

Molly: Hey, everyone. A few quick things before we get started. First of all, thank you all so much for your patience as we took an extra week to get this episode to you. But the biggest thank you of all to our newest patrons, Allie and Ruby. If you want to be like them and get access to all kinds of bonus content, check out our Patreon at patreon.com/podandprejudice.

Second, we have some content warnings for today's episode. We're really getting into the drama in this plot, and today's episode includes discussions of COVID, severe illness and death, and miscarriage. So, listen at your own discretion, and please take care of yourselves. And now, without further ado, enjoy this week's episode covering Chapters 42 and 43 of *Sense and Sensibility*.

Becca: Listeners, one trick of living near Molly now is that Molly wanted really badly to dish with me about these chapters.

Molly: [laughs]

Becca: But I was like, "Molly, if we dish now, we can't dish while we're recording."

Molly: Listeners. I was in [00:01:00] my room, and I finished these chapters, and my door was closed, and I just screamed, "What!? Becca!" And then, I hear her go, "Did you read them?" Then, I came out and I was trying to talk to her and she was like, "Molly?" And I was just pacing back and forth in the living room.

Becca: Yes. I had enough information from Molly pacing to know this is going to be an interesting record sesh, but I just heard the screech from down the hall, and I was sitting watching TV, and I was like, "Yeah, we're about to get some shit."

Molly: We're about to get into the shit.

Becca: What's that from?

Molly: I was doing the voice that we were doing in our pre-record sesh.

Becca: [in a weird voice] Oh, you mean this voice?

Molly: [in a weird voice] This voice.

Becca: [in a weird voice] I don't know why we're doing this, but it's coming out in the podcast now.

Molly: [laughs] [in a weird voice] We invented it, and the listeners don't know that we were doing this in our intro before we started recording.

Becca: [in a weird voice] Well, now, they do. [crosstalk]

Molly: [in a weird voice] Now, they do.

[laughter]

Molly: Oh, no. Oh, man. That might be an outtake. [00:02:00] We'll see.

Becca: Oh, man. No, leave it. Leave it in the main, leave it on main.

Molly: [laughs] We're being weird on main, today.

Becca: [laughs] This is a lot of humor for what is actually some pretty, pretty intense dramatic, suspenseful content.

Molly: The most dramatic set of chapters, I think, we've probably had so far.

Becca: Are we ready for the drama?

Molly: Oh my gosh, this is the definition of the drama and it's not overexaggerated for once.

[Pod and Prejudice theme]

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 *Sense and Sensibility*, Chapters 42 and 43 or Volume III, Chapters 6 and 7. Listeners, if you're new here and have never listened to this podcast before now, I, Molly, have never read any Jane Austen before now.

Becca: I, Becca, have read many Jane Austen books. If you want to hear Molly go through *Pride and Prejudice* for the first [00:03:00] time, you can listen to Season 1 of this podcast, but that is not what we're doing here today.

Molly: No. Today, we are talking about, as we said in the intro, the drama.

Becca: Whoa, I have been waiting for these chapters. This story goes straight from the Regency to the Victorian Goth.

Molly: Yeah!

Becca: [laughs] Molly looks shocked by that description.

Molly: Yeah. I hadn't really thought of that but it really did feel like-- I mean, I don't even know if this qualifies as Victorian, but I'm a big Bulgakov girl, and I-

Becca: Gesundheit.

Molly: I read *The Country Doctor's Notebook* that was turned into a I think, Hulu series starring Daniel Radcliffe, *A Young Doctor's Notebook*, and that's what this felt like just sick person bedridden doctor

running through the snow and the rain to get to her in time. In case you don't know what we're talking about yet, listeners, there's going to be some illness.

Becca: Yes. And some high stakes illness too, none of that Jane Bennet at Netherfield [00:04:00] shit.

Molly: I can't go out [coughs] [sneezes].

Becca: Oh, man, when you said last week, they're not going to be able to leave Cleveland right away.

Molly: I always have to give myself a pat on the back when I inadvertently predict something.

Becca: I have to be honest, you have gotten way better at predicting in *Sense and Sensibility* because you've gotten adjusted to the Austen world.

Molly: Yes. I think that I've gotten adjusted not only to the world, but also the language. I feel like when we started this podcast, I was delving into each thing and trying to dissect what it could pos-- I mean I'm still doing that, and I'm still predicting some buck wild things, and I'm still shipping people who should not be shipped. However, I have gotten better at picking up on like, "Oh, this is a hint. This is how Jane Austen writes, and she is trying to hint at something here."

Becca: Yes. It is also that *Sense and Sensibility* happens to be a more buck wild book than *Pride and Prejudice*.

Molly: So, my predictions are more likely to be accurate.

Becca: Yes, like, "Oh, yeah, he probably got someone pregnant." That actually happens in this book.

Molly: Yeah. [00:05:00] What a wild book we're reading.

Becca: So, should we talk about the book instead of dancing it around like we always do?

Molly: Yes, let's do it. So, let's dive in with Chapter 42. The ladies say goodbye to John and receive a faint invitation from Fanny to come to Norland if they're ever in the area, but they all know that's not going to happen. John, our boy, John, who is shipping Elinor and Brandon out the wazoo says he's sure he will see them all at Delaford very soon. This amuses Elinor. She's just amused that everyone keeps saying that she is going to be a Delaford soon. Even Lucy saying it. Does she not know that they're all shipping her at this point?

Becca: I think she knows and I think she thinks it's ridiculous.

Molly: She thinks it's funny?

Becca: You ever had a platonic guy, friend?

Molly: Yes.

Becca: You ever had a straight platonic guy friend, who's your best friend?

Molly: My mom really thinks that I'm going to marry this man.

Becca: Yes. That is just one of those things, like having a sexless relationship with someone, a friendship when your sexualities point towards [00:06:00] the two of you a-bangin', especially in heterosexual situations, it leads a lot of people to speculate that your intimacy must be romantic intimacy, and kudos to Jane Austen for writing it so early.

Molly: Yes. So, it's early April, and the girls all set out, and Mr. Palmer and Colonel Brandon are going to come a few days after, but they're all on their way.

Becca: I do want to add a caveat to my whole heterosexual friends feel-- I said something like heterosexual platonic friendships get more flak for romance than same-sex ones even if both parties are clear just because oftentimes, people like to assign heterosexuality where it is and--

Molly: You're so right.

Becca: Not to say that people aren't like doing that whole thing where they set up the only two gay people they know or assuming that really close intimate queer relationships are romantic relationships. I'm just saying that we assign heterosexuality at such a young age [00:07:00] that we're just conditioned to believe that if men and women are close to each other, it has to be sexual.

Molly: Yes. And I think that the reason why it happens there more than in queer relationships is because from an external perspective, a lot of people, even if they know someone is queer, are going to think heterosexually about them. So, they see two queer friends and they don't think immediately they're bangin', because they were like, "Oh, gender is-- it should be heterosexual." I'm like, "Not." I'm not saying that. You know I'm not saying that.

Becca: Oh, no, no. What we're trying to say here is that, stories conditioned us to believe that when a man and a woman are in the same place together and like each other a lot, they are destined to bang, just because that's what stories tell us always happens. Like, *When Harry Met Sally...* if you've seen that movie.

Molly: I've seen that movie.

