

Horace Walpole

Eli: Hello and welcome to Queer as Fact, the podcast bringing you queer history from around the world and throughout time. My name is Eli.

Alice: I'm Alice.

Irene: I'm Irene.

E: And today we're talking about the man of letters and writer, Horace Walpole.

[theme music plays]

E: We don't actually have that many content warnings for this episode.

I: Wow.

E: In a refreshing twist. There's a little bit of homophobia, not only in Horace's time but also in the scholarship. There's some strong sexual content – there's a bunch of sexually explicit letters and writings of Horace's we're going to look at, but there's not actual, like, on-screen sex. And there's like, a little bit of racism. But that's it! Uh, so if you don't want to listen to any of that, feel free to check out one of our other episodes instead.

Normally at the start of one of these episodes, we start talking about their early life, what they were like as a child and things like that, and we're not going to do that today. Instead, we're going to talk about things that happened after Horace's death and talk about what the last hundred years or so of scholarship about him have been like.

I: Okay.

A: So it's a historiography episode.

E: No, we're just doing this for the intro section.

A: Oh, we're just... Okay, I see, I see.

E: Yeah. Because you need to understand this before we proceed.

I: Okay.

E: Because otherwise you'll be like, what have you done, Eli?

I: [laughter]

E: So just a quick little bit of background to why we care about Horace Walpole. Uh, Horace was responsible for the most significant English correspondence of the 18th century, consisting of about 7000 letters to friends and peers, many of which were collected and edited together, even in his lifetime, although they weren't published until after his death.

A: That's a lot of letters.

E: It is several letters.

A: Mm.

I: Were they just collecting them and editing them like, super ready for his death? As in, quick, he's dead, let's publish this?

E: Yeah, there seems to be a bit of disagreement in the scholarship, uh, about just how much he planned to publish these himself.

I: Okay.

E: Like, he definitely to some degree with some of the letters had an eye to posterity, so he would like, get his letters back from people...

I: Yeah.

E: ...and then edit them a bit and burn the ones that he wanted disposed of and things. So like, he's collecting and editing them in his life.

A and I: Okay.

E: Yeah. So, one of the scholars I read talked about how his correspondents were specifically chosen in order to cover particular areas of contemporary life. So people who were in the heart of particular political situations on the Continent and things like that.

A: Are you saying the people he chose to write to?

E: Yeah. Y'know, he'd be writing to so-and-so because of their interest in antiquities, and then if they died he would quickly find someone to replace them with so that his letters were keeping up-to-date with that field.

A: Oh okay, yep, yep.

I: That 's quite... I don't know, that feels weird to me.

E: Like, fair. Anyway, the entire collection comes to over 7000 letters, and it's a completely invaluable source for historians on the time that he lived in.

A: Mhm.

E: There's a lot of stuff that happens with say, like, the nuances of Parliament that we wouldn't know about if not for Horace Walpole. It's also very readable, very quotable.

A: Oh good.

E: So it's a good time all round. Historians sometimes say – like, I came across this comment a few times – that when you sit down to write Horace's biography, it's really hard because you can kind of just endlessly quote him.

A: Oh, yeah.

E: And you don't really have to do anything yourself, and it's really hard to kind of draw that line of when you're like, I'm telling the story now, Horace.

[laughter]

E: One of the most famous quotes that comes out of his letters is the statement that "the world is a comedy to those that think, a tragedy to those that feel."

A: I think I've heard that before?

E: Oh really? Okay. I expected everyone to be like, oh!

I: [laughter]

A: No, it sounds familiar.

E: Well, it's Horace.

A: Okay.

E: People say it a lot. You can get it on like, keyrings and stuff.

A: And mugs.

I: Yep.

A: Yeah.

E: But despite this collection of letters and despite the overwhelming scholarly interest in Horace's correspondence, he as a man was of comparatively little interest and there wasn't really as much scholarly work on him until a man called Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis – you may make a joke about that if you want to.

A: Wilmarth?!

I: [laughter]

E: Yes, that's his name, get it out of your system now.

A: [laughter] Is that one word?

E: Wilmarth, first name, Sheldon, middle name, Lewis, surname. Anyway, this American scholar, Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis, made it his life's work to preserve Horace's legacy. He began in 1924, when he was in his mid-twenties and he didn't stop until his own death in 1979.

A: It really was his life's work.

E: It was his life's work. So the result of Lewis' work is that there is a library and a museum and an archive dedicated to Horace that's held at Farmington, Connecticut.

A: Ah! Horace museum!

E: It's very impressive. It's also an invaluable resource on the time. By the time Lewis was collecting Horace's materials, early collections of his letters had already been published.

A: Mhm.

E: Not in any comprehensive way but y'know, just a general book-length volume of some select letters had been published, and in these editions he'd generally been censored.

A: Mmkay, yep.

E: So he like... dirty comments and things like that would be taken out. And Lewis laboriously went about collecting the original letters and made sure that in his edition, all of the omissions were reprinted, many of them for the first time. Many of the letters that he printed were also printed for the first time, and he also went about exhaustively footnoting them. So every single reference that he made to a contemporary song or person or political event, there's a handy little footnote telling you what's up.

A: Mm, what a good man.

E: And the result is the Yale Edition of Walpole's Correspondence. It's 48 volumes.

I: Wow.

E: Several of those volumes are just index.

I: Okay.

A: Hmmmm.

E: It's a time. So, it's very good though as well in that, like, I would have been much more confused reading those letters without the references at the bottom, so thank you, Lewis.

I: Mm, yeah.

E: That's where our thanks to Lewis end. Like, no one can study it today without being very grateful to Wilmarth. Having said that, he was a predictably conservative figure, like, in line with his time. So although he never censored his letters, he's clearly uncomfortable with the implications of some of the stuff that he turns up.

I: I mean, it's still, I feel, kind of admirable then for him to look at it and be like, well, I'm uncomfortable with this but he still wrote it so we're going to print it.

E: Yeah, I agree.

I: Yeah.

E: Uh, having said that, he never wrote a biography, uh, himself, and the definitive one for many years, and it hasn't fully lost this status, is one by a man called Wyndham Ketton-Cremer.

A: There are such names in this episode.

I: [laughter]

E: It's very funny that the like, modern scholars have more intense names than the like, 18th-century English people.

I: Yeah.

A: Yeah, like if I met someone today called Horace Walpole, I'd be like, oh yeah, that's a bit old-fashioned, but sure. But if I met someone called whatever you just said...

E: Wyndham Ketton-Cremer.

A: Yeah.

E: Yes. Ketton-Cremer is uh, hyphenated, it's his surname in one.

I: [laughter] Okay.

E: So we have to say Ketton-Cremer a bunch this episode.

I: [laughter]

E: I've just written it in my script as K-C.

I: I was about to say, can we call him like...

E: K-C and the boys. We can't say that, but...

I: Okay.

E: Yeah, so it was by a man called Wyndham Ketton-Cremer, and he relied, as you have to, very heavily on Lewis, uh, and he notes that he was advised by Lewis and that Lewis revised his manuscript.

A: Okay. So they were pals.

E: Yeah, uh, we know that Lewis knew of Horace's potential homosexuality from comments that we'll go into later, but Ketton-Cremer omits anything that might allude to it in his biography, therefore Lewis was likely involved in censoring the only generally available biography of Horace...

I: Yeah.

E: ...for many, many years, or at least, he was aware that it was being censored and he was fine with that.

A: He was kind of just hoping that no one would bother to read the 48 volumes.

E: Yeah, I guess.

A: Yeah.

I: I mean, fair.

A: Yeah.

[laughter]

E: He put all of the dirty stuff in one volume which is kind of...

A: That's kind of nice though, if you're like, looking...

E: Well, not *all* the dirty stuff but he has one where he's got like a... this collection of like, particularly dirty stuff and he describes it very briefly as being "not the pleasantest volume of the Correspondence".

[laughter]

I: Aww.

A: But that is convenient for you, researching, to be like, well the gay stuff's in this book.

E: Yeah, sometimes it would come up, oh that letter's to be found in Volume 30, and I was like, here we go!

[laughter]

E: Um, yes. So, more recently, as happens quite often with figures that we research on this podcast, scholarship has emerged that is willing to be upfront that Horace might have been queer in some way. Foremost amongst them is a man called Timothy Mowl. I say this because he is the only one to have written a full-length biography of Horace that incorporates that element, uh, thus far. He wrote it in 1996. It is unfortunately a very, very, very flawed biography. There's the fact that he doesn't footnote at all, in any way.

A: Oh my God.

E: Yep.

I: Okay.

E: Ah, his writing style is also quite unclear at times, which is not good in any biography, but in his case, he's really departing very dramatically from the established understanding of Horace as a man and from the sequence of events in his life, and things like that, and so in particular, in order to be taken seriously, it really needed some very heavy, uh, backing-up with primary sources and he just doesn't provide it.

A: So this is what you're working with.

E: Yeah. There's also the fact that he understands Horace to not only be gay, in the modern sense of the word, but also, like, a particular type of stereotypical gay man that he, as a straight man in the '90s, would have come across in like, the dominant culture at that time.

A: Mmm.

I: Wait, so Timothy Whatshisname is not gay?

E: No, Timothy Mowl makes sure to mention in the introduction of his book that he isn't gay.

I: Okay.

A: Thanks, Tim.

E: So he mentions that you might wonder what like, a man with a wife and two kids or whatever he says, I don't know how many kids he has, disclaimer...

[laughter]

E: ...is doing writing this book about this gay man, but then he kind of says that like, well, I'm an architectural historian and that's given me special insight, and then he doesn't really explain why.

I: Architectural?

E: Yes, an architectural historian, he's got a bunch of other books.

I: As in buildings?

E: As in buildings. Uh, Horace is involved with quite a significant piece of architecture later on, but like, how Timothy Mowl has insight into his life apart from that building, I do not understand. His concept of Horace is very much as this basically bitchy, gossipy queen.

I: Oh wow, really?

E: Yes. So there were a few times when reading this book where I was literally open-mouthed because of comments that he made. For example, he says, and I quote, with no omissions, "If Horace behaved often in ways that would be described today as camp, and some of his friends acted like screaming queens, this needs to be said: the gay world is anything but politically correct in private."

