

Molly: Do you ever feel overwhelmed by the amount of choices there are out there? Whether you're shopping for cereal or toilet paper, there are so many options, it's hard to know what's best for you. When it comes to finding skincare products that actually work, it's even more overwhelming. Whenever I have an acne flareup, I go to the pharmacy to try to find something for my skin and I end up leaving with nothing, because there's just too many options. Finding skincare products that actually work for you is complicated. And that's why we're excited to partner with Apostrophe, the sponsor of this episode.

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Apostrophe offers access to treatments for all types of acne, from hormonal acne to facial acne, and even back, chest, and butt acne. They treat **[00:01:00]** breakouts from head to toe. My box arrived super quickly, and the best part was that it came with stickers to personalize my prescription bottles.

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Hey, everyone. Before we begin today, we want to thank our newest patrons, Dominique and Emma. Welcome to the team. If you want to be like them and get access to bonus content like our notes and outtakes, head on over to patreon.com/podandprejudice. **[00:02:00]** And just a heads-up. In our next episode, we're going to be talking about *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* with a very special guest. So, if you've never seen it or you just want a refresher, now it would be the time to watch it. Just go to YouTube and search *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*.

And now, enjoy this week's episode covering *Fire Island* with our guests, Jen, Sarah, and Rachel from Cruising Podcast.

Becca: One thing I'm going to do really quickly before we start up is just apologize to Graham. Fun fact about this microphone. It's not our usual microphone. [chuckles] I meant to travel with our travel mic. I'm in Massachusetts right now, but I accidentally packed my boyfriend's mic, which is not as good.

Molly: No shade to Mike's mic.

Becca: No shade to Mike's mic. No. No shade to Mike, shade to Mike's mic.

Molly: Yes. Her boyfriend's name is Mike. This is getting confusing. [chuckles]

Becca: Yeah, sorry. My boyfriend's name is Mike, but it's just going to be a little bit less high-quality sound from me than usual. [chuckles] So, anyway.

[Pod and Prejudice theme] **[00:03:00]**

Becca: This is Becca.

Molly: This is Molly.

Becca: We are here to talk about Jane Austen.

Molly: We are here specifically to talk about the much-requested *Fire Island*, which recently came out written by and starring Joel Kim Booster and directed by Andrew Ahn. And we are joined today with the most guests that we've ever had on the show at once. We're joined with Rachel, Jen, and Sarah of Cruising Podcast. Welcome.

Rachel: Hi.

Jennifer: Hey. Thanks for having us.

Becca: Well, we're so glad to have you guys here on the podcast. Do you want to tell our listeners a little bit about your podcast and what you guys do in the internet podcasting space?

Rachel: Sure. Sarah, do you want to take this one?

Sarah: Sure. I'll take it. So, Cruising is a narrative-style documentary podcast series about the last 20 or so lesbian bars in the country. The three of us, me, [00:04:00] Rachel, and Jen, almost a year ago now road tripped to each of the last lesbian bars. And then each episode is like a mini-documentary about one of our stops on the trip.

Molly: It's truly so cool. I can't recommend the podcast enough. I feel our listeners are heavily queer. So, I think that all of you will really enjoy that podcast. And we thought it would be perfect to have them on for *Fire Island*, because it is just gay *Pride and Prejudice*.

Becca: Yes, this is a *Pride and Prejudice* that takes place within the queer community on summer vacation in *Fire Island*, which is a beautiful little island off the coast of Long Island, a different island. And it is just an incredibly fun time. [laughs]

Molly: It is really, really good. Before we get started talking on that, we're going to ask our guests a couple of questions that we ask all of our guests. Starting with, what is your relationship to Jane Austen?

Jennifer: This is Jen. I think I'd like to go first, because I think I have the smallest [00:05:00] and least influential relationship, which is that I know Jane Austen and I know Jane Austen wrote *Pride and Prejudice*. That's pretty much the extent of what I know.

Sarah: Okay, I'm going to challenge you to that, Jen, to see who really has the least connection to it.

[laughter]

Sarah: I've seen *Pride and Prejudice* and that's where it ends for me. I've seen *Fire Island*. Yeah, so, hopefully, Rachel, you can bring it home for us.

Rachel: Definitely. I'm by no means an expert on Jane Austen or *Pride and Prejudice*. I have read *Pride and Prejudice* in, I think, high school was probably the last time I read *Pride and Prejudice*. And I have also seen probably a couple of *Pride and Prejudice* film versions along with *Fire Island*.

Becca: Which is, I would say, one of the more accurate modern adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice*. So, you guys have basically read [00:06:00] the book at this point, right, Molly? [chuckles]

Molly: Yeah, it was fairly book accurate. We're going to talk about some differences later on, but for the most part, they hit all the main points. All the characters are spot on representations of who these people would be if they were gay men.

Becca: Our next question is, if you have a relationship today in Austen, what's your favorite Austen content? And you can say, literally, anything for this answer. [chuckles] And if you don't have an answer based on a lack of relationship to Jane Austen, that's fine. [laughs]

Rachel: Well, I can answer this. I think, honestly, after seeing *Fire Island*, *Fire Island* is now my favorite Jane Austen content, if we're counting that.

Sarah: Yeah, absolutely.

Rachel: But previously, as somewhat of a theater nerd, my favorite Austen adaptations, Bedlam theatres adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility*.

Becca: Incredible choice.

Molly: Really, really good pick.

Becca: Kate Hamill, if you want to come on this podcast--

Molly: I've reached out.

[laughter]

Rachel: Oh, [00:07:00] she should do it. She's got to do it.

Molly: Honestly, she should.

Becca: Which Austen character to the best of your knowledge is kinetically the clearest and again, caveated that this is a loose relationship to Jane Austen in general? I can answer this first, because I think I have the most experience with Jane Austen from anybody on this podcast.

Molly: For sure. Yeah, that's the point.

Becca: And for our hardcore Austen lovers out there, I will caveat that my answer is very clearly defined within the confines of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*, because obviously, we're not spoiling Molly on anything. But I would say Charlotte Lucas.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Because [chuckles] that girl don't have a lot of love for men. [laughs]

Molly: Yeah, honestly, a travesty that she wasn't put adapted into this *Fire Island* story. I would also say Charlotte Lucas is the most canonically queer. I want to say Mary Bennet, but she is-- Well, actually, I wouldn't say in the [00:08:00] books she thirsts after Collins. I think that's something that the movie adaptations add in. I would honestly either go with Charlotte Lucas or Mary Bennet. Shoutout to one of

our Instagram followers, Pat, who will consistently respond to this question saying, “Charlotte Lucas is Ace,” and I agree with that. And I think that Mary Bennet is gay and that's my answer of that.

Becca: Yes. I think it's very fair to rate Charlotte Lucas in the Ace category as well. And I do think that-- I want to coin this for a future reference. Mary's thirst for Collins is Margaret Dashwood's syndrome, which is to say that--

Molly: Gave her a personality in the movie.

Becca: Yeah. Well, one adaptation did something that all the adaptations later did as well, which is give in the case of *Sense and Sensibility*, Mark, a Dashwood a personality. But in this case, give Mary Bennet a thirst for Mr. Collins, which is what it is.

Molly: I started thinking about this during *Pride* month, because that's [00:09:00] when this movie was released. And so, I wanted us in celebration of *Pride* even though it is now July. I ask you all, what is your favorite piece of queer fictional content? And it doesn't have to be all time favorite. I would say that my most recent favorite would be *Heartstopper*, probably, which if you haven't watched that, it's on Hulu and it is so freaking cute and heartwarming.

Rachel: I think my current favorite is *Hacks*, a TV show.

Becca: That is phenomenal pick. [giggles]

Rachel: Sorry, Jen. If that was your answer.

Jennifer: I know. I'm like, “Shoot, now, what do I say?” I think a close second would be *Dickinson*. I thought it was going to be really kitschy, it was just really well done, and it had some nice queer attention strewn throughout the series.

