, plus her father is definitely a gentleman with a good fortune since she's never [00:45:00] wanted for anything in her life. So, she's basically a gentleman's daughter, who associates with gentleman's daughters, AKA Emma. And gentleman's daughters would also be like the Dashwoods.

Becca: Dashwoods, the Bennets, anybody we know who hit that certain level of class, basically someone who owns the estate. And who else is a gentleman?

Molly: Mr. Darcy.

Becca: Mr. Darcy is a gentleman, Edward Ferrars is a gentleman. And so, therefore, Fanny Ferrars is a gentleman's daughter. Colonel Brandon's brother was a gentleman as well and I believe that makes Colonel Brandon a gentleman as well, because he now owns his own estate. So, it's not nobility, but it's one step below in society. Gentleman's daughter is what the high-class ladies of Britain are in this time period. And what she's basically saying is, "Yeah, money, not important. Class, actually important." And she's just decided Harriet's high class, because she's hot.

Molly: Yeah, exactly.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: [00:46:00] He then says, "Whoever her parents are, they clearly had no intention of introducing her into higher society. They left her with Mrs. Goddard society and they thought that would be good enough for her" and it was until Emma came along, until Emma came along and everything changed when the Fire Nation attacked.

Becca: Only the Avatar, master of all four elements, is Mr. Knightley.

Molly: Yeah, exactly.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Emma came along and ruined everything. Before Emma, Harriet was perfectly happy with the Martins over the summer and she had no sense of superiority until Emma gave it to her. He says, "You

have been no friend to Harriet Smith, Emma." I love how he calls her Emma. By the way, have I commented on his first name thing? I think I did in the first episode. But he always calls her Emma. He never calls her Miss Woodhouse.

Becca: Yeah. We're very familiar at this point.

Molly: He believes that Robert Martin would not have proposed if he had not felt affection from Harriet. He knows Robert Martin pretty well and he says that he would not address a woman on the haphazard of selfish passion. Emma doesn't reply again, because she knows this is probably true. **[00:47:00]** And instead, she changes the subject saying that he isn't giving Harriet enough credit saying she has no sense, but say, she is only pretty in good natured as Mr. Knightley said she is. She says, "Until men fall in love with a woman's mind instead of her looks, a pretty face and a good nature are all men really want." And Harriet Smith can have her pick, which I guess is true. But again, she's not giving men enough credit in general.

Becca: Well, no, it's not only that you're-- She's also giving men a little too much credit, because what a men want to do with pretty dumb women.

Molly: They don't want to marry him. That's not sure.

Becca: They don't. Certainly not in this time period. What are they wanted a woman in this time period?

Molly: Money?

Becca: Money.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Yeah. And Harriet has none of that.

Molly: Right. You're right. She's not even considering money until they fall for a smart woman over a pretty woman, but it's actually until they fall for a rich woman.

Becca: Do y'all know much money you have to have to not feel your money, especially in this time period?

Molly: A lot. Emma has a lot of money.

Becca: Yeah. **[00:48:00]** Yeah. She's literally like, "Yeah, men don't want to smart woman. Men want a pretty woman." And it's like, "Man want a rich woman, honey."

Molly: She is so privileged.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: Yeah. He says, "Upon my word, Emma, to hear you abusing the reason you have is almost enough to make me think so too. Better be without sense then misapply it as you do." She says, "Well, then you're proving my point. Men want to be with a girl who would be witches their senses and satisfies their judgment as pretty dumb girl." She says Harriet is only 17 and can have some time to take her pick. But again, not everybody has the luxury of waiting until they're older and find a guy that they want to be with.

Becca: It's also just not true that Harriet can expect a lot of proposals.

Molly: Right.

Becca: She can expect men chasing her, but she might not find another economically stable man to settle down with it. She comes from a very different station in life than Emma does. Emma is attached by any standard. She's wealthy, she's [00:49:00] clever, she's accomplished, she's beautiful. She could have any man in the world she wants and she knows it. And it's cool, because it makes her powerful enough to refuse men and basically say, "I don't want to be with men."

Molly: Gay?

Becca: Gay. But Harriet doesn't get the luxury of that. Harriet's not got a lot to offer a man. There is no dowry, there is no connections, there's just living her life and possibly getting someone on the hook. And yes, she is pretty good natured. That's not enough for most men who don't have a psychotic amount of money to justify a marriage. And men who do have a psychotic amount of money would not sync, because it would lower their social prowess.