A: [shocked laughter] Who sits down and thinks, yeah, I'm just going to write 'screaming queens' in this scholarly work? That's fine.

E: To be fair, the words camp, gay and screaming queens are all in quotations, but he still chose to write them down with his own two hands and then publish them.

A: Putting quotations around a word is just...

E: I know.

A: ...distancing yourself from something you're not brave enough to say.

E: He goes on to make a bunch of comments, so I just want to keep in mind that gems like that turn up every now and again in this book, and that is the general tone.

I: Okay.

A: [exaggerated sigh]

E: I'll give you one more.

I: Alright, I'm ready.

E: And again, I quote, "Intelligence services are wise to mistrust homosexuals; being rejected by society at one level, they tend to stand apart at others."

I: Why did he write this book? I don't understand.

E: I don't know.

I: What, like – he's a straight man who obviously has like, problems with homophobia and –

E: I think in his mind he's not homophobic.

A: He just acknowledges that gay people are screaming queens who can't be trusted.

E: He just acknowledges that at least some gay men are bitchy, malicious, effeminate creatures of some kind, so...

I: I just... Yeah, it's like he's come out, written this biography and he's like, alright, so this man who we've never really discussed the sexuality of? He's gay, in a terrible way.

E: He also paints Horace as being very fickle and very like, not genuine in a lot of the sentiments that he expresses in his letters and just a very like, spiteful person. And I think in some degree that's fair, like people tend to agree that he writes some very like, backhanded, mean comments sometimes. I don't want to like, go too far the other way and portray Horace as a perfect angel or anything like that but like, I couldn't trust his characterisation of Horace because I felt it was coloured by his negative assumptions about him, because of his understanding of him as a gay man.

I: Yeah.

A: Mm, mm.

E: So that's where we're at.

I: Alright.

E: That's the scholarship I had to work with.

I: You had the options of trust Timothy or read 48 volumes?

E: Yeah, so, I mean, there's like, roughly two schools of thought on this, Ketton-Cremer and then like, Mowl. And Ketton-Cremer, there's a bunch of biographies that are like him, where they all just omit anything that could be potentially gay.

I: Yeah.

E: And then there's Mowl, who is trying to like, emphasise anything that could be related to it in any way at all costs. So yeah, like, this doesn't just lead to like, interpretive differences on some of the letters, it leads to factual inconsistencies.

A: Mmm...

I: Okay.

E: And I have read more of the letters than I ever planned to. I have read like, a good like, 600 pages of the Correspondence.

I: Oh God.

E: I didn't plan on doing that, but that was all I had time for.

I: [laughter]

E: At that point, having invested many hours of my time, and having read two full books and like, bits of like, five others, I wasn't just going to be like, nah, this one's a wash. We're doing the episode. But, having said that, I cannot do a straight biographical episode, we are not going to start in Horace's childhood and talk about the major events of his life. Instead, I'm going to focus on one particular period in his life which particularly displays these scholarly inconsistencies. And then, so we don't completely short change him, because he was quite an interesting man who did a lot of stuff, we're going to talk about a couple of his major achievements.

I: Okay.

A: Yep.

I: Okay.

E: I hope you're ready to basically just talk about Ketton-Cremer and Mowl for like an hour.

I: Okay, okay, I'm ready.

A: I think we should start calling him K-C now to prepare ourselves.

E: I'm not doing that. You can call him Wyndham if you must.

A: Wyndham.

I: Alright I'm calling them Wynd- Wynnie and Tim.

A: Wyn and Tim.

I: Wyn and Tim, alright, there you go, we've got it.

[laughter]

I: Eli's just like, why did I come here, why did I get out of bed?

E: I live in this house. Yeah, so I wanted to make one more quick note about Horace as a political figure, because he very much is a political figure and I'm not going to mention that at all.

I: Okay.

E: And sometimes by earlier biographers, he's painted as being like, quite uninvolved with that scene and being very politically vapid and the discussion about how involved he was is one that people could have.

I: Yep.

E: It is up for debate; a lot of the like, political manoeuvring that he did was quite behind-the-scenes so, y'know, you can make an interpretation about like, if he's kind of masterminding something or if he's barely involved.

I: [laughter]

A: Mhm.

E: Uh, but I didn't want to accidentally give the impression that that was not a part of his life. I also should note that his father was Robert Walpole, the first Prime Minister.

A: Ah!

I: Oh, okay.

E: Yes. So quite a powerful figure at a time of political change, and this influences the degree to which of course Horace kind of has to be a political figure.

I: Yeah.

A: Mhm.

E: Y'know? He gains a lot of his incomes throughout his life from holding parliamentary positions. So for example, he holds the parliamentary seat of Callington which is in Cornwall for thirteen years, he never once visits it, and its duties are performed by a deputy. So now we can finally get up to when he was born, because I will give you like, a short little bit about the start of his life before we...

I: Alright.

E: ...get into his gap year, which is what this episode's really about.

[laughter]

E: So, Horace was born on the 24th of September 1717 and he spent his early life in townhouses, including in 10 Downing Street.

A: Ah!

I: Okay.

E: Yeah.

A: So has 10 Downing Street always been the residence of the Prime Minister?

E: Yeah actually. So it was a gift to Robert Walpole, uh, from King George II, but he accepted it on the condition that it be given to the First Lord of the Treasury rather than to Robert personally.

A: Yeah.

E: The First Lord of the Treasury for about the last hundred years has been pretty much synonymous with the Prime Minister. For the two centuries before that, it was usually the Prime Minister, but not always.

I: Always.

E: Like at some point Robert is asked to leave 10 Downing Street.

I: [laughter]

E: Ah, but yeah, so it becomes the seat of the Prime Minister and the like, central point of English government with Robert Walpole.

A: Yep, okay.

E: Horace goes off to Eton at nine in 1727.

I: Is that a normal time to go to Eton?

E: Yes.

I: Okay. I mean I guess you go to Hogwarts at eleven.

A: [laughter]

E: You do, yeah.

A: Hogwarts is where like, all of our knowledge of English schooling comes from.

[laughter]

I: Yeah, true.

E: It very much is. He formed a couple of friendship groups there, one of which was called the Quadruple Alliance.

[laughter]

E: So there's four of them.

A: We had some similar dumb name when we were in primary school, I'm just trying to remember, there were four of us...

E: I mean to be clear, this persists through what we would understand as high school until they like, graduate school.

A: Okay.

I: Yeah no, we...

E: This isn't a child thing.

I: The Awesome Foursome! That was it.

E: That is the same thing, that is a modern translation of the Quadruple Alliance.

I: [laughter] Yeah.

E: Which one of the group of you was Horace Walpole?

[laughter]

A: I don't want to answer that question.

E: That's fair. Um...

I: I feel we need to know more about Horace before we can.

E: That's true, that's true. So he meets a number of people who he stays friends with throughout his life and who a biography would go into and like, tell you more about individually as men, but I'm just going to briefly mention one of them who is going to be relevant in the parts that we're going to talk about, who was the future poet Thomas Gray.

A: Mhm.

E: So just keep Thomas in mind.

I: Alright. [whispers] Is he gay?

E: Yes.

I: Okay.

E: I think we can just fairly confidently say that Thomas Gray was gay. Like, I think you can mount a debate with Horace, to some degree, but like, I read a biography of Thomas that was published in 2006 and it was like, look, he's gay and we need to face up to that and write a biography that accepts that.

A: Good.

E: But yeah, he's gay. And they have a pretty good time at Eton, they write about it in this very idyllic, pastoral imagery. Uh, they give each other classical nicknames and are generally a bit over educated.

[laughter]

I: Okay.

E: And insufferable. Uh, a year after Horace leaves he writes to one of his friends, "Alexander at the head of the world never tasted the true pleasure that boys of his own age have enjoyed at the head of a school."

A: Okay.

E: He also goes on to say that Eton provided for young men, quote, "the season when first they felt the titillation of love, the budding passions and the first dear object of their wishes."

I: I mean, Eton is an all boys' school.

E: It is, it is.

A: So.

E: So y'know, like. Not *not* gay.

[laughter]

E: He graduates in 1734 and he has a gap year. Gray is desperate for Horace to hurry up and come to Cambridge already. They keep up a correspondence during the time and a couple of his letters are like, very, very effusive on this theme. He wrote, "Well! be it as it will, you have got my soul with you already; I should think 'twould be better for you to bring it hither to the rest of me, than make my

body journey to it... in short, what the devil d'ye mean by keeping me from myself for so long? I expect to be paid with interest, and in a short time to be a whole thing."

A: [laughter]

I: Aww.

A: That was so good.

E: It is, it is good. To shorten it, I left out this bit in the middle where he's like, you should bring it to me because if my body goes to it, then I'm gong to have to pay a carriage fare but it wouldn't have to.

[laughter]

A: Oh, that was a such good quote, I love it.

E: I really like Thomas and I got pretty far into this before I was like, oh my God, maybe I should have done this on Thomas. We can kind of get an idea of scholarly approaches here already. Mowl understands them to be gay and really like, plays up the gay quotes and Ketton-Cremer mentions that Thomas was "intensely devoted", but he doesn't really dwell on it much, uh, he just kind of doesn't include any of his more intense quotes.

I: Yep.

A: Okay, yep.

E: Lewis wrote in 1960 that, "The modern reader whose suspicions are easily aroused may misinterpret a few of Walpole's early letters and those of his friends, not realising that eighteenth-century men expressed themselves and acted with what seems to us today unmanly abandon..."

A: Ah yes, that argument.

E: Yeah, uh...

I: [laughter] Yes, people just talked like that.

A: Sometimes that argument's valid and sometimes it's not.

E: Well yeah, so I kind of wanted to talk about like, that for a second. Because quite often queer people or queer scholars will just dismiss that out of hand.

I: Yeah.

E: And often they are correct to do so, like, there's a point past which a letter isn't platonic and I don't care about what time it is. Y'know, when you're being like, I can't wait 'til you come here and sleep with me every night, I want to make love with you and be with you for ever, that's not something bros have ever said.

[laughter]

E: But...

I: In my black silk kimono.