Sarah: Okay, I'm going to go—Ah, I feel there's a better answer for this. This is so basic. But I'm going to say *Euphoria*. And then also maybe keep [00:10:00] thinking about it, if I have a really good answer, I'll interject it at some point.

Jennifer: [laughs]

Molly: I think that we can all interject as needed. I'll interject. I just finished a book literally right before we sat down to record this called *The Charm Offensive* and it was about what would happen on the bachelor. It was a fake show called Ever After. If the prince fell in love with his male producer and just like what that storyline would be. It was so heartwarming and I cried. So, I'm just recovering from that right now.

Becca: I'm going to put out a TJ Klune reference that Molly recommended this book to me and it stuck with me, because it was so sweet, *The House in the Cerulean Sea*. It's very sweet little found family love story with a lot of magical children and satanic worship. [chuckles] Well, not satanic worship, but satanic acceptance.

Molly: Yes, Satan is a character who is the sweet little boy. Anyway, should we talk about [00:11:00] *Fire Island*?

Becca: Yes. Before we do that, I'm just going to put this out there. We did this last time. We started covering non-Jane Austen exact content. Spoiler warning for anyone who hasn't seen *Fire Island* yet, if

you're listening to this podcast, I assume you have seen it. And even if you haven't seen it, it's basically just *Pride and Prejudice*. So, just putting it out there for those of you were hoping to watch it and make decisions about how things were adapted for yourself first.

Molly: Yeah. I'm about to give a very detailed overview of the movie, which tells you everything that happens in it. If you want to watch it first, pause now, go watch, come back. Before I jump into this, anyone feel free to interrupt me at any time. I got a little bit overzealous with how many notes I took and I tried to keep it brief, but it's not that brief. So, here I go into a brief-ish synopsis of *Fire Island*.

[00:12:00] We start with our Bennet sisters, Noah, Howie, Luke, Keegan, and Max, who are Lizzie, Jane, Lydia, Kitty, and Mary respectively on their way to *Fire Island* for a week. When we get to the island, we meet Erin, who represents Mrs. Bennet and is played by the amazing Margaret Cho, who won a lot of money in a lawsuit against a chain restaurant and lets all the sisters stay at her house for free every summer. Noah decides, he's going to help hopeless romantic, Howie get laid this week before Erin reveals that she's broke and has to sell the house making this their last summer together.

At the dance later that day, Howie meets Charlie, who obviously represents Bingley and is instantly smitten. Meanwhile, Noah is not smitten with Charlie's friends, Will, who represents Darcy and Cooper, who's like a Caroline, Catherine de Bourgh hybrid. At a party at Charlie's that night, Noah goes to the bathroom and overhears Will telling Charlie that, "Noah isn't hot enough to be that annoying." And that *Fire Island* is a playground for superficial vapid morons.

The next morning, **[00:13:00]** Noah finds Howie never came home. He goes back to Charlie's house to find him and ends up accidentally inviting the whole house over for a dinner party. Erin freaks out and sends them shopping, but since they're broke, Noah's denting cans in the back of the grocery store, when this very hot man, Dex, who represents Wickham.

Becca: I want to take a pause here, because-

Molly: Yes.

Becca: -I want to give a shout out to Joel Kim Booster here for accuracy to the text of *Pride and Prejudice*, which states that Wickham is obscenely hot. He walked on stage and on screen, and I was like, "Oh, my God, hot Wickham. Really, really hot Wickham."

Molly: Finally, because he's canonically never hot in the movies and he needs to be.

Becca: In the books, they make a big deal about how hot this man is. And in every adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, the guy who plays Darcy is hotter than the guy who plays Wickham, because they always cast a heartthrob to play the leading man in the rom-com. But here, the actor who plays Will, who I know from *How to Get Away from Murder*--

Molly: *How to Get Away with Murder*.

Becca: *How to Get Away with Murder*.

Jennifer: *How to Get Away from Murder*. **[00:14:00]** Goodbye. Run.

Becca: *How to Get Away with Murder*, he's very hot. But this is the first time I've seen a Wickham on screen, where I've been like, "Yes, that is certainly hot man. That is ridiculous how hot he is."

Jennifer: Dex is definitely hotter than Will, for sure.

Becca: Yes, I had to give props, because to me-- We'll get into this, but to me, it's clear that Joel Kim Booster knows *Pride and Prejudice* super well, and caught a lot of the nuances of the story, and put them in the movie. And I appreciated that little nuance right there.

Molly: Yeah. Actually, in the moment right before this, one of those nuances came out to me which was Erin being like, "I can't think you invited all these people over for dinner. We're broke. What are we going to do?" And they were like, "Well, you love during dinner parties. It makes it really stressful to be friends with you. But we can cancel if you want." And she goes, "I would rather die" and is so Mrs. Bennet.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Iconic. [00:15:00] Anyway, when Noah is denting the cans and DEX comes back, he's like, "It's okay. I'm poor, too. I get it." Then, Dex latches on to their posse and as they're walking home, they run into Charlie and Will. There's some obvious tension between Will and Dex. Noah obviously invites Dex to dinner, because why not. At dinner, Will and Noah talk about books and have a battle of wits, which makes Noah "both mad and horny," which is also just the nuance of *Pride and Prejudice* in a snapshot.

Becca: It's the maddest, horniest of the books.

Molly: Mm-hmm. Leader in the kitchen, Dex tells Noah that Will heats him, because he has an OnlyFans and then he and Noah kiss. The next day on the beach, I wanted to note that Luke has Dex in sunscreen across his stomach which is some nice foreshadowing.

Becca: A nice shoutout to Matt Rogers from Las Culturistas, who plays Luke/Lydia and this. He does such a good job.

Molly: Yeah. The girls interrogate Howie at the beach about what happened with Charlie after [00:16:00] dinner. And it turns out all they did was do a puzzle and kiss. That night at the underwear party, shit hits the fan, which is where I really started, I was like, "I can't. My notes are going to be too long, if I don't pare this down." So, I tried my best. Noah, and Will have some sexual tension before they're broken up by Cooper, who tells Noah that Charlie only brought Will here to hook up with him and Noah should back off. So, then Noah goes to hook up with Dex, but accidentally gives Dex and nosebleed when he sees Will watching them. Will then tells Noah that Dex is not a good guy. But just as he's telling him this, they see Charlie across the room dancing with his ex, Rhys.

Cooper then reveals that they flew Rhys out that morning. Howie declares that he doesn't need Charlie and everyone decides to go to an after party, but they leave Noah behind. Will walk Noah halfway to the after party, but they get in a fight in the rain and it's very dramatic. When Noah finds Howie, they also get in a fight because Noah doesn't actually know what's best for Howie. The next day, Howie and Luke are both missing and Noah gets a letter from Will explaining that Dex did something bad [00:17:00] to a friend of his. Charlie comes to talk to Howie and tells him that, "Rhys has Lyme disease and that's why he's back with him." We'll talk about how I feel about that plotline.

Becca: We'll get to this, but what the fuck was that?

Molly: Yeah, that whole plotline was—

Jennifer: It was lazy.

Molly: That's what I think too.

Becca: We'll get to it, but this was the only place in the script where I was like, "There was a much simpler way to deal with this whole adaptation piece," but--

Molly: Yeah, I agree. Noah says something that Howie doesn't like, and so he storms off goes for a walk, and he runs into Will. They talk about everything and become friends, when Will does a dance battle and it's a very endearing. The next day they go to the beach and read together. Then later at karaoke, Howiaoke—

Becca: [laughs] The dangers of a very long synopsis.

Molly: Later at karaoke, Howie sings a beautiful love song in front of Charlie, but as soon as it's over Erin screams, because she's been sent a sex tape of Luke and Dex. And Luke was on drugs and doesn't remember the tape being filmed. **[00:18:00]** So, Noah is like, "No way, I'm going to kill him" and he goes to find Dex. He runs into Will, shows him the video and Will also says, he's going to kill and then they go off together. Noah pushes Dex into the pool and Will uses his legal jargon to scare him into deleting the video. Charlie then introduces Rhys to Noah and Howie, and Rhys is racist and awful, and we hate him. Then Howie decides to leave the next day and he and Noah have a heart to heart about the Asian hate they face within the queer community and the different ways that they deal with it.