Becca: Great one. Toxic message though.

Molly: Toxic message. Well, actually, and not too well actually the situation, and I haven't seen that movie in, I was going to say years, but it's been months. I think that the movies subverts its own [00:08:00] saying. It's saying that but also-- oh, my gosh, I could write an essay on this. I'm going to get into it later. I will come back to *When Harry Met Sally...*, and I will come back to wanting two heterosexual people that are in a room together to get together later in this episode.

Becca: Oh, we're going to talk about it and I just wanted to really go there, because I don't know if that came off correctly. I want to make sure I've made my point clear. [laughs]

Molly: Yes. I got what you're saying and I'm glad that we delve back into it. So, Marianne, as kind of

excited as she had been to leave, now that the time has come, she is depressed, and she does not want to leave. I found this relatable because she's assigned everything in this place to be about Willoughby. This was the last place that she wrote a letter to him or the last place that she received a letter from him. However, it is not the last place that they had good times together.

Becca: No, it is not. It is certainly the last place she had hope of marrying Willoughby.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So, I feel [00:09:00] like she thinks when she leaves there, it becomes real that it'll never happen.

Molly: Yeah. Hope plays a big part in these chapters and I was thinking about this later on, they're talking about hope. And there was a quote early on in the book, it was like, "Know your own happiness. You want nothing but patience or give it a more fascinating name, call it hope." That was early on.

Becca: I like that quote. At that point in time, everyone had hope.

Molly: Everyone had hope. Now, it's like, yeah, I think, it's what you said. It's that it becomes real when she leaves which is she's not ready for that because Marianne feels everything very deeply, and I think, she's really clinging to this last shred of it. Meanwhile, Elinor is just really happy to finally be ridding herself of Lucy. Savage Elinor comes back out and says that she's ready to free herself from the persecution of Lucy's friendship.

Becca: Oh, man. Have you ever had left somewhere and been like, "Oh, God, I have an excuse to never talk to that person again."

Molly: [laughs] Yeah. [00:10:00] So, they arrive at Cleveland-- and oh, by the way side note, many of our listeners from Cleveland, Ohio wrote to us saying that, the food there is great, that there's a huge variety, and that they love it.

Becca: Listeners, if we're ever in Cleveland, Ohio, we will post on our Instagram that that's happening, and you'll have to point us to where to go for the good food in Cleveland.

Molly: One day, we will be touring live shows of this podcast-

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: -and we will come to Cleveland and we will do a whole bit. So, they arrive at Cleveland and it's gorgeous there. It's more curated gardening than sweeping countryside's than we've seen. I think it's probably closer to like Catherine de-- not Catherine de Bourgh's estate, but like her grounds. They're very curated.

Becca: They're quite polished, yeah.

Molly: Quaffed as bushes, as we once said on the show.

Becca: Quaffed as bushes. What a throwback.

Molly: That is a deep throwback and you will only get it if you've been listening since the beginning. So, go back and listen to-- I believe that was when we [00:11:00] had Mike Schubert on.

Becca: That is absolutely when we had Mike Schubert on. Shouts to Mike.

Molly: Shouts to Mike Schubert. So, Marianne is just in her feelings because they are 80 miles from Barton, and they are only 30 miles from Combe Magna. So, she starts immediately wandering the grounds trying to see if she can see Willoughby's estate from where she is. In my notes I wrote facepalm.

Becca: I have to respect the lack of self-respect.

Molly: Yes. She is there to wallow.

Becca: We've all been there, and I mean, I have to respect I'm such an Elinor, I would always deny the wallowing. Like the breakup playlist is going to be like private on my phone named something else and I'm going to go around and see the person, but I'm just going to like hide in the corner and be like, "Oh, I was here for this other thing." Yeah, I look fantastic just because I felt like dressing up for me today. Yeah, but I [00:12:00] respect Marianne for being like, "I am going to wander the grounds and see if I can see my ex-lover's mansion from here."

Molly: This is hilarious because I literally just made a breakup playlist, and then posted it on Twitter, and said, "I'm making a playlist taking suggestions." I am the exact opposite of you. However, I will say the equivalent of what Marianne is doing is looking at your ex's Twitter profile, which I am not doing.

Becca: Yeah, this is absolutely the behavior of like, staring at your ex's Instagram page to try to discern whether or not, he's like, out there having a good time and being happy.

Molly: Mm-hmm. These books are so relatable. Nothing's changed.

Becca: [laughs] Nothing has changed.

Molly: Nothing has changed. It says that she's at the Grecian temple. Is that what in the 2005 *Pride and Prejudice*, is that what that thing was where they were in the rain and they're at that thing with the columns?

Becca: I have no idea.

Molly: I'm [00:13:00] going to go ahead and imagine that it is.

Becca: Perfect.

Molly: Listeners, you can tell me if I'm wrong, but when I googled Grecian temple, I got pictures of Grecian temples.

Becca: Grecian temples in England might have been the correct google there.

Molly: Mm-hmm. So, Marianne is just luxuriating in the opportunity to wallow. It was actually, there was a paragraph where it was like, "Marianne loved to take this time to feel bad." It was just like going back and forth between these beautiful verbs about being like, "Happy and thrilled to be there." And then, what she's actually doing.

Becca: Chapters are really good encapsulation of something I have always said which is that, sometimes, people want to see broken is beautiful, but most of the time broken is just broken.

Molly: Yeah. And Marianne really wants to see broken is beautiful.

Becca: And I get it. That's why we love heart wrenching songs. I listened to *Norman Fucking Rockwell!* by Lana Del Rey on repeat. That whole album is just luxuriating in sadness. People love Del.

Molly: Oh, yeah. [00:14:00]

Becca: I mean *All Too Well* by Taylor Swift is one of the most downloaded songs of all time, isn't it?

Molly: Yes. Shouts to Red Taylor's version and the 10-minute version of *All Too Well*, which I have listened to many times.

Becca: Exactly. Listen, I don't know if it's the most downloaded song. It feels that way because we're recording this right when it just came out. So, it feels like, it's the only song anybody's ever downloaded.

Molly: I don't think that there are other songs anymore.

Becca: Yes. But my point is that people love to feel sad. Like the band, Coldplay has made a whole brand out of that.

Molly: [singing tone] I will try to fix you.

Becca: But there is danger in wallowing and we see that physically manifest here.

Molly: Oh, boy, do we? We will get there. Okay. So, that's all happening. Marianne goes back to the house and she finds everything else in there like going on a tour of the grounds, and I had to point out that Charlotte thinks it's hilarious that all of her plants have died in her absence.

Becca: I find that so relatable. I've never been able to keep a plant alive.

Molly: I can't keep a plant alive to save my life, and whenever I leave my [00:15:00] house, my mom waters them for me. So, when I go back after, like, you know, living in New York City, I'm going to go back to Thanksgiving, and my plants are going to be thriving, and I'm going to be like, "Wow, what did I do wrong?" After dinner, it starts to rain. Marianne is bummed because she can't go outside. So, they all hang out. They're hanging around for hours. Charlotte is being super nice to them but Elinor is starting to get a little bit annoyed by how chipper Charlotte is. It said something like she could forgive anything but her laugh.

Becca: See, I took that to mean she had a particularly annoying laugh.

Molly: Okay, okay.

