

Buffering the Vampire Slayer
Episode 4.07: The Initiative

Jenny: Oh, everybody! Wow. It's me, Jenny!

Kristin: And me, Kristin.

Jenny: Before we get started with today's episode, we have some stuff to talk to you about.

Kristin: Yeah, Jenny, you weren't here two weeks ago, and a week before that, so we're like way past this announcement, but did you hear a rumor that *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is getting a reboot?

Jenny: *What* [feigning shock]? You mean, she's finally getting a new pair of boots? [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: After all this time! Kate is going to be so excited.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah. Finally, a new pair of boots for Kate to talk about.

Kristin: But yeah, I just wanted to give you a minute to have a moment here with all of us. We've been having a lot of feelings all around, and I don't know what yours are.

Jenny: Well, okay. I've been seeing, obviously, a lot of people having a variety of feelings about this all over the internet, and here's what I can say.

Kristin: Yeah. What can you say?

Jenny: I am a natural-born optimist. And I am going to *hope* for the best, and if it's not what we all want, then I will mourn it. But for right now, I'm just like, okay. I'm going to hold out hope that this is great. I mean, obviously, you and Joanna talked, right?

Kristin: Yeah, if you don't know this already, Joanna Robinson and I sat down and we did a special episode right after the reboot was announced that is both on our *Buffering* Patreon page and also on Joanna's *Storm of Spoilers* Patreon page. So if you're a patron of either of ours, you have that episode where we talk a little bit more in-depth about things, but...

Jenny: I think as a lover of any franchise, probably this news could spark a lot of conflicting feelings. I think a lot of people are stocked that Joss Whedon is attached.

I think a lot of people are bummed that Joss Whedon is attached. I think there would be bummed people either way.

Kristin: Oh yeah, that tide would have gone the same way regardless of the choice made there.

Jenny: I'm interested to see what his actual involvement is. I mean, I think between him and like the Kuzuis, they sort of like have the umbrella over the property, right? And I feel like, I dunno, I'm really interested in this showrunner that's going to be making it, and there's something that feels weird... Like, obviously I think you all touched on this, like the name is in the property?

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: "Buffy" is in the name of the intellectual property. So you, I guess, can't make a reboot that's going to be instantly identifiable as part of the property without—

Kristin: Unless you call it—

Jenny: Right. So like, is this going to be a *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*?

Kristin: No, no. I mean we learned that it's not. Well you do mean that then this new slayer will be named Buffy?

Jenny: That's what I'm saying.

Kristin: I see. Right. That would be weird.

Jenny: That's curious. I'm just really interested to see what happens.

Kristin: If you're following Monica Owusu-Breen, who is the showrunner, you probably saw her statement that came out after Joanna and I taped, which sort of put some of the initial fears to rest and also really showcased her as a massive fan of *Buffy*, which, you know, again, I'm with you. I'm not ready to like toss it. I am definitely aware of the fact that it's never going to be what the original was, but I do think that there's some power in saying, I know it's not going to be what the original was; maybe shit will be done right. *Maybe*. Are the high? Probably not. But let's all wait, let's all see, and go from there.

Jenny: Yeah, I mean I am interested. I am hopeful. There's no way to know until it exists, like, what exactly they have in store for us.

Kristin: Right. Well, I just wanted everyone here to get to hear your lil voice on it as well and us together.

Jenny: Did you just call my voice “lil”?

Kristin: Lil voice—your *lil* voice. Well you are a woman, so...

Jenny: Oh my god! “The patriarchy!” thunderclap, evil laugh, organ music. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: So, obviously, Jenny and I will continue to follow what's happening as that unfold and see where it'll take us on this whole journey too. It's just a mystery on every level. Meanwhile, a few pieces of news before we get into today's episode.

First, just a reminder that we have added a new level on Patreon. It's a \$25 level and it is a level that comes with exclusive merchandise. I tell you this because I think it's fun, but also because you only have until the end of August to become a \$25 patron to get the first round of merch. We already know that the T-shirt is going to say “Giles in the streets, Ripper in the sheets,” and we are voting on a pin right now. And the pin is either going to say “The Council is trash” or “Support your local alewife.” So, if you pledge in August, you will receive that merch exclusively at the end of September. And then if you miss August, don't worry, you can still pledge and there'll be another round of exclusive merch and voting happening in a few months as well. So, that's what I have to say about Patreon. What do you have to say, Jenny?