Howie is already floating away on the boat by the time Charlie and Will get to the dock, and Noah tells Charlie that he has to do something big and stupid to fix this. So, of course, they steal a water taxi and follow Howie to the mainland. Charlie makes a beautiful apology. They kiss and Howie comes back to the island. Later, Noah and Will talk about what they want in life, and decide to live in the moment, and not worry about the future, and then they kiss, too, and everyone dances in the sunset. The end.

Becca: That was so impressive. Everyone, give Molly-- [crosstalk]

Jennifer: Good job, Molly.

[clapping]

Molly: Thank you, everyone. Thank you. **[00:19:00]**

Jennifer: I love the karaoke beautiful love song, which is just a really slow version of Britney Spears song.

Molly: [laughs]

Jennifer: That comes back to us in a different version, again later in the movie. [laughs]

Molly: The soundtrack of this is very on point all around. A great opening song as well. Everything about the music was on point.

Becca: Yes, yes, I would agree. And also, I did not know Bowen Yang could sing until this movie.

Molly: Yeah, it was sweet.

Becca: All right, so, should we dive into chatting about this? I guess, one way to start would be to just open up and get people's first impressions of the movie in general.

Jennifer: My expectations were, what is this could be so many different things. It could be some terrible things. And probably, 15, 20 minutes in, I found myself just really-- I think that it was written really well, it was quick, it wasn't too kitschy. I think the humor was on point. I felt [00:20:00] connected to it, even though it was a movie about gay man.

Rachel: Yeah, I enjoyed it so much more than I was expecting. I think similarly didn't have super high expectations of it. I'm like, "Oh, I don't know if I'm really the target audience for this movie about gay guys on *Fire Island*." But I had a blast. It was genuinely very entertaining and fun to watch, and I thought it was smart and great performances all around. And yeah, I liked it a lot.

Sarah: Okay. I think this is going to be an interesting conversation, because I really didn't like it. Well, there were a couple things that I liked about it, which I'm excited to talk about. But yeah, in general, I felt it was really-- Some of the humor was so stereotypical and predictable. I just feel, yeah, a lot of the characters in humor were predictable. [00:21:00] I don't know, I have a list of complaints about it, but I don't have to get into it right this second.

Molly: I will say, "Don't be shy about them."

Sarah: Okay.

Molly: When we talk about our least favorite parts, spew them out.

Sarah: Okay. Yeah. I just feel in general, it's a similar thing to love Simon, which is like, "Is there value in this representation even if it's not necessarily groundbreaking content? "Is it just groundbreaking on its own and good on its own?" Because it's something new that we haven't really the queer community hasn't been able to have in media, but in general, if it was the exact same thing and it was not all gay people, I would read it. I don't think we would see as much value in it at all, because it's not like a good-- Okay, I'll get more specific later. [chuckles]

Becca: Very valid. And for the record, we always [00:22:00] love when people have disagreements on our podcast when it comes to different content. We've had several different people on different episodes, who either really, really, really love and are very invested in the things we're covering or really, viscerally hate them. So, we've run the gambit on this.

My personal experience was really enjoying this one. Again, Molly and I come at it from having obsessively in detail reading *Pride and Prejudice*. I really appreciated that this was an adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*. I had a really good time watching it. I had a lot of fun. And I think, for me, and we'll get into this. Something that I was really impressed by, which I haven't seen, done in many adaptations of Jane Austen's work was the effort to bring Jane Austen's class commentary to the work, which is usually thrown to the [00:23:00] wayside in Jane Austen adaptations in favor of the romance.

I think that seeing Joel Kim Booster tried to take the biting satire of England's upper classes and apply it to the politics and class dynamics of the queer community in *Fire Island* in his own personal experience of it was a really interesting watching experience for me.

Jennifer: We read a blurb. I was like, "I need to refresh." Like *Pride and Prejudice*, right? It's like helped me out. And from what she read to me, it seemed more so about class than it did about romance. I

think it was represented really well in a certain type of community in the flick. But I feel that was a main vein to be communicated. So, I'm surprised that other adaptations don't push that. I feel [00:24:00] it strings everything together for me.

Molly: Yeah. It makes it make sense with the Darcy-Lizzie romance is completely centered around money and him being rich and snobby and like--

Becca: The Economics of Dating and Jane Austen.

[The Economics of Dating and Jane Austen stinger]

Molly: Yeah, the Economics is-- I really wrote that in my notes, The Economics of Dating and Jane Austen under similarities, because that's what they-- They did it in a way that wasn't-- I feel there's not people aren't necessarily thinking about money as much when they're dating nowadays. But I think that they did a really good job of translating The Economics of Dating and Jane Austen into other kinds of capital. When they're on the boat coming over, and everyone just starts taking their shirts off, and Lizzie explains that like, "There's money, but there's also, do you have abs? Are you white," like, how their class system works on *Fire Island* and in the gay community.

Rachel: The class commentary and the whole economic side of all the relationships in the original [00:25:00] *Pride and Prejudice* totally ups the stakes of the romance. And in the novel, like you said, that doesn't happen, I don't think in most adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice*, and I feel *Fire Island* did a really great job of translating that to a contemporary audience in a way that makes sense with this setup of like, "Oh, this might be their last summer on the island, unless they--"

And it's not heavy handed. This was the unspoken. I feel subtext of the film like, "This is going to be there last summer, unless they make some connections. Unless they start dating." I don't know, there's just that dynamic of class like momentum that raises the stakes in the novel.

Jennifer: And it wasn't in your face. I think it was dropped in subtle ways that it just sat with you either subconsciously or in a different part of your brain [00:26:00] while you were watching the movie that made it more, like you said, raise the stakes.

Sarah: I totally agree. That was one of the things that I wrote down that I did enjoy was that, using that social class as the social class, like, conflict, I thought was really interesting and really accurate. That's why you should make a movie about *Fire Island* is to explore that, which I think is cool. And then movies, a question for all of my critiques is like, "Is it trying to be what I want it to be? Is it trying to be realistic? Is it trying to be realism in any way?" Because I have beef with how mean that people were and how-- It seemed, some of it was unrealistic to me that they would walk up to a party and people would know that they were poor and annoying immediately.

Molly: Right.

Becca: That's, first of all, such a cliché of that being how you enter a party. [00:27:00] Everyone's in bathing suits. It's like, well, how do you know that these people are poor? I found that weird. But maybe that's not what they were going for. There were moments where I felt they were trying to have this realistic portrayal of people.

Becca: My take on what was going on and-- Again, I have not read enough interviews with Joel Kim Booster's rating of the piece to know for sure. I think you are correct. There were definitely moments

where I thought it was clumsy and it is adaptation of trying to relate press *Pride and Prejudice* on to the dynamics of *Fire Island*. But I do think it was supposed to be a heightened satirical situation, where everything was a little over the top.

With the through line and I really found this to be an interesting part of the story of Howie and Noah or for our listeners going by the books, the relationship being Jane and [00:28:00] Lizzie, their bond and their pain in the community being the more real grounding thing in the movie.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: Which brings us to a difference between the movie and the book, which is that this movie really rests on that relationship between Jane and Lizzie or Noah and Howie in this case played by Joel Kim Booster as the Lizzie character and Bowen Yang as the Jane character being even more outside of the community, and being Asian American, as well as being not very wealthy. And in the case of Jane's character, feeling like he doesn't match the aesthetic. That's expected in certain pieces of the gay community. So, I think that the movie really focused on their relationship above the romances and a lot of ways, which I thought was an interesting choice.

Molly: Yeah. Noah saying that he wasn't going to get laid until Howie got [00:29:00] laid. That centered their relationship immediately and made it less about who they were getting laid with than more on the "Oh, I'm going to help you in this way" and then Howie being like, "I don't actually need help in that way" in the end.