Becca: She's like sweet and Elinor's like, "Yeah, actually, she's not so bad." Except for like every time she laughs at me, it's just like, heh, heh, heh, heh. [laughs] That's canon actually, now.

Molly: Yeah.

[laughter]

Becca: Heh, heh, heh, heh.

[laughter]

Becca: Graham put some seagulls squawking there with that. [laughs]

Molly: Graham loves us.

Becca: Oh, yes. Shouts to Graham, our boy.

Molly: Our boy. [00:16:00] So, the next day, Mr. Palmer and Brandon arrive, and Elinor is surprised to find that Mr. Palmer is actually also not that bad. He's only occasionally rude to his wife and mother, and he is only a little bit conceited. But overall, not too bad. She doesn't need him.

Becca: He's like the kind of an asshole who when you first meet him, you're like, "You're a total asshole." But then, she's like, "Oh, you actually have some good qualities. This is okay." Turns out this visit to Cleveland is just not as bad as she thought it was going to be.

Molly: Heh, heh, famous last words.

Becca: [laughs] Famous last words.

Molly: [laughs] So, she observes his epicureanism which is the cultivation of a refined taste as in food, art, music, etc. Connoisseurship and his selfishness and compares them in her mind to Edwards simple taste and generosity. So, Elinor is also having her own quiet little sad fest.

Becca: That's the thing. Elinor is also hiding the breakup playlist on her phone right now, but she is listening to [00:17:00] just as much gold play.

Molly: Yeah, Marianne's just walking around with a boombox.

Becca: Yeah. Marianne's just like, [singing] "Never mind, I'll find someone like you."

Molly: Marianne is sitting in the Grecian temples say anything it across the vista to Willoughby's estate with her boombox above her head.

Becca: That is exactly what's happening, whereas Elinor's got her earbuds on the lowest volume, and she

only plays it a night, and she just covers her head, and just lets the tears fall.

Molly: Yes. Oh, man, all right. So, Colonel Brandon is telling Elinor all about Edward and the estate. I wanted to read this part and we're going to get back to what we were talking about with *When Harry Met Sally...*, this is the part. So, it says, "His behavior to her in this as well as in every other particular, his open pleasure in meeting her after an absence of only 10 days, his readiness to converse with her and his deference for her opinion might very well [00:18:00] justify Mrs. Jennings' persuasion of his attachment, and would have been enough perhaps had not Elinor still as from the first believe Marianne as real favorite to make her suspected herself."

First of all, Elinor is starting to see like, "This is why people think this." However, she's watching him very closely. She knows him as a good friend and she still sees him. The next thing that it says is she knows that he's still loves Marianne because she's watching how he looks at her sideways, how he's always attentive to her needs, blah, blah, blah. Elinor knows better than to think that he's in love with her. And I know that it's not going to happen in this book, and I did say that to Becca, after I finished these chapters and I was ranting in the living room, I was like, "Part of me kind of hopes that you and all of our listeners have created an elaborate ruse that they're not going to get together and actually they are," and Becca was like, "I'm not creating an elaborate ruse." I was like, "I believe you."

But I think, and this is this case in *When Harry Met Sally...* too, [00:19:00] sometimes, really close friendship can lead to falling in love. I know a lot of times, it does. I'm not saying that you can't have friendship between two people who have sexual preferences towards each other. However, I think that in the case of Elinor and Colonel Brandon, I wouldn't want to just count it completely just because they are best friends because sometimes, the payoff for being best friends first down the line is better than were it just a romantic relationship.

Becca: So, I want to counter this. First of all, with *When Harry Met Sally...*, the problem isn't that best friends can't fall in love. The problem with *When Harry Met Sally...* is that it's inevitable that best friends will fall in love.

Molly: Yes, I disagree with *When Harry Met Sally...* as a whole, but still the payoff in the end is better because they are just friends and then they're not, but then they-- Oh, man. No, I don't [00:20:00] like that movie that much. So, I don't want to compare them to them.

Becca: I want to be clear. I love that movie. They have great chemistry. It's very funny. It's just got problematic moments.

Molly: Yes, exactly. Yeah, no, same, same, same.

Becca: But let me be clear on this and maybe this is a tough spot for me. But first of all, I love the best friends to lovers trope. It is possibly my favorite romance trope. When I was growing up, the couple I cared the most about with every fiber of my being was Ron and Hermione. I was obsessed with it. My parents are a best friends to lovers trope. They were best friends in college and then got married. I am very well acquainted with it. You're right. There is a lot of beauty in people becoming intimate best friends and discovering in a slow burn manner that they're actually need for each other. Totally fair.

I think it is also toxic. Hear me out. That's not necessarily what's happening here. But it is part of what

Jane Austen is doing here and it's clever and way ahead of her time. [00:21:00] So, as someone who has been obsessed with this trope for years, it has actually done me very dirty. And I don't want to go into the details of my personal life but suffice it to say that I've been taken advantage of on this trope and overread on this trope. Because of those reasons, I am skeptical of the trope in general, and through having some pain on it, have learned the sanctity of heterosexual platonic friendships, like co-ed good friendships. What I think is really, really, really vital to the whole best friends to lovers trope is that both parties have to be absolutely on board. And the thing about the best friends to lovers trope is that if they're not, it turns either tragic really quickly or is something very different and very nuanced. There are great pop culture representations of this as well. For example, [00:22:00] Liz Lemon and Jack Donaghy on *30 Rock*, spoiler alert.

Molly: Straight over my head, straight over my head.

Becca: I'm going to say spoilers for *Mad Men* here. So, skip ahead 10 seconds if you haven't watched *Mad Men*. Mostly saying that for Mike's benefit, honestly. But Peggy and Dawn really close intimate relationship, no sex. I just think there's more to be pulled from men and women together than romance, and here, the thing is Elinor saying exactly that. She's saying, "Yeah, this makes a lot of sense. I won't lie but I can't ignore the fact that he looks at my sister like she is the light at the end of the tunnel, that she is the most beautiful person he has ever seen and he's so devoted to her." So, that is my spiel on Brandon and Elinor thing. I will say I get it. It makes a lot of sense. But I think Jane Austen is telling an interesting story about who we fall in love with and why here, and [00:23:00] even if our better instincts tell us it should be a different person, sometimes, it's just not. You know what I mean?

Molly: Yes. I think this is going to be something that we continue to disagree on and I think it's important for the listeners to see that we both have different opinions on these books in some ways. I agree with everything you said. I'm going to keep disagreeing as a whole but I agree with everything that you've said. In the context of this book, actually, I don't see any chemistry between Brandon and Marianne. I know that he is smitten with her but I actually have to take the side of some of our listeners who have said things-- that not that he's creepy, but that he has a type, and then he's really sticking to it. I think that he hasn't had any conversations with this girl, at least not written down and it is a book. So, they have to be written down for us to take them into account really, we can imagine.

It reminds me, while we're talking about tropes that have kind of come out of this whole thing, [00:24:00] the best friend's sister, like he's in love with your best friend and say that they're best friends and not sisters-- I don't know. Taylor Swift, hello, isn't there a Taylor Swift song where she's like, Oh, wait, no. It's Miley Cyrus. "If we were a movie, you would be the right guy. And I'd be the best friend you'd fall in love with." You know that song?

Becca: Yeah, that's about best friends to lovers.