E: Yes. Yeah, I just kind of didn't want us to be like, oh that's not true, because like, we're just very predisposed to view that as being a like, stupid argument and...

I: It isn't always.

E: It isn't always. And it's also this kind of weird thing where like, if we want to establish that some kind of mode of communication or letters are not purely platonic then we need to demonstrate that the writers are in some kind of romantic relationship. And often to establish that those writers are in a romantic relationship, we need to have already established that the way they're writing isn't something that platonic friends do. So it's this kind of like, catch-22 situation.

I: Yeah.

E: Yeah, where like, the line is difficult to find.

I: Yeah.

A: Mm, mm.

E: Yeah, but I think it's something that we've had come up on this podcast before, and thankfully quite often there've been other reasons to believe that they were in some kind of romantic or sexual relationship.

I: Yeah.

E: But I just don't want us to be like, oh if you're saying that like, friends just wrote that way, you're wrong. I mean I don't really know where I'm like, going with that in the context of this specific episode, because I am very much gonna argue that like...

I: It's gay.

E: These men were pretty gay.

I: Yeah.

E: I don't know, I feel like Horace is an interesting discussion but like, Gray was into men...

I: Okay.

E: He was. [whispers] He was into men.

[laughter]

E: He gets very in love with a younger man when he's like, older in his life, like, he's... he's... into men. Um...

[laughter]

E: I don't know how to say this any more ways, he was a screaming quee- no.

[laughter]

E: Horace eventually does go to Cambridge in 1735. He doesn't declare a major, he leaves without getting a degree in 1739 and then he goes off on his Grand Tour and that is where things get interesting for the purposes of this episode.

A: Okay.

E: March of 1739.

A: Okay.

E: He goes to France with Thomas Gray. Mowl definitely understands that Horace doesn't really care about Gray. Scholars generally agree that Gray does care much more about Horace than Horace cares about him.

A: Mhm.

E: Horace like, periodically, like, snubbed him at Cambridge for some class reasons...

I: Oh, okay.

E: ...but also other reasons maybe. It is worth nothing that he writes a will at this point that leaves Gray like, everything he has.

A: Okay.

I: Well, Thomas... Horace hates Gray clearly.

E: Yeah. But I... it's just important to keep in mind the relationship between Thomas and Horace because like, things are going to be kind of okay for a while and then things are just going to go off the rails and you're going to need to have kept these pieces in mind.

I: Okay.

A: Okay.

E: Okay. So, they're in France, they have an okay time. Horace's French isn't really good enough to like, engage with society properly...

A: Mhm.

E: ...and he's grumpy about it. Mowl paints him as very, very unhappy in France and not really enjoying it. Ketton-Cremer notes that he is a little disappointed with Paris but seems to have understood him to have had a better time than Mowl did. He's quite critical of Paris culturally, so they go to the opera and he says that, quote, "their music resembles a gooseberry tart as much as it does harmony."

I: Okay.

E: Yeah, so that's what I mean, he does make, like, sharp comments.

I: [laughter]

A: Yeah, that was quite, quite mean.

E: [laughter] Yeah, it was quite mean, I liked it though.

A: [laughter]

I: Do we have his letters from when he was in France?

E: Yeah. If we didn't, I would be in very big trouble.

I: Yeah, I was going to say, then how did they come out with such different positions on how much fun he was having.

E: I don't know, I didn't read them all in their entirety. I feel like in reality he was kind of like, having a middle of the road experience maybe, and like, Mowl just capitalised on any comment where was just like, this particular thing we went to sucked.

I: Yeah.

E: And... yeah. Ketton-Cremer wasn't trying to like, get a narrative out of this as much as Mowl is. Spoilers.

A and I: Mm.

E: They spent two months in Paris which is much longer than they had originally planned. They go off then to Rheims which, by their account, is a town that doesn't have a lot going for it.

I: [laughter]

E: I'm sorry, if we have any listeners from there, and they stay there for three months to try and essentially get a crash course in getting their French good enough. They don't succeed.

[laughter]

E: Horace's French is never really good enough. Yeah, so they're there for about three months, and then they hurry up to Dijon in September, and then they go to Lyons as well for a few days. And then they go to Italy.

A: Okay.

E: There is direct contradiction in the sources about whose idea this was.

I: I could tell from your tone that something was about to go down.

[laughter]

E: Italy is the room where it happens.

I: Alright.

A: [hums opening notes of *The Room Where It Happens* from Hamilton].

E: Ketton-Cremer suggests that it's Robert's idea, Robert Walpole, Horace's father's idea. Uh, this might be in part because the pope is gravely ill and getting to see a pope change over isn't something that you get to do very often.

A: Oh yeah, that's fair enough.

E: Mowl says that it's Horace's idea and he has to kind of like, talk his dad into it.

I: Okay.

E: The biography of Thomas Gray that I looked at, that was published in 2006 that I mentioned, uh, by Robert L. Mack says that like, maybe it was Robert's idea and I trust that more, so I feel like we don't actually know how this wound up happening.

A: Mmkay.

E: But, uh, they've both made decisions. What Mowl and Ketton-Cremer do agree on, finally...

I: Yep.

E: ...is that in Turin they meet up with a man called Henry Fiennes-Clinton, who is the 9th Earl of Lincoln. Because he's the 9th Earl of Lincoln and all of the sources tend to refer to him as Lincoln, as does say, like, Horace in his letters, so we're going to call him Lincoln.

A: Okay.

I: Okay, got it.

E: Lincoln has just finished up at Cambridge. Lincoln is very hot, everyone agrees.

[laughter]

E: George III observes that, quote, "Lord Lincoln is the handsomest man in England."

I: George III as in the king?

E: Yes, George III the king, it's the only quote we have from George III here.

I: [laughter]

E: He was just sort of like, at court and he is hot enough that George III just spontaneously was like, hot damn.

[laughter]

E: He is a very good-looking young man.

A: [laughter]

I: Alright, alright,.

E: Uh...

A: I guess if the king says you're the handsomest man in all of England then that's pretty confirmed.

E: It is legally binding.

A: Yeah.

I: Yeah.

E: That Lincoln is the hottest Englishman of the day.

[laughter]

I: Okay, got it.

E: He also has two politically important uncles, Henry Pelham and the Duke of Newcastle and they have no children between them, and are very, very obsessed with Lincoln's health and marital prospects.

A: Okay.

E: I should also make clear, although you can infer this from him already being the Earl, that his father is dead. So his uncles are kind of in charge of his wellbeing and life generally at the moment.

I: Yep, okay.

E: Ah like, his education and so forth. Now, like, Ketton-Cremer mentions Lincoln about three times ever in his entire book. Mowl understands that between Horace and Lincoln is one of the greatest love stories of the 18th century and everyone before him has missed it.

A: [laughter]

I: Okay.

A: Which one will it be?

E: Are you ready?

I: Somewhat.

[laughter]

E: And this was the point in my research at which I was like, oh God, oh no. So. Mowl understands that their erratic movements around France, with them lingering for a long time in places that Horace clearly didn't want to be and then dashing about to Lyons or wherever was Horace trying to get access to Lincoln. He waited in Paris for him to turn up and then he rushed to different cities that he heard he'd be in and this is why he's so unhappy.

I: Did he have any evidence for this?

E: Let me continue the narrative and then we'll talk about that.

I: Alright, alright.

E: Given that Gray is in love with Horace and being dragged around behind him, this is somewhat awkward. Mowl understands that Horace brings Gray along because he has to have a respectable companion and he doesn't really care about Gray being there at all, and he's been basing this whole trip around Lincoln without telling Gray that's what they're doing

A: Wow, okay.

E: Ah, so he says for example that Gray doesn't understand why they're hanging around in Paris and Horace won't tell him. This could be a fact. It could not be a fact. I did not go to the extent of also reading all of Gray's correspondence. I am only one man.

I: [laughs] Okay, okay.

E: So, given that by the time Horace gets to France he's already in love with Lincoln and wanting Lincoln to be there, clearly they already know each other.

I: Yeah, okay.

E: And he's already in love with him.

A: Or maybe he's just heard that he's the most handsome man in England according to the king.

I: And he was like, I have to meet this guy.

[laughter]

E: It's not until after this time that George III says that.

I: Okay.

E: He's not yet George III, but you know, the future George III is like, too hot, hot damn.

[laughter]

E: To be clear. Uh, so, there is one comment from Horace in a letter where he mentions that they have been intimate from their school years. That's not "we were having sex when we were at Eton", that's just we...

I: We're friends.

E: We're friends. That is just normal for the time, I swear to god.

A: Okay.

E: And Mowl thinks that Horace first became interested in Lincoln and maybe even seduced him for the first time while they were at Eton together. They were there at the same time. Horace was three years older. He definitely thinks that it's Horace who seduced Lincoln, because of his kind of weird understanding of what gay men are like, where like, Lincoln is younger and traditionally masculine, and like, less overtly queer, and Horace is older and more effeminate, and like, to Mowl's understanding, more overtly queer, and therefore he kind of paints it as like, "Oh you know how like, that type of gay man will like, chase after and try to like, dupe younger masculine men into having sex with them" sort of thing?

I: [disappointed tongue click]

A: [inarticulate sound of disappointment]

E: Like, that seems to be the implicit understanding of the situation.

A: Okay.

I: Okay...

A: Tim.

E: It's been quite difficult because I feel like there are a lot of things that are built into Timothy Mowl's book like, little nuances that are based off his understandings of things that he hasn't adequately sourced, and it's very hard to kind of like, you know, if he's saying like, overall what the character of a relationship is like, or what the character of a person is like, you can't go and look at one letter. You have to read an overarching correspondence.

A: Mm, yep.

E: He also thinks that Horace had learned from Lincoln at Cambridge that he was going to be in Europe and that the Duke of Newcastle, Lincoln's uncle, was deliberately keeping him away from Horace. Lincoln's uncle the Duke had written to Lincoln's doctor in early 1739, making a comment that he was, quote, "sometimes led away by company which he has not always resolution to resist", and on the 17th of May from the same year, there's a letter between the Duke and Reverend John Hume agreeing to send Lincoln off to Europe to study, and again noting that he is unfortunate in his choice of companions. I didn't find a specific mention of Horace, or anything that seemed very clearly about Horace. I did not track down the Duke of Newcastle's correspondence either.