Jenny: I have to say that, have you ever listened to *Angel on Top*?

Kristin: I have!

Jenny: Our sister podcast, hosted by the incredible Brittany Ashley and the glorious Laura Zak? They are two friends of ours, two friends of each other, two brilliant minds housed in two perfect human bodies. [Kristin laughs] They are doing such a great job. I feel like every episode I'm like even more excited. They're just delighting the crap out of me. Thank you for making a great podcast that goes along with our podcast. “Sense and Sensitivity”: oh my god.

Kristin: Oh my god.

Jenny: “Sense and Sensitivity” was last week's episode. And, first of all, it's a great episode of *Angel*. Second of all, something *happened* in the podcast that you *have* to hear!

Kristin: I want you to know that it delighted me. So, Brittany Ashley reads a list of—

Jenny: Every role that two of the actors in this episode have played.

Kristin: Yes, and it's just a bunch of really ridiculous Italian stereotypical names that are so funny, and they delighted me so much, Jenny, that Brittany actually sent me a private voice memo of another actor's Italian names.

Jenny: What!

Kristin: So, I'm pushing for this to be its own podcast, just an episode a week of Brittany reading the Italian names that Italian actors play.

Jenny: It's like literally every character is either Sal, Vinnie, or Tony, and all their last names are like *Aldente*! [Kristin laughs], *Spaghetti*!

Kristin: *Carbonara*!

Jenny: It's so ludicrous.

Kristin: It's really, really ridiculous. So anyway, right. *Angel on Top*, besides the Italian names and lists, is really fun and—

Jenny: It's so great, and they've got "The Bachelor Party" coming up next week, which is also a great episode. It's going to be so wonderful.

Kristin: I wanted to give a special shout to Lauren Klein who is our audio engineer over here in the land of *Buffering* and who helped me with the Riley jingle and also made the Veruca jingle *all on her own*. Took, of course, inspiration from Joanna Robinson's lyric choice. But, Lauren Klein, thank you. Thank you for making us sound good and also for pitching in with some jingles this season!

Jenny: Bless Lauren Klein. Or if you're on a personal level with her, you can always call her "Karen from work."

Kristin: Yes, yes, she also goes by Karen, agreed. And, last but not least, of course, just a reminder that we've got new crop tops in the store. Summer is *real* hot. No matter where you are, it seems summer is melting us all. So hop on over there, check out the new tanks, grab yourself a diner mug—you can put some iced coffee in it until it cools down [Jenny cheers], et cetera. You can find out, of course, so much about us at bufferingthevampireslayer.com; you can find our store there.

Also, just a quick reminder that if you go to bufferingthevampireslayer.com/transcribe, you will be able to work with the community to help us transcribe our episodes. We have almost all of Seasons 1 and 2 transcribed—really need help on Seasons 3 and now 4, as well. It makes our episodes *accessible* to those who are hard of hearing or Deaf. It's really, really important and powerful, so, if you could help us out, it would be super rad. All the instructions are over there on that link that I told you about it. That's all I got.

Jenny: Alright, let's get underground! Let's go to a secret military base!

Kristin: Let's get scanned in our eyeballs!

Jenny: Let's take that elevator! [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Let's get into it.

[*Buffering the Vampire Slayer* theme plays]

Jenny: Hello and welcome to *Buffering the Vampire Slayer*, a podcast where we are watching and discussing episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* one at a time, in chronological order, one at a time—I already said that—spoiler-free. I'm just too excited! I'm Jenny Owen Youngs.

Kristin: And I'm Kristin Russo, coming here to tell you that I don't think Jenny can ever go more than *one* episode without us, [Jenny laughs] because if there was a gap of two or more, I think you might explode.

Jenny: I might explode!

Kristin: Uh, I am Kristin Russo. This week, we are talking about Season 4, Episode 7, chugging right along in Season 4 here: "The Initiative." Hmm, I wonder if that has any significance.

Jenny: Yeah, what does that mean?