Molly: Right. What I'm saying is there's a trope where there's two best friends, and the guy is in love with one of them. I don't know if this is actually a trope. The guy's in love with one of them, and he's talking to the friends to like-- Ooh, you know what's a good example of this? I feel like I am not good at articulating my feelings. I'm trying to say something smart. I'm just like rambling. But a good example of this is, I don't know if you saw it, but this movie that came out on Netflix, and it was gay and it was called *The Half of It*, and it's [00:25:00] about this girl who has a crush on this other girl in her class, and this guy is like, "I have a crush on this girl. Will you write her letters for me?" Because the girl who

is the main character is really good at writing. He's paying her to write love letters to this other girl who she is writing letters back and forth with and falls in love with, and this guy-- wait, maybe this isn't the right trope.

Becca: We're talking about the *Forgetting Sarah Marshall* trope.

Molly: I've never seen *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*.

Becca: It's basically, he gets broken up with by this stunningly, beautiful woman he idolizes and then he goes on a vacation and has a nervous breakdown, but then she's there with her new boyfriend. And he becomes friends with another woman at the resort and vents to her about everything and then falls in love with her in the end.

Molly: That's not the trope that I was going for. I don't know what trope I was going for. So, I won't try to compare it to anything. I'm just going to stick to talking about it in the context of this book. I think that while I know that it doesn't [00:26:00] happen in this book, I think that viewing Colonel Brandon and Elinor as only platonic-- for my little pea brain, I can see three miles down the road where they decide to just stay together forever.

Becca: Yes. And I do think that Colonel Brandon has some weird simp energy with Marianne. It's not all perfect.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: I just think that there's-- We're not going to go farther down this road, because we haven't finished the book. But I have a lot more feelings on this that I am happy to express. I just think that I read this passage so differently from you, because I read this passage as Elinor just acknowledging what makes sense, but isn't so. I think Jane Austen in her heart of hearts believes that something's in love just aren't so. I think, it's an underrated piece of some love stories. You know what I mean?

Molly: Yes, I totally agree and I also think that [00:27:00] after you said that, I'm like, "Yeah, that is how Elinor is reading the situation." I think that what's fun about literature, is that the characters cannot be feeling any of the things that I'm thinking as a reader. But I get to interpret it from a completely external perspective and daydream about the fanfic that I'm going to write or the play that I'm going to do a spinoff. That's what I'm saying, not so much that I actually think that Elinor thinks that he likes her or that she thinks that she likes it, like any of that. But just that this is the external thing that I'm getting to glean from it and I-- Yeah, and I and I'm interested to have a conversation about this at the end of the book as well.

Becca: You mean this is your modern day take on Jane Austen?

Molly: Becca just did a full-on-- punched the air and you know--

Becca: That's what we do on this podcast. This is honestly, I think this is the first major plot point you and I haven't totally agreed on.

Molly: Yeah, which is why I think it's important to dwell on it because I think it's fun. I think our

listeners need to know that we have opinions.

Becca: All right, we're going to definitely have to pull her Instagram. See who's team Becca and who's team Molly on this [00:28:00] one.

Molly: Ooh, yes.

Becca: Yeah. I want it to be like 10% me. [laughs]

Molly: No, I think that our listeners, a lot of them are purists.

Becca: Yes. Okay. I also think and I'll say this without spoiling anything. I also think part of it is that I'm a little colored by the movies.

Molly: Sure.

Becca: That's all I'll say.

Molly: I can't wait to watch them. I also think that part of why I'm thinking so much about Elinor and Brandon is because I am not seeing Brandon-Marianne yet, and I'm also not seeing-- I mean I'm seeing Elinor and Edward but-- I don't know. Anyway, we should try [crosstalk].

Becca: [laughs] Yeah. No, Elinor and Edward are certainly there. You don't get that foundation building in the first few chapters where-- this is actually one of the only big critiques I have of this book from Jane Austen, is that she should have done a little bit more showing and less telling of the relationship forming between Eddie and Elinor. And what you get is like months of [00:29:00] the two of them together building a strong foundation and falling in love. So, it's not as though, it's like the same thing as Brandon pining for Marianne. Although I will say that I relate to Brandon on this because we've all been in serious, unrequited love.

Molly: Oh, yeah. Anyway, Marianne keeps going for her long walks and she's walking in the woods, and it had just rained, and she gets all muddy, and she falls very ill. She has a fever, she's got aches, and pains, and a cough, and a sore throat. And she just thinks she'll go to bed and feel better in the morning, and is very blasé about it, which leads us to Chapter 43 when she wakes up saying, she's fine, but spends the entire day just sitting by the fire and shivering, and then she goes to bed early.

Colonel Brandon is surprised that Elinor is pretty chill about it. She's like, "Oh, she'll be fine." I'm also surprised. I feel like Elinor is a little bit more practical about-- Does she think that [00:30:00] Marianne's overreacting or--

Becca: I think, kind of. I think she thinks it's a Jane Bennet situation.

Molly: Hmm.

Becca: When everyone was like, "Oh, my God, Jane is going to die," but Jane just had like a light fever and was in bed for a few days.

Molly: And I guess Marianne is known to be a little overdramatic.

Becca: So, Elinor's like, "Let's not assume the worst."

Molly: Right. Okay. So, Marianne has a restless and feverish night, and she stays in bed the next day, and when she voluntarily stays in bed, that's when Elinor is like, "Okay, maybe she's sick. Maybe we should call the doctor." So, they call the apo-the-cary.

Becca: Apothecary?

Molly: Apothecary. That's a good vocal warmup. Apothecary.

Becca: Apothecary, apothecary, apothecary.

Molly: The apothecary. Mr. Harris says that she is going to be fine, but he implies that she has an infection and he uses the words, putrid tendency, which I hated, and that makes Mrs. Palmer freak out because of her baby. Mrs. Jennings is like, "Yeah, you've got to get out of here with that baby."

Becca: To be fair to Mrs. Palmer, [00:31:00] back in this day, not a lot of vaccines for little kids. The reason, nowadays, our average age of death is so much higher than it used to be, is partially because we help people live longer but plenty of people lived in their 70s. What was dragging you down is kids died so much in this era. So, I get it her being like, "Oh, I've got to leave."

Molly: Oh, I would have also been upset-- I've thought about this. I've thought about it because I've read the chapters twice and at first, I was like, "Oh, my God, they're taking her out of her own home?" If I were her, I would also want my child away from this sick woman. But it's my house. So, I would call for a cab and have her leave. But I guess she is too ill to be moved.

Becca: She literally can't move. She's 80 miles from home.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: Before a car like--

Molly: Yeah, I guess it would take a while. That's fair. Anyway, Mrs. Palmer and the child scoot the boot out of there. Mr. [laughs] I started making up words and--

Becca: [00:32:00] That wasn't a word. That was a phrase "scoot the boot."

Molly: Yeah. I'm going to start using it. So, they leave. Mr. Palmer does not go. It said partially out of actual concern for Marianne and partially, because he didn't want to seem like he'd gotten scared away by his wife.

Becca: He's a man.

Molly: It's got to have its manly men.

Becca: Manly man.

Molly: Mrs. Jennings is being like very-- She won't leave. She's like, "I'm going to stay with you." It says the Elinor really loves her for it, which is very sweet. They're finally giving Mrs. Jennings her due we stan on this podcast.