I: Yep.

E: Mowl declares that this is clearly about Horace. Maybe in context it is, but it seems odd to me that he doesn't quote the part that is explicitly about Horace or make this clear if that's the case. On the topic of how well Horace and Lincoln know each other at this point, before they are in Italy no letter

between the two of them survives, and there is no mention that I could find in other letters of Horace where he mentions "wrote a letter to Lincoln" or anything like that.

A: Mmkay. So they may have like, run into each other at school, but we don't really have evidence that they were hanging out.

E: Yes. I didn't specifically look up how many people were at Eton and Cambridge, but I feel like men of their class studying at those places can't be a particularly big pool of people...

A and I: Yeah.

E: ...so, you know, I think it's reasonable to say that they are at least acquaintances at this point. Lincoln's letters that they will write to each other from this point forward during and then after their Italy trip are the ones that Lewis includes in Volume 30 which is, as we remember, "not the pleasantest volume of the correspondence."

[laughter]

E: Just before we get in to what actually happens, some of our sources for this trip are letters back and forth between Lincoln and Horace. We have now Horace's side of the correspondence, so the letters that Horace wrote to Lincoln, because Lincoln's family kept those and they ended up in Lewis' possession, or copies of them did. The ones that Lincoln wrote to Horace he seems to have destroyed.

A: Hypothetically...

E: Mm? Yes?

A: ...and I'm not saying that this is the case...

E: Yes.

A: If Horace had, as Mowl claims, seduced Lincoln while at school, there may be no correspondence between them in the intervening period because Horace also destroyed those letters?

E: Yeah, possible, and I think that Mowl pretty much does state that at some point. I am not a 100% sure, but I think that he at least insinuates that any previous correspondence was destroyed. There is no evidence of that, but it could be that they have never spoken until they meet in Turin. It could've been that they've been like, yeah, great friends and occasionally they have sex, and we don't have any evidence of it.

I: Yup.

E: Up until this point in the story, there is nothing to suggest that, but...

I: Yep, but...

A: We just can't know.

E: Yeah. So. Lincoln is in Turin. He is learning to fence and dance and ride. He is protected there by a tutor, the Reverend Joseph Spence. It is quite common that a young man sent to the continent will be given some kind of moral leader such as a tutor or a religious figure to stop him from doing what like, late teens/early twenties...

A: ...men do on their gap year!

E: Men who have a lot of money do on their gap years, yeah. Horace is at Turin for twelve days. We know from references in letters that they do spend time together in society at that time. Like they're not hangin' out, but they do like, see each other...

I: Yep.

E: ...at, you know, gatherings for people of their social circle. Horace leaves for Genoa, and he writes a letter to Lincoln, and this is the first letter we have from one of them to the other, trying to get him to follow him, but he fails.

I: Okay.

E: So, that can kind of be as significant as you want it to be. He writes him a letter being like, you know, it was cool to see you, uh, Genoa's wonderful, you should come along if you can, kind of deal. And that could just be a, like, friendly missive, or that could be like, "I am in love with you and I want you with me."

[laughter]

I: Yeah. I mean, if it was "I am in love with you and I want you with me", he could've written one more like Thomas wrote to him from Cambridge.

E: Yeah. I mean I think the idea is at this point that they're not, even if they've previously, you know, maybe had a bit of a dalliance, they're not in an ongoing relationship at this point, so the idea that Mowl has is that Horace spends his whole time trying to like, angle himself near Lincoln and then seduce him.

I: Yeah.

E: So he's still kind of trying to like, play it cool and be like, "Hey, you should show up in Genoa" [stage whispered] "because I want us to have sex."

[laughter]

A: Not be like, "Post me my soul, thank you."

E: Post me my soul, yes. Awww, I love Thomas.

A: That was a really cute letter.

I: Yeah.

E: They go to Florence then, at carnival time, which sounds delightful. During this like, year, they're both travelling around Italy, so Lincoln's party and Horace's party, and sometimes they're in the same place, and sometimes they're not, and when they're not they write letters to each other.

A: Okay.

E: Horace writes to Lincoln, "You make me extremely happy with letting me think my endeavours to please you were not lost, and that you saw I had the inclination if I had not the power. 'Twould have been a great satisfaction to me had I kept you longer here, my dear lord. Wherever I am you will always command my affections. I did not love you without thinking, and not believing you will alter, I never shall." Discuss.

[laughter]

I: That...does not sound heterosexual to me. But...

A: I think I personally have this problem where much of my reading of people in the 1700s is reading letters that are debatably queer, like that's...

E: Yeah, right?

A: So I don't know what people who weren't debatably queer were writing in the 1700s, because that's not who I research!

E: like you can't like be like, hey, I wanna know how completely heterosexual bros wrote to each other, and then someone gives you like one letter that's archetypal. You have to like, make a wider study.

I: We need to have like, 18th century straight people reading group?

E and A: Eugh... [audible shudder]

[laughter]

I: Yeah, don't let's do that.

E: Horace also constantly extends compliments to Reverend Spence, but he doesn't actually care much for Spence, as evidenced in other letters, so he'll kind of write like, "Oh, I loved talking to him at the party, please tell him I hope he's well. I can't wait to see him again," and in other letters he'll be like, "He is so boring."

I: I mean, I can see why he's doing this, in terms of you need to kind of play nice with your friend's chaperone if you want to do anything fun on your trip to Italy.

E: Yeah, that's reasonable. But that's a dynamic.

I: Yeah.

E: So there was a practice at the time where a married woman would kind of have a like, gentleman escort in public who was not her husband, called her *cicisbeo*. We think that's how you say that...Iunno. I think this is defunct anyway, so maybe even Italians don't know.

[laughter]

E: Privately they sort of worked out where these roles ended, so sometimes this would be her lover. Sometimes it would be entirely platonic. Horace became this for a Madame Grifoni.

A: Mhm.

I: Okay.

E: And, ah, Ketton-Cremer believes that he was her lover. Mowl says that she's just a good cover and he could imply that she is...

A: A beard.

E: ...his lover if necessary. While they are in Italy, they're not only spending time with Lincoln periodically, but also with other members of their general stratum of society, and this includes a Lady Pomfret and her two daughters Sophia and Charlotte. Sophia is very beautiful. Lincoln shows interest in Sophia. He's quite into her for a while, and the Pomfrets are very interested in securing him as a marriage match for Sophia. It doesn't eventually happen. I think she's not really of quite the same social class as him.

A: Mhm.

I: They were going to be such a beautiful couple.

E: They would've have the most beautiful children in the world.

I: Yeah!

[laughter]

E: Yes. During this time that he's... has some kind of like tension going on with Sophia, Horace is eating with Lincoln and Spence almost every day, Spence notes. A common theme of their letters while they're apart from each other is, as far as I can see, their like, two women they're involved with. We don't have Lincoln's letters, remember. Horace destroyed them, or like, plausibly lost them or something, but I think destroyed them. He seems to be writing and being like, "Ah, I'm so into Sophia, and I have to be apart from her, and I'm so sad," and things like that, and Horace is kind of writing back and being like, "Oh, yeah, like...same."

[laughter]

E: You know.

A: So if Horace is writing back and being like "Same", you definitely give the tone that Horace is being like, [stilted] "Oh yeah, women, same..."

E: I mean, I can't know that. I'll talk about his relationship with women a little bit at the end of this.

A and I: Okay.

E: And how scholars have dealt with this. I wanna do it all in a section. But yeah, like, no one is that convinced that Grifoni is the love of his life or anything like that.

A: Okay, okay.

E: And then they end up in Reggio together, and this is where the greatest contradictions happen.

I: Okay...

E: So, the story that Ketton-Cremer gives, and well, the start of this everyone agrees on to some degree, is that Horace and Gray have a fight. Ah, Horace is always vague on why this happens, but Ketton-Cremer assigns it to them having different temperaments, and that's exacerbated by the fact that they've been travelling together for two years by this point, and Gray leaves.

A: Okay, like, that seems like a valid explanation.

E: Yup. So that's only the beginning of this. This is fine so far. I will, before I get into the meat of this next Lincoln bit, uh, just kind of finish up with Gray, because I'm not gonna mention him again in this episode.

I: Oh no!

A: Mmkay.

E: So, over 1745 to 1746, they do eventually reconcile. They're never really close again. They both seem to be pretty firmly over whatever love affair might have happened. Horace is involved with publishing Gray's poems, which are quite successful. They're still quite well regarded. But he's so self-critical that he only ever publishes 13 poems.

A: Aww.

E: But that's it. Gray's gone. Goodbye Thomas.

I: Aww... Goodbye Thomas.

E: Go be gay at Cambridge for the rest of your life. [laughs] After Gray leaves, Horace falls ill, and then Lincoln shows up and gets a doctor for him, and then they're in Italy for a while, and then they travel back to England together. This is a fact.

A: Okay.

I: Okay, a fact. Good.

A: Good.

E: Yes. Well... This is a fact that no one disputes apart from the "he fell ill" part.

I: Okay...

A: Did he fake illness to get Lincoln to nurse him?

E: Well-

[laughter]

E: Mowl proposes that this is an elaborate cover-up for him being alone with Lincoln. He proposes that Horace provokes the fight to get Gray to leave, and then Spence, Lincoln and Horace fake Horace being sick so he has to linger in Italy, and then can accompany them back to England.

A: So he thinks Spence is in on this too?

E: He thinks Spence is in on this. And now I will return...

A: Isn't Spence a priest?

E: He's a reverend. I don't know if that's different. [laughs] We're not gonna spend too much time on Spence, but I will return you to the fact that Horace has been trying to get Spence on side for this trip. Ah, I will also put forward and then explore in no detail the fact that Mowl suggests that Spence might've also been gay and in love with Lincoln.

A: So does he picture a threesome scenario here?

E: No.

A: Or a like...I'll do anything for you because I love you scenario.

E: His - ah - I will also just quickly say that when they get back to England, Horace does help Spence secure a pension for life of a hundred pounds a year.

A: Okay.

I: I would like it if Horace did that to me.