Molly: Exactly. You're saying exactly what Mr. Knightley says. He says, she's one not going to get more marriage proposals, because men don't want to marry silly women. And two, this friendship is going to be bad for her, because you're going to puff her up so much that she's [00:50:00] going to think that she's too good for everybody who's actually on her societal level. So, she's going to end up alone or she's going to end up with someone below her station.

He also points out that she isn't someone who can offer any connections like you said, and that it's possible that when her parentage is actually revealed, it could disgrace whoever she ends up with. So, there's a lot of negative things attached to the potential of Harriet Smith, as well as all of her beauty and whatever.

Becca: Absolutely. And again, I just want to reiterate this one more time in my defense. I was aware that Harriet's big problem was a lack of confirmed legitimate parents. I just didn't know that the term, natural daughter meant bastard child. I just thought it was this implied little mystery that we were going to talk about.

Molly: I believe that wholeheartedly and I don't think that our listeners think that you were holding out on me for some reason.

Becca: I know. I know. It's just very rare that I missed the mark on one of [00:51:00] those very important little words on an Austen novel. But this one I was like, "Ooh, okay, oops."

Molly: That's okay, Becca. Emma says that their opinions are too different and there's no use in continuing on in this way. She actually says the word, canvassing, which I only thought of as a political term, but I guess, it means going back and forth over all of them things over and over again. And she says, it's too late, anyway. She's already refused Mr. Martin. She says she may have influenced Harriet a little bit, but she didn't have to do much, because Mr. Martin's appearance and his manners are so bad. And if Harriet had never seen anyone better, then maybe, Mr. Martin would have been enough for her. But now, she knows what a real gentleman is like. And Knightley says she's wrong about Mr. Martin. And Emma tries to look nonchalant about it, but she is "really feeling uncomfortable and wanting him very much to be gone," which is a relatable concept.

Becca: Yes, absolutely. And Emma does not like to be made to feel stupid at all. And I think Knightley's making her feel a little bit [00:52:00] stupid right now and making her, like, get down on her hunches and fight back.

Molly: Especially because she does have respect for Mr. Knightley's judgment. And right now, his judgment is very against her. They just sit in awkward silence for a while until Mr. Knightley says, "Listen, I know you love matchmaking. If you're trying to set Harriet up with Mr. Elton, you are not going to succeed." And Emma laughs, but he continues on and he says he knows that Elton will not make an imprudent match. He may talk sentimentally, but he will act rationally. He knows his own claims and his societal position and he will not throw himself away.

Mr. Knightley also mentions that Mr. Elton has talked of a family of sisters, who have £20,000 apiece. And Emma laughs it off and says, she has no plans to set up Harriet and Mr. Elton, only to keep Harriet to herself, gay, and that she has done with matchmaking forever, which is a lie. [00:53:00] Then Mr. Knightley just gets up and leaves, because he is done with her and he is feeling bad about being responsible for Mr. Martin's unhappiness.

Becca: Oh, very sad.

Molly: I know.

Becca: Also, again the energy he entered the room with and the energy he left the room with, it's like, "Oh, Goddamn it."

Molly: Yeah, he's like, "Oh, fucking shit."

Becca: "Fuck it, Emma."

Molly: Fuck it, Emma. Ruining everything. Meanwhile, Emma is doubting herself a little bit and feeling a little stressed, because while Mr. Knightley left feeling, like, he was right and she was wrong. She does not feel that way. Actually, she does not feel that she was right and he was wrong. She's nervous, because Harriet has been gone so long and she's actually worried that Mr. Martin might have tried again. And finally, Harriet does arrive and she is in good spirits, and she doesn't say anything about Mr. Martin some Emma things. "Okay, this is good. Let Mr. Knightley think or say what he would. She has done nothing which woman's friendship and woman's feelings would not justify."

[00:54:00] She is a little bit worried about the Elton thing, though. She thinks Mr. Knightley hasn't observed Mr. Elton when he's around Harriet. He's probably just saying that in the heat of the moment to shake her up. But because she has seen so much passion in Mr. Elton, she doesn't think that he has enough prudence to overcome his passion. Meanwhile, Harriet tells Emma that Miss Nash told her that Mr. Perry had run into Mr. Elton on his way to London. And this is the gossip she was talking about.