Sarah: Well, that was dumb, though. He was spending just as much time with these other men and it was almost religious. He's like, "I can't have sex yet for this until this arbitrary thing happens."

Molly: Right. And then he still does though.

Sarah: Right.

Molly: Then he still goes into the bathroom.

Sarah: but you would think the point of that would be like, "Okay, you have to focus on Howie." But you're still just going off and making out with them. It was so unnecessary. I don't know. I think there's still conflict within the film without having this weird boundary for it. [laughs]

Jennifer: Why do you think he [00:30:00] put that in then? Because in theory, "This is my best bud, his wing person." That would be enough for me to be-- [crosstalk]

Sarah: Right. Exactly.

Jennifer: I wouldn't have to be like, "I'm not getting laid until you get laid.

[laughter]

Jennifer: It could just be like, "You're my dude and I'm focusing on you. Let's get you hooked up." I wonder why wasn't just simpler.

Molly: Yeah. I feel it was honestly a writing mistake, where they just put that line in. Because it's not something from the book and he doesn't fully adhere to it and I feel they lose it almost immediately. But then later on, he's like, "My blue balls are eternal." And it's like, "Then go have sex with someone."

Becca: First of all, he did suck a dick in the middle of the movie.

Molly: Yeah.

Jennifer: He did. I think it messed up my timeline for me a little bit too. Because that was a statement in my head, I was like, "Oh, Howie's going to bone or get boned and then it's going to be a lot of snacks." I thought it would be a little bit quicker on Howie hooking up, so that [00:31:00] Noah could hook up, because it was like a big deal for Noah to hook up. So, yeah, it messed with my movie timeline or my foreshadowing in my own head.

Becca: I think if I'm being generous in terms of the writing of the screenplay, it might be an attempt to up the ante of Howie or Jane getting laid in the first instance. Because, again, if you look at the *Pride and Prejudice* novel, Jane Bennet getting married is a huge deal, because she is the oldest daughter in the family.

Molly: Oh. Mm-hmm.

Becca: And she is the one most likely to snag a rich guy and secure the future of her entire family. There's a lot of stakes in Jane getting married, whereas it's hard to just be like, "Oh, he's my shy friend who's not got a six pack."

Molly: Right.

Becca: It's crucial that he gets laid.

Sarah: It would have been really interesting is if the part of [00:32:00] the relationship between Howie and Charlie was exactly that trying to secure a way to still somewhere to stay on *Fire Island*.

Jennifer: Oh, like an ulterior motive not just true romance.

Sarah: Because that's so real. I know people that go there without-- and they can't afford to rent any place and they just go there and meet people on Grindr and meet people on CouchSurfer, stay with people that they're just meeting and hooking up with. That's a part of the culture that would be so interesting and also mirror the book more.

Rachel: I feel that is what Charlie's friends are trying to "protect him from."

Molly: Right.

Rachel: That's what they're suspicious of.

Sarah: Yeah. If that really is what they were talking about, I wish that they had said that. That was weird to me. What do you think they're trying to get from you? You literally think he's a gold digger. [00:33:00] If so, they should have just explained that. Because that's interesting that they need a place to stay on Fire Island and that's maybe why they're talking to him or why they want the two of them to get together. But they didn't really make that clear, I feel.

Jennifer: What do the Howie and Charlie storylines? What is the development of that storyline in--? Go ahead. Molly's pumped to explain this to me.

Molly: Yeah. Well, because this was the main thing that I think that they got wrong in this movie.

Becca: This is the biggest flaw in the movie, for sure.

Molly: It's glaring. In the book, Bingley is smitten with Jane, Jane is smitten with Bingley. But she's shy, like Howie is in this and doesn't fully show that she loves him. And Darcy, one, thinks that she's a gold digger. Two, things that her family is just completely lacks decorum and is embarrassing, which they are and they show that at the party with the [00:34:00] cheese, and the water, and everything. And three, thinks that Jane doesn't love Bingley as much as Bingley loves Jane.

This movie just completely gets that wrong. Oh, and in the book, Darcy separates-- [crosstalk]

Becca: Oh, yeah, this is crucial is that, yeah, Darcy is instrumental in separating the Howie character and Charlie.

Molly: Right. He tells Bingley that Jane doesn't love him and moves him to London to be far away from her and separate them.

Becca: Yeah. So, the trajectory in the book is that these two meet, they fall in love and then Darcy separates them, because he thinks that it's not a favorable connection and that she's not in love enough with his friend to be worthy, basically. And Lizzie has the best time ripping Darcy, a new asshole about the whole endeavor. And basically, by the end of the book, Darcy [00:35:00] has repented and he actually brings--

Molly: He grows.

Becca: Yes, he grows. Growth.

Molly: Growth.

Becca: And he brings the two back together in the end and they ended up married. But after they have to reconcile the abandonment moment that happened. And then Darcy basically apologizes and fixes it. And this, what made me angry is because I saw at the very beginning of the film, there was a way to adapt this cleanly, because here it looked like the Cooper character, which is the Caroline character, Bingley's sister in the book, basically brings Bingley's ex there and has him hanging out.

Molly: Because of Lyme disease.

Becca: Because of Lyme disease.

Molly: But that was fake. But either way, he was still dancing with his ex as if he was still with his ex.

Becca: At the very beginning of the movie, Will says to Charles, "What are you doing with this guy? He's cute and everything, but you just got out of a serious relationship." So, I thought, Will was going to convince Charlie, "It's [00:36:00] not a good idea to jump into something and I should be having random casual sex on the island."

Jennifer: Yeah, I thought Will was going to be more of a bad guy, so to speak.

Molly: Right.

Becca: That would have made sense.

Molly: Because that's what happens in the book. The whole book is about Darcy fucking up in the beginning. One, saying mean things about Lizzie and her family. Two, separating this relationship. And then later on saying, "I'm sorry. I insulted you and your family. But you have to see it from my perspective. But again, I apologize and I love you." And two, "I really did have my best friend's best interests at heart. I thought your friend wasn't in love with him," and growing, and then repenting, and getting them back together. And in this, he never makes a mistake.

Jennifer: I think, like you were saying, they could have went there but they completely departed from that after the overheard conversation. I think they could have went down that road, but I think after that it just disappeared.

Sarah: Which would [00:37:00] have frankly been-- I feel a more interesting and maybe realistic plotline, then the ex-boyfriend with Lyme disease.

Becca: The ex-boyfriend with Lyme disease of at all. [chuckles]

Molly: We just talked about *Pride And Prejudice And Zombies* and it's fresh in my mind, because I just finished editing that episode. And our guest for that episode was talking about the best parts of the book and the movie being when it was closest to what Jane Austen wrote. I think that she really knew what she was doing in terms of plot. And the ex-boyfriend with Lyme disease, she just wouldn't have written that.

Becca: But that being said, I do want to say, because we're on the topic of the Jane and Bingley or the Howie and Charles. I just want to say, I loved the guy they cast as Charlie.

Molly: So sweet.

Becca: I thought he was so cute, and he was so earnest. And your heart just saying, "Every time his little blue eyes got all sad." So, he had a tough plotline to work with. But I thought all the work he did in the [00:38:00] interim of that part was really, really nice.

Molly: Yes. I think while we're talking about differences from the plotline of *Pride and Prejudice* and things that we didn't think, maybe we should just talk about our least favorite parts now while we're on the subject of talking about things we didn't like.

Becca: And then I promise for those who enjoy the movie a lot, we will get to talking about the things we liked a lot, too. [laughs]

Jennifer: Sarah, this is your cue.

Becca: Okay. Well, we were talking about Charlie, I just feel this goes a little bit with what I was saying about not making it clear. Like, what was such an issue with the two groups being together. When Charlie's like, "I've never met anyone like you guys before." I just thought that was crazy. Just so many things like that were so dramatic--

Jennifer: A few times, that was driven home that point of like, "Who are you alien [00:39:00] people that I've never encounter?"