E: I... Yeah, well help him bang someone and maybe...

I: Yeah.

E: He will maybe.

I: Yeah, exactly.

A: So Spence definitely has reasons to help them out.

E: Sure. Now our main source of evidence for Horace's health and his meeting with Lincoln come from Spence, so Spence writes some letters in this period to his mother, and then maybe to other people, but I'm primarily thinking of two he wrote to his mother...

A: Mhm.

E: Mowl thinks that these are all lies, and we can't rely on him because he's one of the plotters, so we only really have one piece of evidence, and Mowl has disposed of it. Alright, so, Mowl's reason for thinking that the illness was fake was that, as late as the 18th of May, he was writing letters that didn't give any indication that he was weak, and that didn't mention him being ill, then on the 22nd of May, so four days later, according to Spence he was so sick that he was in mortal danger.

A: I mean, people get sick and die very fast, especially in like earlier time periods.

E: Mhm.

A: So that's not convincing me yet.

E: Um, furthermore, Spence writes to his mother in one of these letters that, on the 22nd when Lincoln and Spence came across Horace, they had been in Reggio for two days and that they didn't know Horace was there. Mowl thinks that this is completely implausible, just because of the smallness of the social circle.

I: Yeah...

A: But I guess if he was in bed sick for those two days...

E: Possibly, yes. Mowl also notes that Horace's doctor says that it wasn't tonsillitis or quinsy, which is another sort of inflammatory throat thing.

A: Mhm.

E: But it was only a very bad cold. So, sure I'm willing to buy that maybe Spence has exaggerated how sick Horace was, or... So it's noted somewhere that like, he couldn't talk, and so I think it might've been easy to mistake him for potentially being sicker than he was.

I: Yeah.

A: Especially when you can die of like, the flu.

E: Yeah, ah, it's also possible, frankly, that Spence, who was a rather boring person who doesn't have a lot of excitement in his life, is playing things up. I don't know if this is a habit of his or not.

I: [laughs]

A: Okay.

E: Um, I also... I, yeah, so I dunno, what you guys think of that so far?

A: Well, I mean, the only discrepancy here is that Spence says he's a little bit sicker than he in fact was, and I don't think that's enough to claim a plot.

E: So what Mowl claims is that, when Lincoln and Spence showed up on the 20th, they were immediately reunited with Horace, and they were hanging out, and then they just like, made the whole thing up.

A: Okay...

E: Right? So if this plot is already in motion, it seems weird to me that Horace doesn't lie in any of his letters...

I: Yeah.

E: But Spence bothers to lie in his to his mother. Like I get that if you were doing a plot, that you would lie maybe in any letter. But it just seems weird that the reverend is lying to his mother. Like...

I and A: Yeah...

E: How of consequence are the mother's letters here really?

A: Yeah, yeah.

I: Yeah, who's gonna like, check those? And then I mean... yeah.

E: Like why make a big deal of it in the letter, you know, like why not just like, leave it out? I dunno, it just seems a little....

I: Or especially yeah, if you're going to lie about it, then yeah, why make a big deal of it? You would just sort of put a line in, "Oh, Horace has taken ill", or whatever. It just seems a bit elaborate, like...

E: It's quite an elaborate plot to...have suggested based on very little.

I: To have suggested based on the fact that what's-his-name, Timothy, finds it implausible that someone can get sick in the space of four days...

E: Mm.

I: Which is definitely a plausible thing.

A: Yeah.

E: Yeah.

A: And that somebody's level of illness can be read differently by a friend with no medical education and a doctor.

E: Yeah.

A: Which is also a plausible thing.

E: Specifically apparently what happened was that, like, Horace was sick, and he didn't think he was like, very sick, and then in the middle of the night he was like, "Oh no, I'm very sick," and he couldn't speak, and he sent a carriage round to Lincoln and Spence who came to see him.

A: Mhm, yep.

E: So like, it's the middle of the night. Everyone's very stressed.

A: Yeah.

I: Yeah.

A: You can see how you'd be like, "Oh, he's in mortal danger," and then a doctor would turn up and be like, "Look, he can't talk, but he's just got a cold."

E: Yeah, yeah. So. In any case, Horace gets better, or decides to stop faking being ill.

A: [snorts]

E: And they go to Venice together. They stay there until early July, so they're there for about a month. They sit for a portraits together by the painter Rosalba Carriera, who was fairly prominent at the time for doing portraits.

A: Oh good, so we do have a portrait of them together.

E: No, so we have two portraits, but they're like, a pair, in that they're kind of facing each other, like one's facing to the left and one's facing to the right, if you put them on the wall together, they'd be facing each other.

A: That's cute.

E: Yes, it is cute. They're wearing the same coat.

[laughter]

E: So, one of them was painted, and then he took the coat off and gave it to the other one, and then he was painted in the coat. Ketton-Cremer mentions that Horace was painted, but he doesn't mention that it was for a pair.

A: [sniggers] Right.

I: The fact that he's omitted that kind of makes it seem...

E: Like more that it did?

A: So Ketton-Cremer thought it was gay.

E: Well, I mean, either he thought it was gay, or he legitimately did not think this was really of any consequence, and he decided he did not have room for like, what he thought was a slightly distasteful friendship in his book.

A: Yeah, I guess that's true.

E: You know, I think there is at least an argument that can be made that there's either deliberate or subconscious homophobic omission happening here.

I: Yeah.

E: But yeah, then they spent a few months travelling through Europe together. Ah, Mowl views this as their honeymoon phase. Horace has won, and now he gets to go on this nice trip with the dude he's in love with.

A: [laughs]

E: They travel for a few days by boat, with Spence on one boat, and Horace and Lincoln on the other boat.

A: I mean, this like, paired portraits and like, putting the chaperone off on a different boat, does sound kinda like, honeymoon-esque.

E: Well, I mean, regardless of whether or not they actually are, like just put that aside for a minute, and think, if they were, I just love picturing them on a boat together.

I: [laughs] Yeah.

E: Like that's just so nice.

A: And just sending the priest away on a different boat.

E: Yeah. Wouldn't you like to like be on a boat, in Europe, with your lover. Like doesn't that sound so nice?

A: [laughs]

I: [vehemently] Yes!

E: So I enjoyed that, even if maybe they were just like, "...yeah, this is fine."

[laughter]

E: There is one letter, we don't have Horace's letter to - it's to another man called Horace, confusingly. So he writes a letter to Horace Mann, that we have lost, and Horace Mann writes one back, where he's like, "Yeah, look, I'm really sorry that you're having a boring time, I'm sorry that Spence and Lincoln aren't very interesting, and that all they talk about is like, boring stuff and how in love Lincoln is with Sophia, but, like, you'll be back soon."

A: Hmm...

I: Okay...

E: So there's that.

A: So that can either be true, and Horace was just kinda bored this entire time, or it can be Horace being like, "Better write a letter that makes me look straight! I hate this Lincoln dude, such a straight, straight man."

I: [laughs]

E: Interestingly though, according to Mowl, I believe, he thinks Horace Mann is also gay, so... ergh.

A: So maybe Horace is in on the plot too!

E: But he's clearly not, if that's the comment that's being made, so I don't know. Horace and Lincoln get back to England, and Lincoln remains a part of Horace's social circle from 1741 to 1747.

A: Mhm.

E: What exactly happens is difficult to tell, though. I will note that Horace's portrait by Jonathan Richardson is kept by Lincoln at his house, I think it was said in his bedchamber, for like the rest of his life.

A: [laughing] How normal is it to have a portrait of a pal in your bedchamber at this time, would you say?

E: [laughing] I don't know!

[laughter]

I: I don't know, like when I think of like, picture of a friend in your bedchamber, I'm like, okay, that's a normal thing for you to do in like, the modern day, have pictures of your friends in your bedroom.

A: But now it's very easy to take a photo and it costs functionally nothing.

I: Yeah.

A: Whereas a portrait was quite expensive back in the day.

E: Yeah, they're very rich. Like, yes they cost money, but it's not like every time Horace gets a portrait painted of him, he's like, "Oh no," or anything...

A: That's true...

E: Like, they have a bunch of money

I: Does he have other friends in his bedroom, or just Horace, then?

E: It is worth noting that Horace has a picture of Madame Grifoni in his bedchamber for the rest of his life, but that he like, makes comments that he's not that interested in it, so...

[laughter]

I: I guess I've still...

E: Like, he makes some kind of comment about, "Oh yeah, that lady who I knew once," kinda deal, I dunno. Anyway, so! Lincoln draws Horace into his social circle. Lewis does not like this social circle, they are the Volume 30 Crew.

[laughter]

I: The Volume 30 Crew. Maybe we should rename our group chat.

E: [laughing] Yeah. They're quite immoral by Lewis's standards. They write pornography and they're promiscuous and so forth.

A: We're probably immoral by Lewis's standards. I think we can have this name.

E: I thought you were going to say we write pornography and we're promiscuous, and I was like...

A: [laughing]

E: What are you talking about?

A: My secret other life.

[laughter]

E: He does stop hearing from Lincoln so much, and he writes to him when he's bored in the countryside kind of begging him to write to him more and at greater length. Ah, and he just never really gets as much back as he wants.

A: So hypothetically if they were like a couple while in Italy, that's now kind of broken off.

E: I think the idea is that they're back in reality now and that's kind of like dying a slow death.

A: That was a kind of just like, gap year fling.

E: Yes. Lincoln's marriage to his cousin is being arranged in order for him to secure his inheritance.

A: Lincoln's marriage to Lincoln's own cousin?

E: Lincoln's marriage to Lincoln's own cousin.

A: Okay, yep.

E: Because he's getting all of his like, inherited stuff from his uncles, so I think they're just like, tying that up.

I: Yeah.

A: Alright, yep, that makes sense.

E: So he has to marry his cousin.

A: I guess that was normal back in the day.

E: Yeah, but it was never a good thing that we did.

A: No, but it was an acceptable thing that we did.

E: It was a socially acceptable thing that we did. It was not a genetically acceptable thing.

[laughter]

A: True.

E: Yes. Ah, so now I'm just gonna tell you some stories about stuff that Horace decided to write down in this time.

A and I: Okay.