Becca: I think, this is the chapter where it becomes impossible to not stan Mrs. Jennings.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: Because before you can be like, "Ah, she's vulgar, she's rude, she's a gossip, and all this," which we don't care about because we're vulgar, we're rude, we gossip. But she's helping nurse Marianne when she's sick. It's very sweet.

Molly: It is. Marianne, however, is depressed because they were supposed to leave the next day. Now, she's definitely not going to be better in time for it. Hence, me being correct about the fact that they are not leaving [00:33:00] there anytime soon. The next day, Mr. Palmer still doesn't want to leave and Colonel Brandon is encouraging him to go, and he even says that he might go himself. Mrs. Jennings is like, "No, no, no. Colonel Brandon, you can't go." She doesn't want him to leave because his love is so stressed about her sister's health. So, he's like, "You have to stay and keep her company or to keep me company." Mrs. Jennings, she's like, "Let's hang out and also hang out with Elinor," and Mr. Palmer is happy that someone sensible will be there to assist Elinor in the whole debacle. So, he stays. That's all to say Colonel Brandon is going to hang out with them. It's going to be Colonel Brandon, Mrs. Jennings, Elinor, and a sick Marianne.

Two days go by pretty much the same. Elinor thinks that Marianne is going to get better soon but Mrs. Jennings is like, "She's going to die. She's never going to be well again." Colonel Brandon is easily persuaded to Mrs. Jennings point because he is smitten and scared.

Becca: Well, why might he be so scared?

Molly: Ah, [00:34:00] oh. Sometimes, it just takes a little prompting.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Oh, my God. I didn't even think of that. He lost his love to consumption or whatever.

Becca: Consumption after she got her heart broken and was ruined by a man.

Molly: Oh, my God. Good [unintelligible 00:34:25] Jane Austen, really tried to pull it over on me there.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Heh, heh, heh.

Becca: Heh, heh, heh. Oh, God.

Molly: Oh.

Becca: This is a serious, serious chapter. People are very sick.

Molly: I know. Okay. So, Okay. Ooh, that's where we're at. Okay. Yes. That's why Colonel Brandon is so scared. Of course, he is. Wow. So, on the third day, Marianne wakes up and she feels much better and Elinor is relieved because in her letters to her mom, she had been underplaying the situation and being like, "Oh, Marianne's got a little snuffle. So, we're going to be another day." She didn't want to scare her mother and now, she's like, "Phew, I didn't lie." But then it goes in the complete opposite direction and [00:35:00] Marianne gets sick again, and she has to take medication, and she goes asleep, and Elinor sits with her while she sleeps. Mrs. Jennings goes to bed early thinking Marianne's taking care of. This is a very dramatic chapter.

Becca: This is tense. I mean, usually when I'm reading this, I'm like, "Yeah, I remember this part of the book. I remember this," and I was reading this and I was like, "Oh, God." I was page turning it because this is so suspenseful.

Molly: This was a page turner. But this isn't even where I screamed what at Becca. So, Marianne sleep becomes restless and painful, and suddenly, she wakes up and she asks if their mother is coming. Elinor is like, "She'll be here soon," which is a lie, like they haven't even sent for her. Marianne is like, "She can't come by London." "I will never see her again if she goes by London," which made me think is Marianne having a vision and then I got really concerned for Mrs. Dashwood. I don't know, I don't know but I'm really concerned because throughout this chapter, they keep saying like, "Oh, Mrs. Dashwood will be here soon. Mrs. Dashwood will be here soon." But she's not yet. It's not time yet. But where the [00:36:00] fuck is she and also is she okay because Marianne was really concerned and I believe in ghosts.

So, Elinor calls for the doctor and consults with Colonel Brandon on how best to send for their mother and he's immediately like, "I will go." "The comfort of such a friend at that moment as Colonel Brandon have such a companion for her mother, how gratefully, it was felt a companion whose judgment would guide his attendance most relief in his friendship might soothe her." Again. we won't get into it again. I just think that their friendship runs so deep. Okay, so, [laughs] Colonel Brandon keeps his shit together. He is stressed, but he is like, "I'm going. This is the time I'll be back. Goodbye." Elinor is anxious, Marianne is delirious. Elinor, this whole time does not wake up Mrs. Jennings, because this is kind of exactly what Mrs. Jennings said was going to happen, and it's not that she doesn't want her to say I told you so. It's more that like, she, I think, Mrs. Jennings being like, "Oh, my God, this is exactly what I thought." That makes it more real that Marianne is actually in [00:37:00] danger.

Becca: Have you ever been anxious about something? So, my mother is like Mrs. Jennings in these situations. Sometimes, I love her dearly, but sometimes, she will just dive deep into whatever you're stressed about and make you 10 times more stressed than you would have been otherwise.

Molly: Yes, yes, yes. Mom, I love you. Sometimes, I call and I'm like, "Oh, my God, this thing happened and I just want you to tell me it's going to be okay." And you're like, "Oh, my God!"

Becca: It's such a mom thing to do. It is just, like, get so stressed out for your children, which is very

human. You love your children, you're super empathic for them but also, sometimes, if I'm stressed about a situation, I just need a little bit of calming and comfort myself.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And if you're going to get stressed, then suddenly, I'm calming and comforting you. So, I think what Elinor is saying is if Mrs. Jennings is freaking out, there's no room for me to freak out.

Molly: Yes. You're so right. Wow, it is a really big mom move. As a child, I'm very grateful for my mom's worry for me. But also, I am a worrier as well.

Becca: This is said with deep love for our mothers.

Molly: Who both listen to this podcast.

Becca: Love you, Mom. [00:38:00]

Molly: So, Elinor is worried that they waited too long, that Mrs. Dashwood might not arrive in time to see her daughter alive or saying, she thinks she's going to just go off the deep end, but also, was Mrs. Dashwood going to arrive, okay? There's so many things going at the same time right now.

Becca: Yeah. I think Marianne's just got a fever so high that she's hallucinating. Has that ever happened to you?

Molly: I've never been that sick. No, actually.

Becca: I have. It is absolutely terrifying. When I was like nine, I had the flu really badly, and I had 104.5 fever.

Molly: Holy shit.

Becca: Yeah. It was very sick and I had massive hallucinations, and I had to do the ice bath and all that stuff. It was not pleasant.

Molly: Wow.

Becca: So, I will tell you that there's nothing scarier than feeling that sick. As I say this, I know we should put some content here for COVID people because I know a lot of people have been that sick in the last year and a half. So, we should just all take care of each other in those situations. [00:39:00]

Molly: Yes, and also, I think that in this time period, because we didn't have the same medications, Marianne or Elinor's fear for Marianne is that she's going to get permanent brain damage from this fever, which I think is a possibility.

Becca: Yeah. People for a lot of other reasons just don't recover from these things. Some people have been made deaf by fevers or blind. There's a lot of things that can happen to your body when you're that sick. I had Tamiflu, which is awesome, and I got better in that time period. They had leeching and

bloodletting although, yeah, it was still in practice at that point in time, not an ideal form of medicine. Actually, fun fact, during the yellow fever epidemic in the late 1700s, early 1800s. Yeah. *Fever 1796*, that's the novel written about it. The bloodletting was very common and killed a lot of people as well intentioned as it was, but the French doctors commanded a [00:40:00] different regiment, which was sleep-- lying in bed and drinking a lot of water, and a lot more people survived if they were treated by the French doctors.