Kristin: I don't know. Stay tuned at the end of this podcast every week for an original song written by us recapping the *Buffy* episode we are discussing.

Jenny: "The Initiative" was written by Doug Petrie and directed by James A. Contner, and it originally aired on November 16, 1999—just six days before I turned 18. Sorry, I keep doing countdown to 18; this will be the last one. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Yeah. You'll be able to buy porn and smoke cigarettes by the time we do the next one.

Jenny: Hot, hot, hot, hot!

Kristin: This is the one where "Spike finds himself targeted by a group of commandos after he escaped from a military lab underneath the Sunnydale campus." Of course, there's a military lab underneath Sunnydale campus.

Jenny: Of *course*, there is. Okay, so can we talk about the previously on? It's like, "Previously on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: Hi, I'm Parker. Hi, I'm Riley. Hi, I'm Professor Walsh. Hi, I'm Spike and I'm getting tased."

Kristin: I think it's funny that you included Walsh, because my previously on notes were: "The Men: The Supercut." [Jenny laughs] It's like literally all the men: Parker, Spike, and Riley. Everybody wants something from Buffy, but then you added Walsh, so...

Jenny: Well, I mean, that's going to come into play, obviously, in a big way in this episode. And also, it's just like literally that's all that happens in the previously on. It's like, just in case you forgot about Parker, just in case you forgot Riley's a TA. Holy cow. Here's Professor Walsh. She teaches psych.

Kristin: So, after the previously on, we roll into: "Women. Young, nubile, each one a mystery waiting to be unlocked" with a closeup on breasts. And I don't know if you know this, Jenny, but Joanna and I forgot to play a jingle last week. We were so sad—

Jenny: I noticed...

Kristin: That we forgot about it. So, I would like to say to these breasts and to the commentary, bestoweth upon them by Forrest, here is your patriarchy jingle, everyone:

[THE PATRIARCHY jingle plays]
The patriarchy! [thunder clap, evil laughter]

Jenny: Okay. So yes, the patriarchy, but also?

Kristin: Oh boy. [Jenny laughs]

Kristin: Uh, I love this scene. And here's why.

Kristin: *What?*

Jenny: Yeah [laughing].

Kristin: Fucking, an upset! What! Why?

Jenny: No, no, no. I mean, it's insulting and ludicrous. Then, Forrest is like "nubile, et cetera," right? But it rolls right into like, "Who's *that* girl?" and talking about how... No, I don't want—I'm not trying too...

Kristin: Just for the listener, I rolled my eyes so hard at Jenny that my neck snapped backwards, and that's why she did this.

Jenny: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. We might disagree a lot in this episode.

Kristin: Great!

Jenny: What I really love about this scene is Forrest going on and on about how... Oh god, he says "mattressable" even, which is so gross. But, he's just talking about how hot she is while she's doing, like, the most not hot stuff. She's like overfilling her soda at the soda fountain, [laughing] and then she is totally just having a real heck of a time with the Froyo machine. She way overfills the thing and then she like breaks the handle off, and it's a huge mess.

Kristin: Well, she doesn't overfill the thing; it's just her slayer's strength. She forgets for a moment and just yanks the handle off, which is what overfills the thing.

Jenny: Right, right, right.

Kristin: This is the Bella Swan version of—

Jenny: Oh my god [laughing]. "Oh, she's so clumsy! She's just so clumsy!"

Kristin: She's so clumsy [laughing]. I do *not* like this scene. I do not like the light. I mean, like, Buffy, this is kind of like an *exaggeration* of the character of Buffy that we've already been given, right? That she's obviously slaying demons, she's the chosen one, but she's like just a normal girl.

Jenny: Stop! "Slayers: They're Just Like Us!" [Kristin laughs] So I really like it for that. And I also—I *know* we're going to disagree about *this*—I like it for Forrest going hard about like, "How about that girl? How about the hot girl? How about the

hot girl?" And Riley just being like, "I hadn't noticed. I hadn't thought about it. Hmm"

Kristin: Okay, but he had noticed!

Jenny: Well, he had noticed that she's...peculiar.

Kristin: *Oh my god*, this episode is going to be a rough one for us.

Jenny: She's so clumsy and so peculiar!