E: In 1744, there was a masquerade, and Horace wrote that he went to it in the dress of an Indian. God knows what that means.

A: An American Indian or an Indian Indian?

E: No, I think a...ah, an Indian from India.

A: Okay.

E: Ah, because he's got a letter here that's written in the persona of a Persian, and that seems more similar than a Native American to me.

A: Okay.

I: Okay.

E: Ah, so he goes up to Lincoln, and he bows three times, and he kneels before him, and balances a long letter on red paper tied in silk on his head, and Lincoln just stares at him like, "What are you doing Horace?"

[laughter]

A: That's what I would do if like... [laughs]

E: But he is essentially obliged to read it out loud for the amusement of the company. They're all like, "Oh, this is so funny, read the letter, Lincoln," and so he opens it and he reads it, and it's in the persona of a Persian man called Kouli Kan, congratulating Lincoln on like, recent achievements and things like that. This is where the like, "this is kinda racist, Horace", comes into it, in this next section here. This is what I content warned for. So it says, in part, and I'm just going to read a section of it- it says in part, quote, "We have heard prodigious things of thee. They say thy vigour is nine times beyond that of our prophet, and that thou art more amorous than Solomon the son of David."

I: [laughs] Alright.

E: "Yet they tell us that thou art not above the ordinary stature of the sons of men. Are these things so?" And then there's a bit more, and he says, "Adieu, happy young man. May thy days be as long as thy manhood."

[laughter]

I: That was... [still laughing] That was an experience. Um...

A: [laughs]

E: This is not the only time in writing that he alludes to the large size of Lincoln's penis.

A: I feel like in this context we can't really read anything into it. Like that's a joke at a party.

E: No, like he writes another few jokey things that were like, we think, designed to be passed around in their social circle about how big Lincoln's penis was.

I: So this was like, common knowledge among their friends that Lincoln was hung.

E: Apparently! Apparently, according to Mowl, there's allusions in Horace's letters with another member of his social circle about how big Lincoln's penis was. Mowl - ah, we haven't heard from Mowl in a little while - so Mowl says, "In modern homosexuals, Horace would be described as a size queen". So you know. He's still here. He's still doin' that.

I: He's still here making like, wild assumptions about people based on nothing except his own stereotypes about gay men.

E: Yes.

I: Yeah. That's what he's doing.

A: Why are you like this, Mowl? I don't understand!

E: I dunno. I think that like, we should all just take a moment to appreciate how good Lincoln's life is right now. He's about to come into money, and a title, and he's about to get married, and he's the most attractive man in England, and his penis is huge, and he's just had a great promotion....

I: [laughs]

E: Like, he is living the life.

I: True.

A: Good for Lincoln.

E: Good for Lincoln. Anyway...

A: People just walk up to him at parties and hand him letters about how great he is.

E: Yeah. I'm here, in racist costume, with a letter about how gigantic your penis is for everyone to admire!

[laughter]

E: Horace also wrote a sort of fairytale-esque poem at this time called Patapan. Patapan is a fairy dog that grants wishes in it. He had an actual little white dog called Patapan.

A: Aww!

E: Anyway, it's quite a political poem, and it like, satirises many contemporary political figures. It's aimed in particular at the Speaker of the House, who Horace felt had slighted him in some way.

A: Okay.

E: And it depicts Lincoln as seducing away the Speaker's wife with the help of the wish-granting fairy dog Patapan.

I: [laughs]

E: And Lincoln and the wife go and live in this beautiful castle together, and the Speaker wants his wife back, and he wants to live in the castle instead of Lincoln, but - and I'm very sorry for this - it's guarded by a gigantic Ethiopian man, and in order to get to the castle, he has to submit to sex with the giant Ethiopian man.

[silence]

I: What?!

E: So... like...

A: Okay.

E: That's racist and no good.

I: Yes.

E: But... also, yeah, like this kind of like, risqué sex comedy stuff is just like, stuff that is being passed around in this social circle.

I: Yeah.

A: And he's also written it starring Lincoln.

E: Yes. So like, Lincoln is the hero of the tale essentially.

A: I don't know if you'll know this, but does Horace treat any of his other friend in that circle in a similar way? Like, have we just picked out the Lincoln ones because we're talking about Lincoln, or was this an outstanding way that he treated Lincoln that he didn't to other friends?

E: Mowl focuses it on Lincoln, and I feel like if there were other people that he might have been having sex with then Mowl would have like, capitalised on that.

A: Mmm.

E: My gut feeling is that no, he doesn't.

A: Okay.

E: But again, I didn't read 48 volumes of correspondence.

A: That's fair enough.

E: He also wrote a letter to Lincoln dated only Wednesday sometime over 1743 to 1744 and it's quite long so I've edited it down quite a bit to just give you like a general sense. I genuinely feel that I haven't like, cherry-picked this, but I would encourage you to read it for yourself. So it begins: "I have changed my mind. Instead of desiring you to have done loving me, I am going to ask something much more difficult for you to comply with; pray continue loving me. I like it vastly." And then I've omitted a bit. And then he continues: "Nothing under the sun is so charming as you, you have all the tenderness, all the attentions of a lover in a romance".

A: Okay. [laughter]

E: And then a bit later on he says "I won't pretend that I feel vast tenderness and passion when I expect to meet you. My satisfaction arises from your passion not from my own, so you see, 'tis absolutely necessary you should continue to love me, for if you don't I have no resource". And this goes on to talk about how he'll do anything to keep Lincoln. He writes this sort of like, this clearly didn't happen, but he writes about how like 'I went to all of your mistresses and asked them how best to keep you' and tired to get advice but didn't find anything useful.

[laughter]

E: And then it's signed only with the initials 'PP'. Lewis says that this is written in the persona of one of Lincoln's mistresses. Having read this letter, I don't think apart from the initials that aren't HW there's really any indication that it's written from anyone's point of view but Horace's.

A: Yep.

E: It certainly doesn't like preface like, hey I wrote this as a joke for you or anything like that.

[laughter]

I: Yeah.

E: And I think mainly that's just because this is not something that you can argue that a straight man writes to his straight bro friend.

I: Yeah I mean, I guess that if we assume it was written by Horace and was his own words then we have at least resolved that 'is this just how bros talk to each other' question because he was literally like, 'in a romantic way'.

E: Yeah. Just to be clear. I'm not sure if this was just a like, slight unclarity on your part, Horace definitely wrote it.

I: Yep.

E: We're not sure, I mean, Lewis proposes that he was writing in the persona of a woman that Lincoln was having sex with.

I: Yeah, no, I definitely meant like, in the persona.

A: If Lincoln did have a mistress that we knew of whose initials were PP, I would be willing to believe Lewis but-

E: No, we don't. We do know of like several woman that Lincoln was having sex with though, so like-

A: PP may have been one of them, we don't know.

E: Yeah, it's possible.

I: I mean he was the most handsome man in England.

E: It's true. He did have one called Peggy Lee but she's mentioned in the letter as one of the women that Horace goes and is like 'how do I keep him?'.

[laughter]

I: Yeah. I mean possibly just like PP was a nickname of some kind.

A: Pata, pan?

E: [gasps] It was the dog.

[laughter]

E: No. I didn't meant to imply sexual things about a dog.

[laughter]

E: I meant as a matchmaker. Anyway, to round up the story about Lincoln and Horace. They don't really write many more letters. Lincoln gets married. They stop writing to each other and Horace never really seems to like, feel done with this. Much later he'd like, write to him occasionally again and give him gifts and stuff but they never really have any more friendship. Lincoln does seem to have been genuinely happy in his marriage, and he's very distraught when eventually much later in life his wife passes away. So that's nice.

A: Yeah, that's good.

E: That they had a nice time. Given that it was arranged and she was his cousin, that could've sucked but he seemed to love her very much. So, how are you feeling? Are they gay?

[long pause]

A: If somebody came out with definitive evidence that they were not gay, I'd be like okay fair enough, but I think that circumstantially the evidence points to at least Horace being interested in Lincoln, if not them being in a relationship.

E: How do you feel, Irene?

I: I feel about the same thing. There's not necessarily the implication that they were in a relationship but I definitely get the impression that Horace has raised this idea with Lincoln.

E: Mm.

A: Especially that letter you read that he signed PP. That being sent not long before their relationship kind of dwindled. If you take those two events together it seems like Horace is like 'look you're getting married, please don't stop loving me'.

E: Yeah.

A: And then Lincoln doesn't reciprocate that and does get married and move on. So yeah if you see those as two connected events, I think that's also...

E: Yeah I guess I don't feel completely different from that. I think that there's enough here that it's worth someone else doing a better biography where they look into the possibility of queerness in this circle.

I: Yeah.

E: But I don't feel like it's definitive based on what Mowl has given us and I definitely don't feel like his whole chain of events that he portrays is convincing.

A: Yeah. Mowl's whole theory about this plot where Horace and Spence and Lincoln pretend Horace is ill so Lincoln and Horace can spend more time together in Italy. That seemed contrived and I wasn't convinced by that.

E: Yeah.

A: But I don't think that that is necessarily linked to whether or not we believe Horace was interested in men.

E: Yeah. And unfortunately because Mowl has written the only modern biography that deals with Horace's homosexuality, and because it's frankly not great from a scholarly perspective, this is not an accepted fact about Horace or an accepted like, plausible line of thinking about Horace that he was gay in modern scholarship so much. There are people who have written more recent journal articles that refer to the fact that Horace was probably queer in some way, but it's not something that's been fully cemented yet, and I feel like Mowl is in part responsible for that. A 1998 review of the book observes the bad scholarship and going off that says that like, he is mistaken in his understanding of Horace's sexuality and that that theory doesn't really have any worth.

A: If all you had read was Ketton-Cremer and Mowl and Mowl's obviously doing like not very good scholarship then I can see how you come out of it being like 'Who was this guy who thought he was gay? Like there's no good evidence for that' and just accept that he wasn't interested in men.

E: I think this is the first time at least that I have done an episode where there just genuinely aren't sufficient secondary sources to do this episode justice.

I: Yeah.

E: Which is why we've focused so much on this one particular part of his life.

A: Yeah.

E: So that's a terrible shame, frankly.

A: That is a shame.