Becca: Oh, yes.

Molly: I've realized that as I was saying it, I was like, tiresome wretches or whatever. Anyway, he had run into Mr. Elton on his way to London and he was just admonishing him for missing whist. But Mr. Elton was like, "I must miss whist, because I have a very important business." And he talks about a very enviable commission and being the bearer of something exceedingly precious. And Miss Nash assumed that this must be about a woman and she looks at Harriet very [00:55:00] meaningfully and says, any woman who Mr. Elton could prefer, she should think the luckiest woman in the world.

Becca: Dah, dah, dah.

Molly: And that's the end of those chapters.

Becca: All right. That brings us to Becca's study questions. This was long. So, we'll be briefnees. We get to know the three of these men much better in these chapters than we did in previous chapters. Number one is Mr. Elton. We're going to go through each one, one by one. What did you learn about Elton in this chapter?

Molly: What I learned about Elton is that he might not be the romantic that he has been acting as if we're trusting Mr. Knightley. He is much more aware that he's hot stuff than he lets on. He is also aware of his place in society. And I think that he might be more inclined to Emma than a Harriet Smith. And I also know that there are some mysterious [00:56:00] family of sisters, who he thinks are cute, maybe, who all have £20,000 apiece.

Becca: Yes. And I think you also learned a little bit about him in the moment of being exceedingly complimentary, which seems to be just how Jane Austen writes her priests, except Ferrars.

Molly: Yeah, he is a flatterer.

Becca: So, we've learned he's a flatterer. We've learned that he speaks very sentimentally and we've learned that Knightley thinks of him as one who will act rationally when push comes to shove.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: It's important to think about these things.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: We also got to know Mr. Martin quite a bit better. What did we learn about him this chapter?

Molly: My boy.

Becca: My boy.

Molly: I love Mr. Martin. We learned that he, in fact, can write and read and he's a good writer. We learned that he knows himself in his station also. He has no delusions about who he is. And he [00:57:00] loves Harriet with his whole dang heart and he looks up to Knightley a lot. We learn that Mr. Knightley loves him and thinks that he is a very worthwhile person to marry. We learned that he can't afford marriage. So, he has enough to marry.

Becca: Yeah. And I think what we learned here is, at the very least, Mr. Martin is surprising Emma.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: He's coming out with much more sense, intelligence, grace than she had perceived he would come out with. And that tells us not only something about him himself, which is that there might be more than meets the eye to him. But also, that it tells us a little bit about Emma, and her shortcomings, and what blinds her as well. You know what I mean?

Molly: Yeah. And it shows us that she is almost capable of seeing her own failings, but not quite, because [00:58:00] she sees that it's a good letter and she sees that he has surpassed her expectations and yet, outwardly, she can only admit that he must have had help.

Becca: Yeah. And she has no capacity to admit that out loud.

Molly: Right.

Becca: None of it. Which brings us to our third boy, who is more than happy to admit when Emma does things wrong out loud, Mr. Knightley.

Molly: Ah, I'm in love.

Becca: I'm [chuckles] so in love Mr. Knightley. Let's talk about it. The last chapter with Knightley tells us so much particularly about how he perceives the world, how he operates within the world, and where his head is, in terms of the people around him and who he interacts with day-to-day in Highbury.

Molly: I will say, I'm just going to throw this in here that there are some crickets outside being loud.

Becca: They might just be on our episode, y'all. Sorry.

Molly: Yeah, they just might be there. I just wanted to throw that in there in case I was later editing like, "What does [00:59:00] that sound in the background, so I can warn Graham?" Anyway, yeah, I think that we've learned about Mr. Knightley that he has respect for people, no matter what their social standing is. He does genuinely respect people. He genuinely respects Mr. Martin, even though he's in a lower social class than him and rents from him. And he respects Mr. Elton, who he thinks is going to make the choice that benefits Mr. Elton and not the choice that benefits Harriet Smith. He respects that. Yeah, he has a lot of respect. He's not afraid to speak his mind. He's a helpful boy. Yeah, what else? What else have we learned?

Becca: Well, I think these chapters really just paint a picture of a man, who unapologetically calls out the people around him, particularly Emma, who no one else calls out and is very direct, and insightful [01:00:00] about the people around him and has a good amount of sense about how everyone is stationed in society. It is almost to a fault. You could argue that in these chapters, he's being a bit cruel to Harriet and his evaluation of her.