Kristin: Well, I'll get to Riley and my fucking issues with him in a little bit. My main issues are with Forrest in this scene, which was a shocker to me because, to be honest with you, I've only seen this season once. I've only seen all the seasons once, apart from now Seasons 2 and 3, which I've seen 401 billion times. But, I remember really liking Forrest, and so as this is really our first introduction to him—like we may have seen him before, but I don't think that he's had as much of a speaking role.

Jenny: Yeah, we're just meeting Forrest *and* Graham for the first time.

Kristin: Right, and Graham. I literally forget Graham's name all the time. It's like if Riley is cardboard, then Graham is cardboard soaked in a little water.

Jenny: Jeez!

Kristin: Anyway, I was just really bummed because I didn't remember that Forrest was just kind of a shithead right out of the gates. I mean, he's pretty shitty to women.

Jenny: Mm.

Kristin: Yeah okay Jenny's not sold. He could be shittier with her, she says with her eyes. [Jenny laughs]

Jenny: He definitely could be shittier, but also this is not great. This is not the behavior we're looking for.

Kristin: No, it's not, as noted by our earlier jingle play. So—

Jenny: Speaking of men...

Kristin: Speaking of men, one of my favorite shows up.

Jenny: I like my men like I like my coffee: unconscious on the floor of a sterile environment. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Uh, yes. Spike's locked up.

Jenny: Yo, are those new boots? Did you notice his boots? They're so good. They're high, like combaty type, like black leather boots, but then they have these like straps on the sides that are like flapping all around. They look like a fireman, executioner, vampire boot.

Kristin: Of course, your standard. "Excuse me" the shoe store—"do you have any loose vampire execution combat boots?"

Jenny: Well, you know the band, The Village People, right? There's the fireman, the vampire, the executioner, [Kristin laughs] and the military character

Kristin: And the executioner's wife. [Jenny laughs]. So, actually, what I noticed about Spike, although it was pointed out to me that he's been wearing this kind of the whole time, was just that his outfit was the same as the outfit worn by the two Spikes at our prom that danced together, which is kind of like uniform.

Jenny: Yes! *Vrrmm du du dun dun dun* [imitating a chainsaw]!

Kristin: But, I dunno, I think it was contrasted against the white, which just really made that red pop.

Jenny: I feel like when he appeared earlier in the season with his first thing with Harmony, he was wearing just like a black T-shirt tucked into black jeans all the time.

Kristin: But last season, he wore a lot of the red shit, Season 3.

Jenny: Gotcha.

Kristin: Anyhow, Spike's looking great despite his, um, *pallor*? Is that a thing?

Jenny: Yeah, he is. He's pasty AF. Even pastier than he normally is.

Kristin: Cause he's just so hungry and so full of electrocution. He's just been electrocuted eight ways from Tuesday.

Jenny: Uh, electrocuted door, we see people walking by in lab coats, and we see there are many, many cells containing a variety of demons. What is this place?

Kristin: Well, you know what this is, it's underneath the *Cabin in the Woods*, I think.

Jenny: Yeah, totally. They're just waiting to see what they touched in the basement to see which thing to send in.

Kristin: You know, that's impressive, Jenny. I had to look up what the plot of *Cabin in the Woods* was to remember.

Jenny: Oh, really?

Kristin: Yeah. I can't remember details.

Jenny: It's burned into my brain and soul. Uh, remember when, like, before Chris Hemsworth was Chris Hemsworth? Mmm. Talk about hunk.

Kristin: Yeah, he is a hunk. That's true. But, you know, we've talked about Spike, Spike's T-shirt, Spike being in the episode, and we talked about Spike a couple of other times this season. We've missed a major opportunity.

Jenny: Hit it!

[SPIKE jingle plays]
Spike! I love you
Spike! So dreamy
Spike! Your trench coat
Spike! I love you
Spike! Your black nails
Spike! Peroxide

Jenny: I'll tell you what else about Spike, since what happens right after this scene is the credits, is that somebody's gone and somebody else is in.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Goodbye, Oz. Hello, Spike in the credits. What's uuup?

Kristin: Yeah, Spike is no longer a special guest star. I wonder if that means we'll get more of the Spike—

Jenny: I think that's exactly—

Kristin: Jingle.