Molly: Interesting. It sounds like how we treat things today, which is hydrate, pee, pee it out, also get your vaccine.

Becca: Yes. If you don't have other medicines available, sleeping and hydrating is probably your best bet.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: But not as good a bed as antivirals, vaccines, and antibiotics. We love modern medicine.

Molly: We love that good, good booster. I'm getting mine on Friday. Whoo!

Becca: Hell, yeah. Anyway.

Molly: Anyway, that's been Becca and Molly trying to talk about medicine.

Becca: [laughs] My God, poor doctors and nurses that listen to our podcast.

Molly: I know. Okay, but back to this though, the doctor returns and he has a treatment in mind. He's like, "Okay, she's going to be okay. I know that it seems bad but here's some whatever." He gives it to her. In the morning, Mrs. Jennings is upset that they didn't wake her obviously, but she's comforting Elinor and not speaking of hope. She's just comforting her like, [00:41:00] "I'm so sorry for your loss," basically, even though Marianne is still alive. She's just certain she's going to die. She's also sad for Mrs. Dashwood because she thinks Marianne is to her what Charlotte is to herself and that's really sad that she's going to die. Spoiler alert. She doesn't. At least not in this chapter. I don't know if she dies in the book.

The doctor returns again, he finds his medicines have failed, but he's like, "Never fear. I've got more up my sleeve." So, he gives her some more. He thinks this is definitely going to be the one who's going to cure her. Elinor is wallowing, and she's worrying, and Mrs. Jennings implies that this was brought on by Marianne suffering over her breakup with Willoughby, which in a way it was because she was wandering the grounds wallowing and caught a cold.

Becca: It's more than that. We talk a little bit about how mental health actually affects your physical health.

Molly: True.

Becca: But when you're depressed, your immune system goes down.

Molly: Right. So, she was depressed, she was out in the cold, her immune system was down, she's not doing anything to take care of [00:42:00] herself.

Becca: Like not eating, not sleeping properly--

Molly: For days.

Becca: Yeah.

Molly: Weeks even.

Becca: Heartbreak is really dangerous. I know we've talked a lot about how Marianne's a drama queen, but mental health is a really big problem in this book.

Molly: Yeah, it really is. And also, at this point, Marianne is a drama queen in some ways, but when she's feeling her feelings in a negative-- Yes, she does do it all over the top for everyone to see. But honestly, if we all acted fully on our feelings that we have instead of bottling them up, we'd probably all be Mariannes.

Becca: Yes. I think there is a lot courageous in the way Marianne expresses herself, especially in a time period that doesn't reward that and in fact, makes it dangerous to be that way.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: I think there's a lot of beauty in the fact that Marianne refuses to hide how she feels even in moments when all society dictates she should. Granted it's not ideal, but I think this is kind of-- we talked about this with Lydia, girl is who just [00:43:00] for some reason or another can't fit their society's expectations. With Lydia, we talked about it as someone selfish, which it is. But I don't know. With Marianne, she's trying so hard to be correct for her sister and her family, but she refuses to bow to what she's supposedly supposed to be feeling.

Molly: She's not going to button up.

Becca: Unlike some people we know.

Molly: Unlike some people we know. So, around noon, Elinor starts to feel a little bit of hope because Marianne's fever starts to go down. Mrs. Jennings is like, "Don't feel hope. That's bad." But "It was too late. Hope had already entered." Wait, what were we just watching? Oh, my God, *Ted Lasso*. It's the hope that kills you.

Becca: But it's not the hope that kills you.

Molly: But it's not the hope that kills you. It's the lack of hope that kills you. That's what Mrs. Jennings is trying to say. The British tendency to say it's the hope that kills you. I don't know if that's real. British listeners, I know that you make up about 50% [00:44:00] of our listenership. So, let us know if *Ted Lasso* was right on that.

Becca: And also, just for everyone's knowledge, Molly and I have only finished Season 1 of *Ted Lasso*, so we're working through Season 2. No spoilers yet.

Molly: Yes. Thank you for that because we would get messages about it.

Becca: Oh, yes.

Molly: So, this whole passage was gorgeous. I think it's kind of long, so I don't know if I should read the whole thing, but it was talking about hope.

Becca: No, no. Go for it.

Molly: Okay, well. "About noon, however, she began, but with a caution, a dread of disappointment for which sometime kept her silent even to her friend to fancy, to hope she could perceive a slight amendment in her sister's pulse. She waited, watched, and examined it again and again, and at last with an agitation more difficult to bury under exterior calmness than all her foregoing distress, ventured to communicate her hopes. Mrs. Jennings though forced an examination to acknowledge a temporary revival tried to keep her young friend from indulging a thought of its continuance. And Elinor, conning over every injunction of distrust towards herself likewise not to hope. But it was too late. [00:45:00] Hope had already entered and feeling all its anxious flutter. She bent over her sister to watch. She hardly knew for what." And then, she gets better.

Becca: Almost through Elinor's prayer does Marianne improve.

Molly: Oh, yeah.

Becca: This is what I mean when I say this story is really about Elinor and Marianne.

Molly: It is. Yeah, it's about their relationship.

Becca: It is about the two sisters and part of the reason why I love this book so much is that I don't need the romance as much as I need the love between these two.

Molly: Yeah. This book to me, I mean yes, I'm sitting here shipping Elinor and Colonel Brandon. But this book isn't about them. It might be. It's about their friendship, and it's about Elinor and Marianne's friendship, and it's not really for me about Elinor and Edward, or Marianne and Willoughby, or Marianne and Brandon, if that's ever going to be a thing. It's about friendships between lots of different kinds of people.

Becca: It's about a lot of different kinds of love.

Molly: It is.

Becca: Cheesy.

Molly: Cheesy. All right, we're almost done with this chapter. [00:46:00] After about half an hour, Marianne looks almost fully better. Well, not fully, but she's looking a lot better and the doctor tells them

at about 4 o'clock that Marianne will be okay. Mrs. Jennings is like, "Wha-hoo," but Elinor cannot be cheerful. It says, "All within Elinor's breast was satisfaction, silent, and strong," because she's just so relieved. She's not going to cheer, she's not going to get too excited, but she is like, "I am here for you, girl."

Becca: She's also just like-- this is a rare moment of Elinor having very little control over her feelings because it takes this level of extreme to break down those barriers.

Molly: Yes. And she's kind of like, "Hmm." She's been rattled and she is turning back into her steady self.

Becca: Yes. It's like all the tension that was in her body just [sliding away sound].

Molly: Yeah. So, Elinor stays with Marianne all day and steadily, Marianne gets better and better [00:47:00] They're expecting the Colonel and their mother around 10 o'clock, and she really wants them to get there so that she can relieve them of their worry, because it's not like she could text them and be like, "She's okay." So, they're probably like galloping over here, freaking out both of them. At 7, Elinor leaves Marianne to have tea with Mrs. Jennings. She hasn't eaten all day. She's hungry. Mrs. Jennings offers to take over at Marianne's side, but Elinor is just running on tea and adrenaline, and she wants to wait up all night. So, Mrs. Jennings goes to bed. The night is cold and stormy.