Molly: He is pretty mean about it.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: But I think that that might be in the heat of the moment. Okay, maybe we have to go back a minute and say that he has a lot of respect for men. And I think that he has respect for women also. It's hard, because he has a lot of respect for Emma and he wouldn't be so hard on her, if he thought that she was a lost cause, I think. The way that he talks about Harriet, I think, is more out of anger at Emma and he's super rational in terms of knowing class structures. While he has respect for people in lower classes, he's always like, "But they're in a lower class." So, when he's talking about Harriet and he's like, "She literally has nothing to offer." That is true.

Becca: I'm going to skip down to a later question and we'll come back to the rest later just because it's [01:01:00] so apt to what we're talking about now. What do you think of the head-to-head between Mr. Knightley, their dynamic, and who's right and who's wrong?

Molly: I think Mr. Knightley is right about a lot of things, but at the same time, some of the things that Emma says were really, really stuck with me, like, a woman should marry the first guy that asks her, because that's what we're supposed to do, right? Of course, not and she knows that. But societally, that's what's expected of her.

Becca: Well, I think it's expected much more of Harriet than it is of Emma.

Molly: Yes, yes.

Becca: Yes.

Molly: And she's saying that as she is showing that she knows how women are treated or expected to behave in society. She just doesn't think that they should, but she doesn't realize that it's necessary so like the marriage thing. When she says that Harriet shouldn't accept the first guy that asks her, [01:02:00] she's not thinking about the fact that Harriet might have to accept the first guy that asks her. But she does have some good points.

Becca: Here's the thing about this dynamic scene is that you have on one hand, Knightley is unapologetically going through the jugular at Emma and he's really good at being really precise about what she's missing in the world. And understanding things that she doesn't think of in the moment, because she's privileged and she's narrow minded. At the same time, and I want to be clear on this, Emma is also seeing pieces of a world that she's seeing outside the lens of her society, which you could read as naive, but you could also read in a more generous manner as a little bit more idealistic. She sees Harriet Smith for more than just her class. She thinks the world of Harriet and wants Harriet to have a better life [01:03:00] and wants more for her.

And Knightley is right on the substance of who Harriet is as a person. But Emma is also right in some ways, because she understands that Harriet is this really good girl, who's really pretty and likeable and also has certain very gentle, sweet emotions that are very valuable. And she doesn't see just her as this little bastard daughter, she sees my friend. And you're telling me my friend is this low in society? That's not fair. She has stuff that's going to make her useful to a lot of people in life and she should have her own choice of suitors. So, she's being naive a little bit, but she's also giving Harriet way more credit than Mr. Knightley has. And I do I don't think it's a gender thing in this case. I think it's [01:04:00] truly Mr. Knightley just being as purely realistic and surgical as possible and also, being a little pissed off that he got his friend butthurt.

Molly: Yeah. Well, here's the other thing, though, is that that's true about Emma and how she feels about Harriet and everything. But she didn't fully take into account the fact that Harriet had feelings for Mr. Martin and she knew that.

Becca: No, no, that's why I'm saying that's the most generous interpretation-

Molly: Right.

Becca: -of what happened here. She wants Harriet to have the life she has. She wants to share high class society with Harriet.

Molly: She wants a mini me and she loves Harriet, because Harriet worships me.

Becca: Exactly. Okay. Are you Team Helton or Team Robbier?

Molly: I'm Team Robbier.

Becca: Mm-hmm.

Molly: [chuckles] Well, I'm not Team Elma.

Becca: Elma?

Molly: Elton and Emma.

Becca: Got it. Okay.

Molly: But I do think that Elton likes Emma and I'm throwing that out there. I'm not Team [01:05:00] Helton, because I think that that is being too orchestrated by Emma and I know that's the whole point. But I think that it's not how Harriet feels and I'm fully Team Robbier.

Becca: All right. What do you think of Knightley's evaluation of Harriet in terms of how it tells us the story is being narrated?

Molly: Who is narrating our story?

Becca: Jane Austen, generally. But we are once again getting a little jarring pull out of the frame of the story, which is primarily from Emma's perspective. We are getting how Emma sees Harriet, Emma's thoughts on Robert Martin, Emma's thoughts on the people around her.