Sarah: Right. You've never met someone that's not rich ever. I feel they overdid the class structure, which is already there, and already really interesting, and already more dramatic than it should be. And

then they just took it and made people to mean and made people to-- Yeah, like it didn't make sense to me. I didn't like the narration. I've just feel, like, we're past that in movies at this point. Also, please interrupt me as well.

Molly: [laughs]

Sarah: I don't want this to just be my monologue. I didn't like how much Noah loves Fire Island in the way he was-- At dinner, when they all started crying about losing the house, I thought that was insane.

Molly: Yeah, these men just need to rent an Airbnb somewhere a couple times a year.

Sarah: I know. Yeah.

Molly: I feel it's so easy.

Sarah: Your New York City [00:40:00] servers, you can definitely afford. You're fine.

Molly: Right.

Sarah: I think you're more important than these other people, but you're fine.

Molly: Well, also, I will say about the class structure and the money. Will is a lawyer at a nonprofit.

Becca: That was the one that stuck out to me as an attorney. I was like, "Wait a minute, there is no class divide here. Who bought the mansion that Bingley or Charlie is living in? Is that his parents? Is he from money? Because if he's a doctor, if he's a pediatrician, he's not making mansion on Fire Island money?" [chuckles]

Sarah: That much money. Right. Exactly.

Molly: Right. And also, Charlie, not Charlie. Cooper, when he pulls Noah aside, he's talking about Will and I think he comes from money and he's like, "Do you not come from money?" You are all--" [crosstalk]

Becca: You're all brand manager. That's code for trust fund, maybe.

Molly: Right. You simply must be like, if you're making your money on Instagram, you're not making that much money.

Jennifer: That also came out of the blue, too. It was like, Cooper was just a dick, period. [00:41:00] Cooper could have just been a dick throughout the entire movie and I didn't need to know that Will was flown in or brought to the island for to hook up with Cooper. I didn't need that to know that Cooper was just a dick, and will be a dick for the whole movie.

Molly: Well, that is a nod to the movie or to the book. Because Caroline in the book, Bingley's sister is thirsty for Darcy. However, I will say, I didn't think it was obvious in the book. I didn't realize it until halfway through.

Becca: I firmly disagree with Molly.

Molly: Oh, okay.

Becca: It's very obvious from Chapter 3 onwards that Caroline really wants to bone Darcy.

Jennifer: Now, it makes sense. Now, it all makes sense.

Becca: I will say, I did not think that Will was actually flown in for Cooper's benefit in this. I thought that Cooper was being super self-involved and a dick, and had decided that Darcy was going to be his LA boyfriend.

Jennifer: Ah, yes.

Becca: But that I thought Charlie had flown Will in, because [00:42:00] he didn't like the people who were staying in his mansion, and he actually wanted a real friend there.

Sarah: Oh, yeah. That's what he said, right?

Becca and Jennifer: Yeah.

Jennifer: Yeah, I think he did say that. Yeah.

Becca: Which again, and I do have to emphasize this. There is actually no class divide as far as I could tell, because Will was a lawyer to nonprofit, and Noah was a nurse at a clinic, and neither one of those jobs makes a crazy amount of money, but they're at the same class level pretty much.

Molly: Right. And Noah is just as hot if not hotter than Will. So, he has that on him, too.

Rachel: I think we just have to assume that there's generational wealth involved.

Molly: Yeah.

Sarah: That's the only way the movie works is, even though, Will and Noah are probably making the same annual salary, Will comes from wealth and Noah doesn't. It's the only way to justify it, even though they didn't explain that.

Sarah: I agree with you that. If you want to be able to take the movie seriously, you have to assume that. [00:43:00] But I think that, if they intended it that way then they would have said something. I'm glad that they refer to Will going all Elle Woods on, what's his name, Dex. Because that scene was so obviously Elle-- It's the exact scene from *Legally Blonde* and it was just so dramatic. If they hadn't said that, I was about to be so mad-

Molly: [laughs]

Sarah: -that they had that as a plot. You can just steal that plot point that you go in lawyer, whatever. But I'm glad that they that for I forgive them for that a little bit, because they referred to it as him Elle Woodsing. And then, oh, I actually have a question. So, how many of you guys and also if you know anything about your listener-- Have you guys been to Fire Island or and do you [00:44:00] think that your listeners have been to Fire Island?

Molly: I did a poll on our Instagram yesterday about how many of our listeners are from New York. And it's a shockingly low number, So, I feel a lot of them probably haven't. Although, I guess, people travel. But I haven't. I wish I have.

Becca: I can't say, I've been to any big clubs on Fire Island, but I've been to Fire Island. It's beautiful.

Sarah: Jen, have you been?

Jennifer: I've been Fire Island a bunch, and the Cherry Grove?

Sarah: Okay, cool. That'll just affect the way that I talk about it as if I'm the expert of Fire Island.

Jennifer: I digress. I probably went in my late 20s and early 30s. I haven't been in, let's say, seven to 10 years. So, it could be very different from when I was going to Fire Island. Aging myself, aging myself here.

Rachel: I have not been to Fire Island, but maybe I'm making this up, but I feel Fire Island has similar vibes to [00:45:00] P town. That's how I envisioned Fire Island in my brain.

Sarah: Same

Rachel: Maybe I'm wrong.

Sarah: I think it's different. Because it's not touristy.

Jennifer: Correct.

Sarah: I totally get why you think that, but it's just different. The vibes are just different. Both of that I would say. Maybe worse at Fire Island. But anyway, yeah, okay. I still know that before I start being like, "Fire Island, this is what it's like."

Molly: Please, do. I want to know what it realistically is in comparison.

Sarah: Yeah. Okay. Well, those are maybe some of the positive things. So, I'll get to that. Okay. I'd like to big conversation starter issues with it, which is that the first thing is, how much do we think this was like geared towards straight people and are we okay with that? Then explaining things for straight people. I thought it was really obvious to me when they were explaining the different party drugs that they were doing. [00:46:00]

That just felt like a very picture book of like, "This is what like gay people do." You know what I mean? And there were a couple of moments like that and I'm like, I don't know. I'm not clear on whether I'm mad about it that we're of the explanatory column on so many things for straight people. What do you guys think?

Molly: Yeah. When I consume queer content particularly on-- I feel books for me, it's easier to read books written by queer people for queer people and enjoy that. When I'm watching TV shows, I'm always just a little bit skeptical and same with movies. I fucking hated the *Happiest Season*, for example. I was skeptical going into this. I did worry that it was going to be geared towards straight people. I could go either way, because I felt it was [00:47:00] definitely throwing stereotypes in my face a lot and being very explanatory in that way. But the moments of found family and I felt comfortable with the characters in a ways I could go either way on how much it was for straight people versus queer people.

Becca: Mm-hmm. Yeah. You want it to be consumable also. I don't know. It's not the worst thing.

Rachel: Yeah, I think that that was maybe one of my biggest concerns, especially going into watching the movie was like, “Okay, is this going to be exploitive? What's the target audience for this movie? Is it for straight people to get a glimpse into what goes on Fire Island and live vicariously through the crazy gays on your TV screen?” And I feel what makes it not entirely [00:48:00] that. I think certainly, there's a little bit of that and that's just Hollywood and capitalism and what they need to do to probably get this movie funded, and greenlit, et cetera, et cetera.

But I think it being an adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, it makes it feel somehow okay to me. It's not just this portrayal of *Fire Island* for the streets to consume. It is also an adaptation of this classic novel and it's like, “Why shouldn't we get an adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* that is just fun, and queer, and set on Fire Island?” That's such a fun setting for *Pride and Prejudice* to unfold.

Molly: I totally agree with that. I talk a lot about queering Austen on this podcast. And 50% of why I wanted to do this podcast was because I felt-- Well, starting out, I had no idea anything about Jane Austen. But after having started to read [00:49:00] her and get more engrossed in the classical literature fandom online, I think it's important for her works to be made queer, because a lot of the people reading her works do see themselves in these stories.