E: I also just wanted to quickly note thought that going back to his relationship with Madame Grifoni, he has other comparable relationships with women a couple of times in his life, and it's quite common for scholars with a potentially queer figure to really play up their heterosexuality and to emphasize their relationships with women and this isn't really found with the scholarship on Horace. So Ketton-Cremer and others do mention these female partners, again such as Madame Grifoni, but they also readily admit that he never really felt particularly deeply about these women and that he moves on very quickly from them. I wanted to read a quote from Ketton-Cremer, where he says, "The relationships about which Walpole felt most strongly, and which really influenced his life, were those into which the element of physical passion did not enter. He was a natural celibate". And this is something that we do see throughout Horace's life. Dirty sex poems aside-

[laughter]

I: Yeah.

E: This doesn't seem like something he's particularly interested in. and barring perhaps Lincoln, we have no evidence of him pursuing a sexual partner in his life. And so, I think what made this really interesting for me as an episode to do this on is not this mess of maybe he was gay for Lincoln, but the possibility that Horace Walpole was asexual.

A: Okay.

I: Yeah, I was going to say that, then there's a sort of possible reading there that he's asexual. I don't know then what we make of the Lincoln situation.

E: Well.

A: I mean-

I: I mean after those like, you have a long and handsome manhood letters.

[laughter]

A: But I mean there's definitely the possibility that he's asexual, he's romantically interested in Lincoln and he likes to make jokes about the size of Lincoln's penis.

[laughter]

E: Both Mowl and Ketton-Cremer note a poem written by a friend of Horace's that describes him as being "untost by passions" and in the context it's specifically sexual passions.

A and I: Okay.

E: Yeah so I think that like, obviously getting evidence that someone was asexual in history is quite difficult but I think this is the kind of thing where like we have this rare example where his own descriptions of his life and people's descriptions of him potentially give us some evidence there and that's interesting and nice.

A: Yeah, I mean I think based on what you've said there, if we're going to have this episode being like 'well we're having this episode because maybe Horace was gay', we're just as much having this episode because maybe he was asexual.

E: Yeah.

A: Like, both are circumstantial and possible and make sense.

E: Yes. But yeah I thought it was interesting and it is something I really hope that preferably asexual historians look into. This kind of idea of like, the natural celibate, y'know, the gentleman celibate figure who is quite often called possibly gay because he shows no interest in anyone throughout his life-

I: Yeah.

E: As maybe being an accidental observation of a way in which people could be acceptably asexual in earlier societies.

A: Mhm.

I: Yeah.

E: Ketton-Cremer's biography, I really should have mentioned by now was written in the '40s.

A: Yeah.

I: I think I got that impression.

[laughter]

E: Yeah. I thought it was interesting that they were like quite willing to be like 'yeah he just did not care about these women really all that much at all and he was just naturally inclined towards being celibate.'

I: Yeah.

A: I mean I think both Ketton-Cremer and Mowl obviously have strong biases going on. One wants Horace not to be interested in men and one wants Horace to be interested in men, but the thing they can both agree on is that Horace wasn't interested in women.

E: Yeah.

A: Yeah.

[laughter]

I: And regardless of what else, I guess the fact that Horace is not interested in women makes him queer.

E: Yeah.

A: That's true, yeah.

E: So I mean I think the tactic I would take starting research on this to do like a biography or something, which I will never do-

[laughter]

E: Would be that maybe Horace was homoromantic asexual in some way.

I: Yeah.

E: Returning to Lincoln.

I: Hello again.

E: Regarding that letter that I just read, specifically the part that talks about how my satisfaction arises from your passion not my own. I first came across that because Mowl outright says in his biography that Horace makes the astounding claim that he was always the passive partner in sex and that he didn't physically enjoy it himself, he just liked that Lincoln enjoyed it.

I: I mean I guess that stands to reason with our asexual hypothesis.

A: I mean once we have our asexual hypothesis, that sentence of like my satisfaction comes from your satisfaction not my satisfaction, if we assume that they were ever sleeping together then like-

E: Sure.

A: That goes together well.

E: I was really disappointed when I found the full letter, because I don't think it is as clear from the full letter that he's talking about sex as Mowl implies.

A: Okay.

E: I would really love for this to be a statement where he's like 'hey you know that I'm not into sex at all but I enjoyed having sex with you because you were super into it'.

A and I: Yeah.

E: That would be wonderful. I'm not convinced that's what we have, but I wanted to mention that reading.

A: Yeah, yeah.

I: It was definitely something like when you read it out in the letter before we'd discussed asexuality as a possibility. It was definitely in the letter, I was like that's an interesting thing to say.

E: I think there's a lot of little things you could pick over when you read the full letter. But yeah that's about what I wanted to say about the period of Horace's life when he was involved with Lincoln in whatever way. As I said at the top of this podcast, I wanted to just quickly highlight a few major achievements of Horace's life so we don't only remember him as someone who maybe didn't have sex with Lord Lincoln.

[laughter]

E: And for this section I wanted us to think back to Mary Shelley for a minute.

A: Okay.

E: Now when we did the Mary Shelley episode, we talked about how Mary Shelley was possibly the gothest person who had ever lived.

[laughter]

E: And today I bring you a contender for that title.

[laughter]

I: Okay.

E: So what I want us to do, is in this discussion, think about Mary Shelley, think about Horace, and at the end we'll have a discussion about who is the reigning goth.

[laughter]

A: I'm ready to fight for Mary Shelley but like I'll hear the evidence first.

E: Okay.

I: Yeah, it's like a historical goth-off.

E: Yeah, we're having a goth-off. This will be a running segment on this podcast, I'm sure.

[laughter]

E: So, Horace in 1747 leases a property called Chopp'd Straw Hill, and I'm sure you will agree that this is already superlatively goth, in Twickenham. He discovers from records that the land had been called Strawberry Hill Shot and he thinks that sounds much nicer, and so he starts calling it Strawberry Hill. The property -

A: Strawberry Hill Shot sounds like something you buy in a bar that's obnoxiously sweet but delicious.

E: True. It does. We could make it.

A: Yeah.

I: True.

E: The property has no real distinguishing features, it's quite small, it's quite boring, it's quite shabby. And he decides he's going to renovate the ever-loving hell out of it. Right? So he forms a Committee of Taste, as he calls it, with some friends to discuss how they're going to renovate it.

A: That sounds fun.

E: It does.

[laughter]

E: So Gothic architecture. Originally is a style from the late medieval period. It's embodied mostly in cathedrals and churches as well as castles and some of the more grand university buildings in Europe. So like think of Notre Dame.

I: Yup.

E: You know, just like really, really tall compared to its width, and just generally huge and like, a lot of stained glass and stuff like that. And Horace isn't the first person to incorporate elements of Gothic architecture into his house now. So like Gothic architecture is over, right, it's not currently-

A: Okay.

I: Yup.

E: And he's not the first person to decide he's going to put a little Gothic into his house. But it had been a common thing for a little while amongst the middle class and they'd just added a little bit here and there, right?

I: Just like a little stained glass window or something.

E: Yeah. And also they were largely going off of these like popular published architecture books that weren't very good.

I: Okay.

[laughter]

E: And they weren't very accurate to the styles they claimed to be talking about and things like that. And that's kind of gone out of fashion now. So that's my disclaimer. But Horace is the first person who, taking real Gothic architecture as his model, renovates an entire house from the ground up in the Gothic style.

I: Okay, Horace.

A: Okay. So point to Horace, Mary never built her own Gothic house.

E: Well I mean, I think that house, it is called Strawberry Hill House, but it's really a little Gothic castle in miniature. Interestingly enough, the entire outside is white, so you end up with this kind of wedding cake effect of like, this confection of a Gothic castle. You know, it's got battlements and it's got a tower and it's got stained glass and it's just a whole time.

A: Is it still there?

E: Yes it is.

A: Ooh good.

[laughter]

E: The inside is crammed with all kinds of curiosities. There are rooms with like a hundred paintings in them and stuff. It's a dramatic, over the top, Gothic situation.

A: [laughter]

I: Okay.

E: Yeah so like he went around and looked at tombs and abbeys and rose windows for his inspirations for it. Thomas Gray, who he is now kind of friends with again.

A: Oh good.

E: I am mentioning him again! Described it as "all Gothicism, gold and looking glass". It also has very beautiful gardens. Someone wrote to Horace and asked if he was also going to have Goth gardens. And he wrote back, "Gothic is merely architecture and as one has the satisfaction in imprinting the gloomth of abbeys and cathedrals on one's house, so one's garden on the contrary is to be nothing but-" *riant*? The French word for laughter. "And the gaiety of nature". So.

A: So, sorry the what of abbeys?

E: The gloomth, which was a word that Horace made up and with which I am entirely in love.

[laughter]

E: It's a combination of the word gloom and warmth, and what he wants us to evoke is the sublime aura of a crypt, but also he wants it to be a place that people can live and enjoy being.

I: Did he...?

E: So even though it is very Gothic, it's not foreboding. It's quite a bright and accessible and enjoyable place to be, it's just also as Goth as he can make it.

[laughter]

I: Is sublime aura of the crypt, was that a quote from him?

E: No that was a word, that was just something that I said out of my own face today.

[laughter]

I: Oh okay, I am sorry but I think I've figured out the answer to who is the Gothest Goth on this podcast.

[laughter]

E: My last thing for how Goth Strawberry Hill is, is that about 100 to 150 years later there is a revival of Gothic architecture, and Horace is often credited as being the inspiration for it.

A: Okay, so not only a Goth man in his own right but influencing many future Goths.

E: Yes.

I: I just like this kind of soft Goth architecture aesthetic where he's like I want it to be Goth but in a like warm and loveable way.

A: Pastel Goth.

E: So quick aside here, just to kind of like set Horace's mindset for you. He writes political pamphlets right. One of the pamphlets he writes is in protest of the execution of a man for cowardice in war. This whole situation is something we could do a whole episode on, we're not, I'm sorry.

I: Okay.

E: It's quite interesting and it helps to shift the public tone on the death of this man. He also writes a defence of his cousin who he is very close to, Henry Conway, after he is fired from his job, like dismissed from all of his civil and military positions after Horace encouraged him to vote in a certain way that did not go well.