Molly: There have been moments in the story, where the narration has suddenly gone from being Emma's perspective to being shitting on Emma. And I feel those parts are more like Knightley is the [01:06:00] perspective that can shit on Emma and can shit on what's happening.

Becca: Is it though? Because when we get the descriptions of Emma, the very tongue in cheek almost they are Emma's little fanciful thoughts about herself as if she's making fun of herself in a little clever way.

Molly: Hmm, interesting, interesting, interesting.

Becca: Because they're very gentle, and quirky, and fun, those evaluations of Emma as a person.

Molly: That's true. And Knightley is a little bit more harsh.

Becca: Yes, he is. And particularly, his evaluation of Harriet is unlike any other description we've gotten of her so far in the story and it makes for a very different picture of a person.

Molly: Yeah, I think I have a stronger picture of her now, because before I was only seeing her through Emma's eyes. And even in the conversation where he and Mrs. Weston are discussing the friendship between Harriet and Emma, even then I didn't really get a full picture of Harriet's situation and how Emma is influencing [01:07:00] her and all of this stuff. But he is ruthless.

Becca: Mm-hmm. Yeah, and only time will tell as to who's right, Emma and Mr. Knightley in the end about who Harriet is as a person.

Molly: Well, I don't think that. Here's the thing is that I haven't really gotten a picture of Harriet from Emma necessarily outside of, she is so sweet and she is so pretty. And she even says that here. She's like, "I'm not going to admit that she's just sweet and pretty, but if she were just sweet and pretty, that would be fine." I haven't gotten much about their friendship aside from the hero worshipping and the she is sweet and pretty. And Knightley doesn't know Harriet as a person. We don't really know much about Harriet's personality yet, honestly, because Knightley is just stating the facts which are that she is sweet and pretty, she has an average education, she doesn't have a family, she's just a parlor boarder, and she has no dowry and nothing to offer [01:08:00] anyone. That's what he's saying. And he's saying like she's average looking, I think he says at one point.

But meanwhile, Emma, she's not saying like, "Oh, Harriet tells the best jokes or Harriet's really good at checkers. I want to know about their friendship and to know more about Harriet as a person. And I also want to know-- The only thing so far this hinted at a personality for Harriet is the little slip into snobbery, where she's trying to impress me by being a little snobbish." That's the biggest hint of a personality that I've gotten so far.

Becca: All right, what do you think of Emma?

Molly: God, it gets harder every time. Well, I'm not proud of her.

Becca: Wow, that's the most accurate description I've ever heard of the character.

Molly: [laughs] Yeah, I think I'll leave it at that, honestly.

Becca: All right, that's fair. Funniest quote?

Molly: "It is very pretty," said Mr. Woodhouse. "So prettily done [01:09:00] just as your drawings always are, my dear. I do not know anybody who drives so well as you do. The only thing I do not thoroughly like is that she seems to be sitting out of doors with only a little shawl over her shoulders and it makes one think that she must catch cold. But my dear, Papa, it is supposed to be summer, a warm day in summer. Look at the tree but it is never safe to sit out of doors, my dear."

Becca: [chuckles] Oh, we love our hypochondriac king. All right, questions moving forward?

Molly: Well, are Mr. Knightley and Emma in a fight now is one. Two, will Mr. Martin try again? Three, does Elton like Harriet? Does Elton like Emma? Is Elton coming back? Four, does Harriet like Elton?

Becca: We can leave it there.

Molly: Let's leave it at that. That's a lot of questions.

Becca: All right. Who wins the chapters?

Molly: Mr. Knightley.

Becca: Oh, incredible. Incredible pick.

Molly: He just went off.

Becca: Yeah, we love a sass master.

Molly: [01:10:00] Yeah.

Becca: Boom.

Molly: Him, I'm proud of.

Becca: Oh, God you cannot be. We love our K.

Molly: We do.

Becca: King Knightley, not John Knightley.

Molly: Not John Knightley. That's going to be so confusing.

Becca: Oh, boy, just you wait.

Molly: Oh, no.

Becca: We're going to read Chapters 9 and 10 for the next episode. Molly, are you feeling good?

Molly: I'm feeling great. I can't wait to keep reading.

Becca: All right, well, then, until next time stay proper-

Molly: -And wear a shawl, because it's never safe to go out of doors.

Becca: I love that.

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

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