When we were talking in the beginning about which characters we think are canonically queer, I read Mary Bennet and I'm like, “Yeah, that was totally me when I was 16 or however old she is.” I think that it's important for those people to get to see themselves in adaptations of Austen, nowadays.

Rachel: I think an inherent flaw of setting it on *Fire Island*, while really interesting is that it's going to be all based around men, which I guess, not that gay men necessarily need to be thinking about-- [00:50:00] In all of their content, be thinking about other people with other gender identities. But it definitely could have been done. I think they would have had to put in effort into having a storyline on Cherry Grove.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Rachel: But they could have done that. And I felt like the Margaret Cho character was their attempt at being the movie isn't all men. But that is my number one thing that I hated about the movie, not necessarily that there weren't any women, but the representation of women was, she existed to take care of these men and to give them a home and to make dinner for them. And that was her main character traits were all around that.

And then also the Cherry on top on the end, the only other woman we see the [00:51:00] entire movie is that lesbian that's like, “Why don't we get to get to Cherry Grove?”

Becca: [laughs]

Rachel: I can't believe that they kept that in the movie. I feel there must have been smart people working on this that like, let's just have a lesbian screaming about Cherry Grove at the end.

Jennifer: [laughs]

Becca: You're actually tapping into an actual public controversy that happened over the film. I read a couple reviews of the film after I watched it, just because I tend to try to just get the cultural context of whatever watching. And there was actually a tweet from Hanna Rosen regarding the film and specifically, its failure of the Bechdel Test. And its use of just one token lesbian character in the film. I

should note that she did get a quite a bit of backlash based on that tweet from the perspective of queer men of color, who said basically, [00:52:00] “The Bechdel test was created to critique machismo and film and the straight white man film that just excludes women and female characters altogether.”

I think I should just note. I'm a straight white woman talking about this. I don't feel perfectly equipped to speak about it with all the nuance it deserves. But I think your critique is very valid with the caveat that there's also room for a story centered around AAPI queer man that we haven't necessarily gotten before. Does that make sense?

Rachel: Yeah. I completely agree with you. I just think that the way that it was done, the way that there's one and then that extra lesbian woman-- The way that the woman in the movie was portrayed, that wasn't necessary. Everything else could have been the same. They had the whole throwaway plotline [00:53:00] of that she was kicked off of Cherry Grove, because they wanted her to be on-- They didn't dive into that. That was an interesting. They didn't make it that funny. It was just because they wanted it all to take place on Fire Island, on Cherry Grove, because otherwise, it makes no sense, why would a lesbian, buy a house on Fire Island and not Cherry Grove. And just have gay male friends that she invites there and not--

I literally wrote before I knew that she had been kicked off with Cherry Grove, I was like, “I have to believe that this woman has other friends that are just not there right now and also that the house is on Cherry Grove and they're not explaining that, but obviously, it wasn't.” One thing that is at least interesting to know about *Fire Island* is the meat rack that they mentioned, which is not entirely clear. That is to get from Fire Island to Cherry Grove, you have to [00:54:00] walk through these dunes and greenery and stuff. It's not a short walk.

Anyway, I think that was a part of it that they wanted everything in *Fire Island*. I just think they could have done Margaret Cho way better. She could have been a more interesting character and had more of her own life, like, some of the other characters did. And I don't think that it had to take away from the stories that they did tell and the representation that they did have of queer men of color.

Molly: I will say, this was from a while back, but we were talking about queer in Austen. I realized that the two gay *Pride and Prejudices* that we've covered have all been about men as the Bennet sisters. And I wanted to shoutout a book that I read that is a lesbian retelling of *Pride and Prejudice*, where Darcy's a woman and it's called *Written in the Stars* by Alexandria Bellefleur. So, it's a book. YA.

Becca: We love YA.

Molly: Of course. Welcome.

Jennifer: [laughs] Of course.

Molly: Everyone should. Check it out. [chuckles]

Becca: All right, so, I think it might be a good time to turn to things we enjoyed about the movie.

Molly: Totally.

Becca: Starting, I guess, with-- I said it already, but I really liked the guy who played Charlie. I thought he was really cute.

Molly: Yeah, he was very sweet.

Becca: And I feel I will put this at the top as just a mention. This was the hottest movie I've ever seen. Everyone was good looking in it.

Molly: Very.

Jennifer: Lots of body. Lots of chest, male chest. Lots of chiseled muscles.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Rachel: I thought you're going to say butt. Lots of butts.

Jennifer: I actually was surprised. I thought there would be way more ass in this movie, because it was about gay men and there wasn't. I just thought there would be assless bathing suits. Just more butt.
[crosstalk]

Rachel: There are couple.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Molly: Yeah, there was one assless underwear.

Jennifer: Yeah. But I thought there would be more.

Rachel: I have to say, Sarah, I agree with, I think some **[00:56:00]** of what you're saying about how Margaret Cho's character could have had more of a backstory, more of a life of her own a little bit more developed without taking away from the stories of the queer men of color in this film. And yet, I still feel Margaret Cho stole the show. Maybe that's just because she was the only lesbian character, and I am starved for lesbian representation in film and TV. But I just think she was so good, and she had the best one-liners of anyone in the whole movie.

Molly: She did have really good one-liners.

Becca: Yeah, I think she really-- Obviously, not to pull it all the way back to the novel, again, but Mrs. Bennet is an iconic mom character.

Molly: Way over the top.

Becca: Extraordinarily over the top as a character. I thought Margaret Cho did a good job balancing the Mrs. Bennet of it all with giving it a little bit more heart than Mrs. Bennet sometimes has. Because sometimes, she's just screeching really loudly through the entire movie. **[00:57:00]**

Molly: Yeah, But she cares about her girls and she ultimately wants what's best for them and wants to marry them off. One of her lines that I really loved was, she was like, "Our Howie with a doctor. It'll almost be like having health insurance again." That was so Mrs. Bennet.

Jennifer: I love how she just explained when they're walking behind them on the dock. He's like, "I'm a doctor" and just perfect comedic timing. She's like, "Oh," covers her mouth. In my head, I'm like, "How many times did they do that?" Because they nailed the timing.

Molly: Perfect.

Rachel: Yeah. And it was cool to see this chosen family that is so integral to queer culture as the Bennet family led by Margaret Cho, the matriarch, even if some of her character traits were maybe a little gender stereotypical.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Rachel: Yeah, I love that idea. It's similar to the way that they represented social classes taking this family [00:58:00] and making it a chosen family, I think is really interesting, for sure.

Jennifer: At heart, I am a very big sap. I leaned in really, really hard to the romantic, even if it's really just over the top and cheesy. I enjoy that and I thought this this made my romantic heart very happy throughout.

Becca: Yeah, I want to shoutout Joel Kim Booster and the guy who played Will as well, because I actually thought they had some great chemistry. Sometimes, there's a little bit of a switched flip when it comes to when Darcy goes from hating Lizzie to loving Lizzie. But what I thought was one of my favorite moments of the entire adaptation was the Alice Monroe conversation they had outside the house, and the back and forth, and the witty banter about the literature, because first of all, it's a Jane Austen adaptation. So, witty repartee is very important and literature is very important.

But I thought the actor who played Will did a good job of using that scene to transition from thinking this guy is vapid and shallow [00:59:00] to thinking, "Oh, he's got substance, and he's challenging, and interesting to talk to," which is the Darcy and Lizzie of at all. That was my favorite scene. Possibly, that one and the scene where Howie and Noah are in the bathroom together, and Howie's all upset. We didn't talk about this, but the "Rice Queen," the creepy guy who keeps trying to hit on Howie and Noah, that's definitely a comp to Mr. Collins in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Molly: Absolutely. Yeah.

Becca: But the scene where Howie's upset and he basically says like, "Stop trying to compare my experience, your experience. Our experiences are different and you know it." I thought that was really powerful. And again, I think anchors the whole movie and their relationship as opposed to their romances.

Molly: It's the sisters tale.