[storm sounds]

Becca: Oh, is it cold and stormy.

Molly: It was a dark and stormy night. So, it's cold and stormy. Marianne sleeps through the storm and Elinor thinks that the travelers, i.e., Brandon and her mother will have a great reward in store for their inconvenience of traveling in a storm. Again, I am nervous. This whole part is just-- I can't really paraphrase it and at a certain point, I am going to give up on my notes. [00:48:00] But I am nervous at this point while I'm reading that Mrs. Dashwood is not going to get there, and that Colonel Brandon and Mrs. Dashwood are just going to capsize or whatever it's called for when a carriage flips over. I know that this is not *Sense and Sensibility and Sea Monsters*. So, they are not capsizing. But you get my gist.

At 8 o'clock, Elinor thinks she hears a carriage approaching. She figures it must be her imagination, because she's not expecting them until 10. But she looks outside and sees that there is in fact a carriage being pulled by four horses. So, she's like, "Oh my gosh, they added two extra horses so they could get here faster. That must be them." So, she runs down the stairs, and she's so anxious to tell them that Marianne is okay-- I just can't paraphrase the end. This is where I'm giving up on my notes. I'm just going to read it.

Becca: Okay. Yeah, yeah. I think, that's fair.

Molly: So, she runs downstairs. "The bustle in the vestibule as she passed along an inner lobby assured her that they were already in the house. She rushed forwards towards the drying room. She entered it and saw only Willoughby."

[record scratch sound]

Becca: Ah, record scratch.

Molly: And that's where I screamed, "What?"

Becca: [00:49:00] [Glass shatter, bomb going off sounds] Glass shatter, bomb going off, things are wild. Willoughby, taking a triumph in return or not so triumph in return.

Molly and Becca: Yeah.

Becca: I have never been as excited for Molly to read chapters because I knew I was giving her first real cliffhanger.

Molly: Yeah, this is a cliffhanger and I did a poll on Instagram of who's reading along with us and who is reading it for the first time versus rereading. So, most of the people are rereading it but there is like 10% to 15% of our listeners reading this along for the first time with me, and we are all on tenterhooks over here.

Becca: Ooh, ooh, it is a lot.

Molly: I haven't even had time to process. How dare this man and also, how did he find out? What is he doing there?

Becca: We'll just have to find out next episode, won't we? Because that definitely concludes those chapters and brings us to Becca study questions. Lots to say. What do you make of Marianne's sudden illness?

Molly: So, we talked a [00:50:00] little bit about how this was brought on by her breakup with Willoughby-- not her break up with, her heartbreak by Willoughby, and her wallowing, and fully agree with that. I'm shocked that we've gotten this dramatic. I was not expecting it. It's like you said, we've gotten to Gothic all of a sudden. We've gotten to the middle of Russian winter, we've got-- It's just higher stakes than we've had. Yeah, when I called my mom and told her what happened, she was like, "You never going to guess. Marianne got sick," and my mom went, "Did she die?"

Becca: [laughs] Almost.

Molly: Almost but she's going to be okay. Knock on wood. Yeah, I'm surprised by it.

Becca: I wanted to bring something up and I apologize to our listener who sent this to us, because I don't remember your name. But someone sent me this theory and you touched on it when we were talking before, but I hadn't heard it before. The idea that this is tied not only to Marianne's [00:51:00] depression of Willoughby, but physically what she and Willoughby did. That is to say, there's a lot of questions about whether or not Marianne and Willoughby had sex in this book.

Molly: Wait, wait, yes, that was something else that I said when I was pacing in the living room.

Becca: She walked in to the room and screamed, "Is Marianne pregnant?"

Molly: Is she or did she get an STD?

Becca: Well, I think, a fair reading here-- and again, we'll put some content warnings at the top of this episode. There's a fair reading in my opinion that Marianne and Willoughby sex back when they were at Barton together, when he showed her his estate, if you will, and that her desperation to see him again was partially a pregnancy, and that this is a miscarriage.

Molly: Oh, whoa!

Becca: I had never thought of that before. I want to give full credit to our readers and our listeners who came to me with this [00:52:00] theory in a way that they didn't want to spoil you. I thought that was a very interesting take on it. I had always read this as Marianne's culmination of her depression and her illness. Her sensibility physically manifesting in her body in a way that was close to killing her. When you take it in the context of the way Marianne behaves the whole book, what we know about who Willoughby is as a person, it actually is not unfair to read that plot onto this.

Molly: I think that might be it. The sudden fatigue-- there's a lot of things that could point to that. I think if Jane Austen were to write about it, she wouldn't write it outright. She wouldn't just say Marianne is having a miscarriage. She wouldn't, you know?

Becca: If that was Jane Austen's intention, this is how she would have written it. I just don't know that it was her intention.

Molly: Yeah. But you know what? She's been done 200 years. So, maybe, it was. We don't know.
[00:53:00]

Becca: I mean, you can read a lot of the things like the way Marianne reacted to Willoughby could be read as hormones, but also desperation for her situation. Her surety that they were engaged or close to it could also be read in that regard.

Molly: And the fact that her reaction to him being so severe if she were pregnant and she had an inkling that she might be would be like, she would be upset in a way that she wouldn't be if he was just cheating on her or whatever.

Becca: So, I want to give credence to that theory. I will say that is an unconventional way of reading these chapters, but I think definitely, it adds to the conversation in the 21st century. All right, thematically, what does it bring to the story? We talked about this a little bit in plot wise as well.

Molly: Plot wise, it's thrown us for a loop. I mean, I didn't think they were leaving Cleveland, but they really thought they were leaving Cleveland. They really thought that the rest of their story was just going to be drive home, go back to our mother, [00:54:00] and this is just putting a stopper there. So, thematically, it's bringing back the possibility of Brandon's love dying. It's raising the stakes for him. There's a lot that can go from here. He can make his move now while he's got chance. I mean there's lots of things. So, thematically, I think it's obviously bringing that-- not obviously, because I didn't catch on to it until you said, but it's bringing that theme back.

Plot wise, Willoughby's here now. I don't know if he knows about it, I don't know how he got there, I don't know if he was just showing up for fun at 8:00 PM on a Tuesday or whatever. But Willoughby's there, the mother's coming there. There's so much happening, Becca. I don't know how to talk about it.

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: Yeah, a wrench in the plans, raising the stakes, what else?

Becca: I think you're totally right. I also think it's kind of a culmination of a lot of things. We're talking about a book where Marianne has been upset [00:55:00] most of the time.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: And it's just been getting worse and worse and worse and worse under the surface while Elinor has been dealing with her drama. It comes to a head in Cleveland when Marianne's body shuts down with her heartbreak, which is also quite different than a lot of other things we've read Jane Austen write before. She's famous for writing witty rom-coms about social class in England.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And this takes the deepest foray into the dramatic, it takes the deepest foray into the Gothic, which I mean that's Austen ahead of her time a little bit on that, but it almost has a Brontë edge if you ever read the Brontës?

Molly: Yes, I don't really know anything about the Brontës but I did read *Why She Wrote* by the ladies from *Bonnets at Dawn* and I got this vibe from the Brontës.

Becca: This is definitely [00:56:00] a Brontë vibe compared to say, Lizzie Bennet sassing Mr. Darcy.

Molly: Yes.