Jenny: Oh. I thought you wonder if that means if we're going to get more of Spike. Like, Kristin, I don't think it's a question so much as an exclamation.

Kristin: Uh, yes.

Jenny: So that's really exciting. Uh, Xander and Giles are so without purpose together. [Kristin laughs] What a great—I love when Xander and Giles get paired together, because Xander's such a doof and Giles is, like, so intolerant.

Kristin: I believe a “doof” is actually the exact word that Buffy uses for Riley later.

Jenny: True, yes. Listen...

Kristin: And I have some Xander–Riley comparisons to pull out—

Jenny: Oh! Now that doesn't sound flattering...

Kristin: Nothing specific, but just in general. But, doofishness aside,

Jenny: They're just desperately trying to figure out how they can be useful.

Kristin: Oh my god. There's a lot of comedy points in this episode, but this is a good one for me. I enjoy useless Giles and useless Xander, like an old married couple, just like irritating the shit out of each other. Also, Giles is so good at drawing. Who knew? Did you know?

Jenny: Aw yeah. Mmm.

Kristin: It's like, who was drawing those charcoal sketches of Buffy, you know what I mean?

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Kristin: Cause, Giles, using that charcoal real nicely.

Jenny: Jesus.

Kristin: Yeah. And then Buffy comes in and she's like, “Fuck everything. I'm going to a party.”

Jenny: "Willow's having a hard time," ergo, party. She also says, "If you'll excuse me, I need to find something slutty to wear tonight."

Kristin: How did they make you feel, Jenny?

Jenny: Well, I was like, I don't remember this outfit being slutty. And then I was, like, what even are the qualifiers that make an outfit slutty? And then I was like, stop thinking the word "slutty." And then I was like, is it slut-shaming to acknowledge someone's sluttiness at all?

Kristin: Well, it's acknowledging her own sluttiness all.

Jenny: Sure, sure, sure, sure. But I'm just saying, like, for us as humans, is talking about sluttiness slut shaming?

Kristin: Right? Because my initial instinct was, I was kinda like into this line. I mean, I think it depends on how you use the word, and I'm not a fan of the word, but I am a fan of like reclaim, like using the word.

Jenny: She's not like self-deprecating. She's just like, "I gotta find something slutty to wear" [imitating Buffy, casually].

Kristin: Yeah, exactly. And I think it's a real departure from Seasons 1 and 2 Buffy, where Xander was always kind of calling her a slut, like as a dig. And I don't think she yet had the words or the confidence yet to be like, "Hey man, I am a fucking slut!"

Jenny: No, she's like "Come get it. Or get near me and be rejected or something."

Kristin: Some version of that. But yeah, I was kind of into this cause like, again, I know people have feelings on the word, but I just felt like Buffy was owning it. And I think that that's maybe the answer to your question, Jenny, that I think that as a woman, perhaps we can use the word for *ourselves*. I don't think it's ever very powerful to use it for another person, even if you mean it to be empowering.

Jenny: Right, right, *right*!

Kristin: Once it leaves your lips toward another human, I think the meaning can change drastically. Again, neither of us are the definers of how to use the word or not use the word "slut." So, great talk!

Jenny: That was excellent.

Kristin: So, the blood is poisoned. The blood is poisoned. [Jenny laughs]

Jenny: Oh yeah, I don't know if you remember this vampire from Sunday's crew?
[Kristin gasps]

Kristin: I didn't!

Jenny: I knew you wouldn't. [laughs]

Kristin: I didn't; I was like, this guy's so dramatic.

Jenny: He's the one who got away.

Kristin: Right. Wow, Jenny.

Jenny: And then we saw him get tased by the Initiative.

Kristin: Holy shit! No, I didn't remember. I just was like, who's this drama queen in here? Like, he's just so dramatic. He's like, "Call me a rat," or "I'm a rat," whatever it is.

Jenny: Yeah, he needs to chill out. But, I do like that we get like two great things—two hilarious things from Spike. The: "So, who's behind this? The government? The Nazis? A major cosmetics company?"

Kristin: Right? [laughing]

Jenny: Fair.

Kristin: Yeah fair. Exactly what I thought.