Becca: It's a sister tale. It's by the sea.

Molly: And it's by the see. A few more things about the guy who plays Will, Conrad Ricamora, I will first say that he's currently playing Seymour in *Little Shop*. I think Off Broadway. But [01:00:00] I've watched his tiny desk performance yesterday after watching this, and it was just so sweet, and he's so awkward. He wears these little glasses and also extremely handsome. He had a few of my favorite moments as well. One being the repeated moment of him just throwing his ice cream cone to this side.

Jennifer: Yes.

Becca: [laughs]

Jennifer: Hilarious. That was so funny.

Rachel: I loved that. He's like, "It's melting him."

Molly: Yeah, he just throws it to the side. They were like, "Oh, well, I didn't think of you as a tiny ice cream cone, dude." He just throws it down.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: And then later on when Noah sees him, he throws it and just starts running away. It's perfect comedic timing. Also, the moment where Noah comes to find Howie the next morning after the party, and they have an interaction in the kitchen, and Noah is like, "You don't actually need to pollute the oceans with your water bottles. The tap water is fine." And so, Will throws his bottle in the garbage. But then as soon as Noah walks away, **[01:01:00]** he's not actually a tough guy. He takes it out of the garbage and puts it in the recycling. I thought that was a really great nod to Darcy's softer side and his tough exterior actually being a softy. It was really sweet.

Becca: And a full-blown human disaster, canonically.

Molly: Oh, absolutely. He doesn't know what to do in front of a hot man. And He's like, "Ah--" Loved that. I also want to shout the sunset, which was probably the most iconic moment in the movie for me when they're all on the dock and counting down the sunset, but they have to keep extending it and they're like, "0.9, 0.7, 0.6." And I just counted wrong, but that's okay. Nobody has to know that. And then afterwards, when Keegan, who for me was my favorite-- Keegan and Max are my favorite out of the Bennet sisters. When Keegan is like, "You go, girl. So proud of you, girl. See you tomorrow." I was like, "Yes." So good.

Rachel: I loved Keegan. Keegan, for sure, my favorite character. **[01:02:00]** Also, in the dock when they were-- There were some funny lines. But he was like, "Do you want to go to their hot tub?" And then they were all like, "Hot tub, hot tub."

Molly: Hot tub.

Becca: [laughs]

Rachel: And the people are right there--

[laughter]

Rachel: They're so good.

Molly: And they're like, "Be chill, be chill."

Becca: He's like, "Yeah, I guess, we could probably make it."

Molly: [laughs]

Rachel: That shot of all of them silhouetted on the dock. You saw both groups and then on the right-hand side, you see them all being like, "Hot tub, hot tub." And you can just see how close they are still standing-

Molly: [laughs]

Rachel: -together.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Rachel: It's such a smart shot. That was definitely a top moment of mine.

Sarah: I thought that the water bottle moment was weird. I get what they were going for, but it was so dramatic, and it was like foreshadowing. I guess, it was foreshadowing-- [crosstalk] good person.

Molly: Oh, it was 100% foreshadowing.

Sarah: But that's so weird. And also, there was still water in the water bottle. It's not even-

Molly: I know [crosstalk]

Sarah: doing a good job. **[01:03:00]** This quiet zoom in of him putting up a water bottle into the recycling thing, it was so weird. And I thought that his vibes were really weird in the beginning, too, when they were trying to have him be aloof and off putting. I think that that's because they didn't fully explain why he was skeptical of the other people. He was just being a dick. It was so weird. He's just like [unintelligible **[01:03:31]**

Molly: And it was sloppy, too, because then the next day, he's like, "Listen, I wanted to apologize for last night." All of a sudden, he's in love with Noah. He's being so sweet to him, all of a sudden, and Noah's like, "You want to apologize for Braden?" Will's like? "Yes." And then they get mad at each other. But what was he apologizing for-- When did he change his mind about Noah? That didn't make sense to me.

Rachel: Yeah, no, it was a weird transition from **[01:04:00]** enemies to friends. That was strangely portrayed to me.

Jennifer: And also helpful, though, to keep the movie not two and a half hours, I think. There were these just stepping stones that were much bigger than others, but unseen. That just happened to get us to the end.

Sarah: Yeah.

Molly: Mm-hmm. Another favorite moment of mine was Max. Again, Keegan and Max are my two favorites of the five of them. And when Max gets high, and he's in the party, and someone says, "Who is that?" And then he looks in the mirror and he goes, "Ah, who is that? Is that me? I'm gorgeous" and starts crying. I lost it. I thought that that moment stole the show for me, his whole performance in that scene.

Becca: Max was the most relatable character in the entire movie.

Molly: So relatable. When he was like, "I think I want to be implicated in this." And they're stealing the vote at the end like, "I get it." Oh, yeah. And he was like, "I am fun, and smart, and **[01:05:00]** worthy." When he was high, I was just like, "You are. You are all of the same." It was [crosstalk]

Jennifer: I was a little bit worried at first, though, because when we realized he was on drugs and then he looked in the mirror, in my head, I was like, "Never look in the mirror."

[laughter]

Jennifer: Like, “You never look in the mirror when you're on drugs. Get away from it.” But it turned into an endearing moment. Not a scary one.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Yes. I also want to shoutout another scene that I loved, which was Darcy dancing. I thought that was so weird and so fun, and so funny.

Molly: It was weird.

Becca: Also, a little cameo from Peppermint in that scene.

Sarah: Peppermint was so good.

Becca: She was just thriving up there. [chuckles]

Sarah: Yeah, she was so natural. I was all in on Peppermint. That was awesome.

Becca: Her reaction to the way he spoke was the most organic moment in the entire movie. [laughs]

Sarah: Totally. Yeah.

Becca: I've been to a drag show before where the drag queen gets someone on stage who's like, “Hi” and they're like, “Okay.” [laughs]

Sarah: Yeah, totally, totally. And then she was reacting to people, shouting things in the crowd and she was like, “Whoa, ah.” It was so real. Anyway, she was a star for sure.

Becca: Yeah, she looked absolutely gorgeous. And Bowen singing a song to Charlie-- Oh, I wanted to say, I think on the Charlie front, I think what they were going for with how into the group he was, was that sometimes, people who are born into wealth in a certain way and follow a very specific path through a professional school, don't really get the experience of coming down to Earth and creating found families, and learning about themselves in a stupid 20 something kind of way. I thought what would they were going for with Charlie being in enamored with their group a little was that longing for that freedom, and that warmth, and that community-

Molly: Real friends, maybe.

Becca: -that he was getting-- Yeah, I say this as someone who's like, **[01:07:00]** “I've been in the messy 20 something world and I've also been in the world of professional attorneys” and their general ton of vision on like their achievements in certain ways. It can lead to a really lonely life. I think they were going for the loneliness of Charlie. I thought for me, another really powerful moment was when Noah confronts Charlie and basically says, “You know what, how am I the only person who's ever even asked you are good enough for Howie?” And then he looks he's going to cry, because he feels it in his own soul. I thought that was a good moment as well despite the fact that the ex-boyfriend with Lyme disease was there.

Rachel: I feel the game scene, where they're all playing heads up also an amazing scene.

Jennifer: That was so good.

Molly: Hmm/ So good.

Rachel: That was so funny. But I think that scene drives that point home that it's not just that there's this [01:08:00] class difference, and he's never met poor people before he's like, "Never met people that have fun and do family game night are silly," which is also exemplified by Will just not knowing what to do.

Becca: Marisa Tomei.

Molly: Oh, my gosh, one of my favorite line deliveries was Laura Dern, "We get it. You are gay."

Rachel: [laughs]

Jennifer: Their Marisa Tomei impersonations were on point.

Molly: It's so good.

Jennifer: I could rewatch that two-and-a-half-minute clip once a day.

Becca: I kid you not. The night before we watched this like or two nights before we watch this. We watched *My Cousin Vinny*. And my boyfriend had never seen it before. And we went straight from watching *My Cousin Vinny* to this and we did not know Marissa Tomi would feature so heavily *Fire Island*.