Becca: So yeah, we just have a real experiment from Jane Austen giving us an element of a story that we're not used to seeing from her. Who's to say if we'll see more of that in some of her other works?

Molly: Whomst?

Becca: You could say whomst. I will just put that on the back burner but I wanted to note it because we've been reading Jane Austen now for two years, and this is the first real life or death situation we've seen in any Austen novel.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: All right. Brandon and Elinor both have reactions to Marianne's illness. Let's talk about each of their reactions starting with Brandon.

Molly: So, Brandon freaking out. Staying calm but freaking out inside. We could make a meme of him internally screaming or--

Becca: [laughs] This is fine.

Molly: Yeah, this is fine. He's like, "This is fine. I will go get your mother." He's like, "What can I do?" He just wants to help. We've talked about [00:57:00] how it is definitely bringing back memories for him. He probably is thinking he wants to do something this time. He's here, he knows it's happening, he wants to be able to do something about it. He's not going to be too late, he's not going to be too late. So, he's freaking out and he's obviously smitten. So, it's heightened.

Becca: Yeah, I think you can see two things. One, Brandon's gone through this before. He already lost a woman he was in love with, and in all the ways that Marianne reminds him of Eliza, this is immensely painful for him. My poor Brandon boy.

Molly: Poor baby boy.

Becca: Poor baby boy. And I also think that, as we've mentioned, Brandon is hiding his feelings, shall we say? He's not exactly even pursuing Marianne.

Molly: No.

Becca: But if there was ever no chance, now is that time. If you think she's going to die without her ever knowing how you feel, it's a bummer.

Molly: It's a bummer but also now is the time then. Now is tell her how you feel.

Becca: [00:58:00] Carpe diem, Colonel.

Molly: Carpe diem.

Becca: Carpe diem, colonel.

Molly: Heh, heh, heh, heh.

Becca: Heh, heh, heh, heh. Oh, God. This is still a comedy podcast even if Jane Austen's writing tragedy. All right, now, let's talk about Elinor's reaction.

Molly: Weird at first that she was staying so calm, but I understand that she was like Marianne's probably fine. But it really took her until Marianne was falling ill, like falling faint to even call the doctor. But then, once it was happening, she was like, "Did I wait too long?" Feeling all of that sisterly anxiety, feeling like, "Oh, my God, this is my best friend." Really just feeling it and then bottling it back up at the end.

Becca: I think this passage tells us a lot about Elinor living in denial.

Molly: Mm-hmm.

Becca: For a lot of reasons. I think this is again the first time we're really seeing her like actually lose

control of her emotions, and be [00:59:00] scared, and out of control in a way. She's been through it this book, but this chapter is different. In some ways, I think, this is a culmination for Elinor as much it is for her plotline as much as it is for Marianne's plotline because she's confronted with something much more terrible than losing the love of her life. She's confronted the thought that she could lose her sister-

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: -and it wrecks her. The passage you read about her prayer, and then about her relief tells you really everything you need to know about how desperate the situation was for Elinor.

Molly: Yeah.

Becca: And it's almost like she needed a moment to know that sometimes, there are things outside of the bounds of society. Sometimes, there are things about what's proper or what she needs to do to keep everyone happy. Sometimes, it's really about, "Is my sister going to die right now?" Elinor needs to learn to feel her feelings.

Molly: Yeah. And also, I mean, the conditions being out of her control is something she's not entirely used to. A lot of things have happened during this [01:00:00] time that are outside of her control, but she can at least control how she reacts to them and how she disseminates information and all of that. In this case like, it is happening in real time, there is no time for processing or packaging up with a neat little bow, this is what is happening, and it is happening fast, and she is living in it, at least for this chapter.

Becca: Yeah. All right, last one before the standbys. The return of Willoughby, the character nobody missed.

Molly: No. We weren't expecting him to come back.

Becca: What do you think he's there for and what do you think's going to happen?

Molly: I truly have no idea. He could either be there for one of like six reasons. So, one--

Becca: Oh, yeah, six.

Molly: I said six. I meant two, but maybe six. Who knows?

Becca: [laughs]

Molly: One, he ran into Brandon on his way or something because he lives in the neighborhood, and Brandon was like, "Marianne's sick." But Brandon wouldn't-- I don't know. But he came. That's one. Two, [01:01:00] maybe he broke up with his wife and he said, it's time to go, get the woman I love back, and he got on his horse, and it was just really bad timing or good timing, depending on how you look at it. Three, I did run out of my room and say, "Is Marianne pregnant?" So, there's a possibility that she was pregnant, and he was coming to be like, "I'm going to be a good father to my baby." So, that's three.

Four, he had no idea that they were there and he was just coming to say, "Hello." I don't think that's what it was. But also, how would he know that they were there? What's he doing at Cleveland? Who else was

it Cleveland? It's the Palmers. The Palmers live at Cleveland, the Palmers have a new baby, maybe he was coming to give his congratulations. That's five. Six, perhaps, his wife is pregnant and he maybe wants to get advice from the Palmers [01:02:00] about or something, or he's having even a calling card to be like, "Guess what? We had a baby." Because that's what something they do. That's six. Six possibilities.

Becca: All good possibilities. I will say some of them at the end got a little iffy because it is 8 in the evening which by Austen standards is a late time to call. Otherwise, great predictions. We'll see what happens. That leads us to the standbys. Funniest quote.

Molly: I forgot to pick one but let me-- wait.

Becca: You can also go with most intense quote because this chapter doesn't have a lot of funny ones.

Molly: Yeah. Okay. I think I'll go with the funny one. I mean there's a lot of really intense ones, but I think that I read the ones out loud that I felt really hit. So, we'll go with something funny because we've gotten into a lot of dark subjects this episode. So, we'll go with this.

In dawdling through the greenhouse where the loss of her favorite plants unwarily exposed and nipped by the lingering frost, raised the laughter of Charlotte, and in visiting her poultry yard, where in the disappointed hopes of her dairymaid by hens forsaking their nests or being stolen by a fox [01:03:00] or in the rapid decrease of a promising young brood. She found fresh sources of merriment.

Becca: God bless Charlotte Palmer.

Molly: She's just having a good time.

Becca: She is. Questions moving forward.

Molly: What is Willoughby doing there? What's happening with Marianne? Where is Mrs. Dashwood? Is she okay? The storm is happening. I'm still really nervous for her and Colonel Brandon getting back safely.

Becca: Who wins the chapters?

Molly: Elinor, Mrs. Jennings, Brandon. This is hard. They all kind of had their moments.

Becca: I was going to give it to Marianne for living but--

[laughter]

Molly: Yes. Good for Marianne. She has, knock on wood, made it out of the woods. Let's give it to her.

Becca: All right. That concludes this long, intense, dramatic episode of Pod and Prejudice.

Molly: The drama.

Becca: The drama.

Molly: Becca, what am I reading next? Tell us, tell us, tell us.

Becca: Oh, you're reading the next [01:04:00] two chapters. That would be Chapters 44 and 45.

Molly: Yes. Or Volume III, Chapters 8 and 9.

Becca: That concludes the episode. Until next time, listeners, stay proper-

Molly: -and find yourself someone who will just get in a carriage and go get your mom when your sister is sick.

Becca: Yeah, do that.

Molly: He's a really good egg.

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