A: Okay.

E: In return for Horace stirring up political feeling, his political adversaries write a pamphlet about him that describes him as quote "By nature mulish, by disposition female. So halting between the two that it would very much puzzle a common observer to assign him his true sex". It also describes him as a hermaphroditic horse, it's just a whole situation.

A: Wow okay.

I: Okay.

E: Yeah so I mean like first of all I guess there's some evidence that Horace could like plausibly be attacked in public for being effeminate so there's that. But yeah, also like this happens. It also implies that he's been in love with his cousin for twenty years, this male cousin who has just been fired.

A: Oh, yeah.

E: And they brush it off, and it doesn't really have any like major material consequences for Horace. But he's very distressed in his letters. He considers fleeing to Europe and he remains distraught for a few years. Not just because of this pamphlet, but also because of the whole political situation where he's created quite a bad situation for Conway who he cares about very deeply.

I: Yeah.

E: So he's kind of a mess, is basically what I'm trying to say. So he goes away to Strawberry Hill, and he's just kind of there and he's kind of like mad with stress and grief and so forth, and he sits down one night to write *The Castle of Otranto* in June of 1764.

[laughter]

E: In a letter from the 9th of March 1765 he describes this and he says, "I waked one morning in the beginning of last June from a dream, of which all I could recover was that I had thought myself in an ancient castle. A very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story. And then on the uppermost bannister of a great staircase, I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down and began to write it, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate".

A: So, I read *The Castle of Otranto* in preparation for this podcast.

E: [excited] Yes.

A: And I would like to say that it came to me in a dream and I sat down with no idea of what I was going to say really comes across in the novel.

[laughter]

E: I'm not going to tell you the full plot of *The Castle of Otranto* because you won't be able to keep it straight in your head and it's insane.

[laughter]

E: Basically it begins with the wedding day of the son of the lord of the castle of Otranto. The lord's name is Manfred and his son is being married to a princess. But then there's a big commotion and they come outside to find that the son has been inexplicably crushed by a giant helmet that has fallen from the sky.

I: [laughter]

A: This is on like page two.

E: This is page 2, this is the premise of this novel, if you are in you are in.

I: What.

E: And then this mad fever dream of a plot ensues where people are imprisoned and identities are mistaken and revealed, women are pursued by predatory men and deaths happen.

A: Three of the women in the novel are referred to as the princess, and the fact that this is confusing is a key plot point in the novel, but it's never addressed why they decided this was fine in the first place.

[laughter]

E: Yeah, so as you can tell, you know, from Alice's general demeanour-

[laughter]

E: It is quite easy to ridicule *The Castle of Otranto*, but for all its flaws and its ridiculous characters and so forth, it's been translated into fourteen languages, it's never been out of print-

A: Really?

E: How did you find it overall, do you just hate this book?

A: Uhhhh...

[laughter]

A: I don't hate it and it was a short book, so you know, I would recommend people read it, it was entertaining. But its plot was nonsensical-

E: Yes.

A: Its prose was, as a modern reader, difficult to get into-

E: Yes.

A: Its characters were between shallow and actively obnoxious.

[laughter]

I: But you enjoyed the experience?

A: I enjoyed the experience.

E: And this is something that critics of it have noted but also have been like 'but I was just so weirdly engaged'.

[laughter]

A: Yeah no I was, I was definitely engaged and I was getting to the end being like but how are they going to resolve this?

E: Exactly! In this book Horace Walpole pioneers elements that form the basis of Gothic fiction such as supernatural elements, a beautiful heroine fleeing a predatory man, the general kind of atmosphere of the secret passage and the clanging trapdoor and all of that. And this is a pretty wild thing for an MP to write in 1764.

[laughter]

I: It would be fairly wild now if I like looked up my local MP and it turned out he'd written a Gothic novel.

[laughter]

E: That's true! And he gives it to Thomas Gray. And I've mentioned him again!

I: He's back!

E: And Thomas says 'no, like publish this, this is great'.

[laughter]

I: I love you, Thomas.

E: He's very afraid of ridicule and he does publish it and this is the like full original title page. It's called 'The Castle of Otranto, A Story. Translated by William Marshal, Gent. From the Original Italian of Onuphrio Muralto, Canon of the Church of St. Nicholas at Otranto'. And he writes this fake preface for it from this fake translator saying that it had been discovered in the library of an ancient Catholic family in northern England and that it originally dated to 1529 when it was written in Naples by Onuphrio Muralto. And it is received very well, it's praised very highly, people have very strong reactions to it.

[laughter]

E: You know Thomas Gray was like 'I cannot sleep at night now'. Someone described it, I don't have the exact quote, this isn't exactly right but they described it as like a curious little goblin novel that was delightful or something like that. The word goblin was definitely used. People are just really into it, they've never seen anything like this before. After this, Horace is immediately like 'it was me!'.

[laughter]

E: And prints a second edition and it continues to be successful and here we are, two hundred and fifty years later and it continues to be fairly successful. Ultimately this influences all later Gothic fiction. It influences Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, it influences Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, it influences Robert Louis Stevenson and Edgar Allan Poe and its influence is still felt today in modern horror in the works of Stephen King, Anne Rice, Neil Gaiman, Poppy Z. Brite- shout-out to anyone who liked that Poppy Z. Brite reference.

[laughter]

E: Yeah, so I just wanted to like finish up a bit and say Horace lived an enormously full life, he did a lot with his life. We've only covered a little bit of it. In his later years he kept up a very wide social circle, he kept writing letters and other writings until very close to his death. He remained intermittently involved in politics. Amongst his works is this edited notes of a man called Virtue who made this like very comprehensive notes on European painting up until that point and they were like a mess and the guy passed away. And so he got that and he edited these like reams of paper together into some books called *The Anecdotes of Painting*. This is a service to art history that is impossible to overstate, there is a lot that we would not know about painting in the period without this work. He also published a play called *The Mysterious Mother* which Byron adored.

A: Oh.

I: Okay.

E: Byron said of him "He is the father of the first romance and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may".

I: Wow, okay.

E: Horace eventually passed away in 1797. Some of his writings were lost to the wind. Some were left to relatives and friends, and some remained scattered throughout the upper class houses of Europe, where they were eventually collected by Lewis. Which brings us back to the beginning. So, I wanted to end this by asking, who's gother, Horace or Mary?

[laughter]

A: I think I'm biased so I'm going to open this question up to Irene first because I've spent a lot of time with Mary.

I: I feel like I still want to hand it to Mary. Because there's just something intensely goth about learning to read from your mother's gravestone.

E: But this is just one moment at the start of her life that you're mentioning. Like, I'm not objecting to the fact that she had a couple of very intense key goth moments that she did, but he created the possibility of being a modern goth.

I: This is true.

A: I think Horace has the advantage of being born earlier. I mean in terms of like talking about pioneering being goth.

E: Sure.

A: Mary cannot pioneer being goth if Horace has already been goth. And both wrote an important work of Gothic fiction.

E: Yep.

I: I was going to say, Mary didn't let like, being born later stop her. She also pioneered a literary genre.

A: She did.

E: She did, but what she pioneered is more science fiction than Goth.

A: Yeah.

I: Yeah that's true.

E: For Goth she realised on a pre-existing genre which Horace made up.

A: That's true, that's true. I think Horace's construction of his house may give the title to Horace actually. Because like Mary, she had that whole thing about being very, very attached to her dead mother and visiting her mother's grave and doing many important things on her mother's grave, both learning to read and sex.

[laughter]

I: Many important things.

E: The most important things.

A: But her overall life except for that moment where she was in that villa in a storm in Switzerland writing Frankenstein, was like not so goth. I think I'd give it a tie really.

I: Alright.

E: I think you're biased and you're wrong but that's okay.

[laughter]

E: He made up the word gloomth.

A: That's true. I don't know what words Mary made up, but she sure didn't make up anything as good as gloomth.

[laughter]

E: Thank you very much for listening. This has been Queer as Fact. I'm Eli.

I: I'm Irene

A: I'm Alice.

E: If you want to, you can find us on social media. We are Queer as Fact on Twitter, Tumblr and Facebook. You can also email us directly at queerasfact@gmail.com if you have any criticisms, complaints, questions, compliments-

A: Arguments about who's more goth.

E: Arguments about who's more goth.

[laughter]

E: Weigh in on our goth-off! You can also find us on iTunes and if you do listen to us on iTunes, we'd really appreciate if you left us a rating and a review. It really helps us find new people who will listen to us. If you do leave us a review, we will read it out on this here podcast, it would be weird if we read it out on a different podcast.

[laughter]

I: It certainly would.

E: And I'm going to read one of those reviews now. So the subject of this review is 'I love this podcast' so we're onto a good start.

A: Good, good I like it.

E: By Ross King. Thank you very much for taking the time to review us Ross King.

I: Yes.

E: And they write 'I recently began listening to this podcast after seeing the episode on Baron Von Steuben listed as a source at the end of a historical fiction story I was reading'

I: Oh wow.

A: Okay please tell us more.

E: Yeah, please. Please for the love of god send that our way, we need it very much.

I: Yes.

[laughter]

E: Like, the person who reviewed us or anyone else. We need this historical fiction story. Am I to assume that this is like on Ao3 or something?

I: Online or something, yeah, I don't know.

E: If this is a published book I will faint.

[laughter]

A: Send it our way.

E: Yeah someone send that our ay for the love of god please. Anyway, they continue 'Now I am addicted and have had to bring headphones to work to listen to work to listen to this. Since I have never worn headphones in all the years I have worked at this place, my coworkers forget and they accidentally startle me by often materializing behind me suddenly. Well worth it though'.

[laughter]

E: 'I love the thorough research, sources, attention to details, philosophical discussions and a certain scepticism that avoids jumping to conclusions'. Well isn't this the episode for you.

[laughter]

I: Really is.

E: Thank you, thank you very much for that review. We'll be back on the 8th of July with our next mini-episode, when Alice will be telling us the story of the female Pope, Pope Joan and we'll be back on the 15th of July with our next full-length episode, when Alice again, you work so hard, will be telling us about the American gospel singer Rosetta Tharpe.