Molly: [laughs]

Jennifer: That's amazing.

Rachel: The defense is wrong.

Jennifer: And they did it six times.

Molly: So, when the defense is wrong.

Becca: [laughs]

Jennifer: Almost competing while simultaneously saying it. I thought it was so fantastic. And then they split. And [01:09:00] one went one direction, one went, imagine your idea. It was done really well.

Becca: [laughs]

Jennifer: It was very funny.

Molly: I think that this could be a good transition into our favorite line deliveries. We've already done some of them. But I wrote down six. So, I can start with one of them. It was Luke and he says, "I don't know why you guys don't think of me as more of a threat." I thought that was great. And also, encapsulates Lydia really well.

Rachel: As a character, yeah.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I want to shoutout a really, really, really clever line snuck in and it is a quote. The reason it is clever is very Jane Austeny. But at a certain point in time when they're getting ready to go to the underwear party, Noah's on the floor doing sit ups and shitting on Darcy, and Howie just turns around and goes, "Oh, way harsh tie." That is a quote from *Clueless*.

Jennifer: Oh yeah.

Becca: Which is a contemporary adaptation of *Emma*, a book by [01:10:00] Jane Austen.

Molly: Whoa.

Becca: And this is a Jane Austen adaptation as well. I thought it was really fun to pop a little homage to one of the most iconic Jane Austen adaptations into this film in a cute little under the radar way, because they referenced dozens of rom-coms through the movie. But just this one little reference to *Clueless*, I was like, "Oh, Joe Kim Booster, you know Jane Austen."

Molly: [laughs]

Sarah: Okay. As I said, I have some funny lines written down I can read. I don't remember who said this, but someone was saying like, "He thinks Lindsay, Graham is starting *The Parent Trap* and then at the end of the scene, someone's like, "Lindsay, Graham in *The Parent Trap*. I would watch that. And honestly, yeah, there's the mental image that that creates is so funny.

Molly: So funny.

Sarah: Then, maybe my favorite line in the whole movie was, "Do you know who Amy Schumer is?"

Molly: [laughs] [01:11:00]

Becca: That was my second favorite line.

Rachel: I wrote that down, too.

Sarah: And then, Keegan, my favorite was when they don't know where Howie is, he's like, "I swear something happened to him." We were making a podcast.

Molly: I know.

Sarah: It's good. And then this is Margaret Cho. She's referencing Will and she goes, "Charlie's friend. What's his name? Wee?"

Molly: She's like, "Whoo?"

Sarah: Oh, yeah. Whoo.

Becca: [laughs]

Sarah: Whoo and they are like, "Will."

[laughter]

Sarah: So good.

Rachel: I wrote down a lot of Margaret chose lines, but I really liked her girls. “I have some terrible news. We're broke,” which I don't know if that is a moment that happens in *Pride and Prejudice*, the “Girls. I have some terrible news.” But it just felt very Jane Austen and-- [crosstalk]

Molly: It's pretty *Sense and Sensibility*-esque.

Rachel: Yeah, maybe that's what I'm thinking of. But it just felt like, [01:12:00] “Girls, I have some terrible news. One of you must be married off in this week.” I don't know that just set the vibe for me. And then a personal favorite of mine was, “I was an early investor in Kwibi.”

Molly: [laughs]

Rachel: Yeah, that was hilarious.

Jennifer: Well, you guys pretty much took off mine. So, I will go to my favorite non-verbal line, which is, I'm pretty sure at the end of the movie when Will and Noah were kissing to last dance. They kissed on beat. I could have just been wanting that to happen, because it was so romantic.

Molly: [laughs]

Jennifer: But if you rewatch it, I'm pretty sure they're kissing to the beat of music.

Molly: I'll look out for that next time. I have a few more favorite line deliveries-- [crosstalk]

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: I'll keep going. When Noah drops his phone or rather when Max bumps into Noah saying, “Ah, there's a tick.” Noah drops his phone in the pool. Luke asks Noah if he has AppleCare and Noah says, “What about me having an iPhone 6 Plus in 2022 makes you [01:13:00] think I can afford AppleCare?”

[laughter]

Molly: But also, Luke saying or maybe it was Keegan saying like, “Well, my dad says that if you don't have AppleCare, you only have yourself to blame.”

Jennifer: It's Luke. Luke says that. Yeah, it's funny.

Molly: It's Luke. I think another Luke line was, my roommate who I watched this with said that it was improvised, which was, “Can someone trade a crest white strip for a prep pill?” I haven't to off screen. I'm not sure who says it. But apparently, it was not scripted. And then my other ones I've already said which were, “Proud of you, girl.” You said, “See you tomorrow, girl, at the Sun.” And then Max looking in the mirror and saying, “I'm gorgeous.” So, those are all mine.

Becca: Incredible stuff.

Molly: If we don't have any more favorite line deliveries, we like to end our episodes by asking who wins the movie. It can be anyone. It can be an actor, it can be a character, it can be a moment, it can be the cinematography, the music, the director, or pretty much anything.

Sarah: I'm going to say Keegan.

Molly: Me too.

Sarah: [01:14:00] I just think he did so much with that character and it was also-- I don't know. it was so much in a way that was very real to me. I'm thinking of one person in particular. But I just know people like that and it was also so funny. I've got to give it to Keegan.

Molly: I completely agree. Keegan, for me, every time I've watched this has been a standout performance and just like so honestly true to character and gave Kitty, who's a nothing character in the book more to do while still being Luke's/Lydia's right-hand man/sister. He was so good. And Max, who was phenomenal. Reading a book on the way over and just everything about him, just those two were standouts to me.

Becca: I was going to put Keegan and Max were up there for sure. But I think also, I'm going to give it to Bowen Yang for his performance Howie's, well [01:15:00] because I really feel he put a lot of heart into that performance. And really had for me the moments in this movie that grounded me, brought me back to Earth, and also made me really feel for him. Good on him, because he-- I think Bowen Yang is generally hilarious, but I think he had a lot of straight man, so to speak, role pieces of movie, not in terms of heterosexuality but in terms of comedy.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: But I thought he actually performed them with a lot of hearts. So, yeah.

Rachel: I think I have to say that this might be a cop-out answer, but the casting overall, one for me, particularly in regard to the film's like treatment of race, I feel this should be said that, at least most of the adaptations of classic literature or pieces of media that are set in the Jane Austen time period are just completely colorblind [01:16:00] casting. It's like, "Oh, this is an alternate universe in which race does not exist as a thing." And that just was not the case at all with this film. I think they just did a really beautiful job of addressing race and through color conscious casting and--

Molly: And making it a relevant plot point.

Becca: I was going to say, some specific writing to really make race a part of the story.

Jennifer: For me, it was Keegan and Will. Keegan, because he's just totally fabulous and beautiful acting. And Will, because I feel as much as a lesbian could, I was smitten with him. I went through a character development in my appreciation and love for him in the flake. I don't know. At the end, I was like, "I really liked him a lot."

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: He was pretty dreamy and [01:17:00] they had some real chemistry.

Jennifer: Totally.

Molly: And he was sweet. She had his sweet moments where I was like, "Oh, he's just a disaster." Yeah, I wish that he had been more developed, and I think that Conrad Ricamora did a really good job with the character.

Jennifer: Totally. Agreed.

Becca: All right, that concludes this episode's discussion of *Fire Island*. Thank you so much, the Cruising Podcast in general. Do you want to tell the people where they can find you?

Sarah: You can find our podcast at *cruisingpod.com* and *@cruisingpod* on social media. And the podcast is streaming wherever you get your podcasts. So, you should follow Cruising Podcast and listen. Yeah, those are all the big ones.

Molly: Amazing. Well, thank you again for coming.

Rachel: Thanks for having us. This was a blast.

Sarah: Thank you so much for having us. This was so much fun.

Becca: Yay. So, until next time, stay proper.

Molly: And—Oh, oh, oh, **[01:18:00]** and go watch a sunset.

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