Jenny: The three big evils! And then followed up by like, "Oh, the slayer? The slayer's involved. Always wondering what would happen when that bitch got some funding."

Kristin: Right. [laughing]

Jenny: First of all, how dare you, sir? But second of all, excellent question.

Kristin: Excellent writing for Spike and those two lines. And I also love his response to finding out it's the slayer, like, the arch nemesis moment.

Jenny: He's just like *ah!*

Kristin: "Of course, it's the slayer! The slayer *again!*" [imitating Spike]

Jenny: Yeah, so he's like Buffy's the mastermind. Meanwhile, Buffy is getting *slayed* by a ballpoint pen.

Kristin: Oh my god. [laughing]

Jenny: She is so bad at ballpoint pen.

Kristin: She's such a klutz! [mocking *Twilight*]

Jenny: She's just so clumsy! [mocking *Twilight*]

Kristin: She's a slayer, she's the chosen one, but she, like, just doesn't know how to use a pen. So cute! [Jenny laughs] Right, so Buffy gets ink all over herself and her notes, and we learn Oz's real name.

Jenny: Yeah, this is the first and only time it's ever mentioned: "Daniel Osbourne,"

Kristin: Daniel Osbourne. Um, and this is an unfortunate—

Jenny: Here's the thing. Okay. Sorry. Is it okay? Sorry, I feel like I have a lot pent up because I wasn't here last episode.

Kristin: Please.

Jenny: Okay. This sucks, and Professor Walsh is a total jerk for, okay, fine. But it's hard for me to really get into the scene, because this wouldn't happen. This is like so stupid. Like, Willow is not saying anything substantial. She's just saying to the TA like, "Oh, he's gone, but he'll be back." And it's not like... He's had *one* absence. Professor Walsh goes on this whole tear about like, "If he can't abide by my schedule, it's best he not come back." Like, it's *one class*! Like you're flipping—like everybody's flipping—out. And I know that it's just so that Buffy could really give Walsh to talking to *in front of* Riley. And then Walsh could be like, "I like her." [laughs]

Kristin: I do like that moment.

Jenny: That's *so great*. That's the only good thing Professor Walsh does all episode.

Kristin: Yeah. And I guess you're right. I didn't really, I was too wrapped up in the—I hate when people are shitty to heartbroken people moment to see past. It's just like so shitty. Like I know all she's supposed to be like the evil bitch monster from hell or whatever the fuck. But like,

Jenny: Oh my god, wait—yes, dude! The previously on *edit* is just like, “I'm Professor Walsh, the evil bitch monster of death.” [Both laugh]

Kristin: Just setting you up so you remember. But I just feel like it's very uncalled for. It's very over the top.

Jenny: So ridiculous. And then, of course, as soon as Walsh is like, I” like her,” Riley's like, “You don't think she's a little *peculiar*?”

Kristin: “Peculiar”: the buzzword of this episode. [Jenny laughs] God dammit. So then, we get more of Giles and Xander. [Jenny laughs] What is there romance name? Um, “Gander” or “Xyles”?

Jenny: Ooh, I think Gander.

Kristin: Gander? Gander's got a certain ring to it. So yeah, we go to Gander in Xander's basement, which is just really amazing in so many ways. First of all, let's take a brief, sexy-alert moment when fucking Giles takes the gun away from Xander and just un-like, fucking snaps it open, and reloads it, and doesn't even look at it. Yes, daddy. You know what I mean?

Jenny: Wow! [Kristin laughs] Well, now I know what I mean.

Kristin: I’m trying to get the point where, Jenny, you're so inspired that you give us the Giles jingle that we have been waiting for!

Jenny: I promise you, it's imminent.

Kristin: Okay, great. Can you just do like a remix of me calling Giles “Daddy”?

Jenny: “Yes, Daddy...” Jesus. No!

Kristin: But yeah, so that's pretty sexy. And then the other moment I love in this scene is when Xander's mom, which is really out of character by the way. Xander's mom has been ordering Chinese food and not paying attention to him for years, and yet has made fruit punch—

Jenny: A nice fruit punch. For you and your friend.

Kristin: Yes. And then Giles goes up the stairs and asks if it's raspberry.

Jenny: Have you ever had *raspberry* fruit punch?

Kristin: That's what I'm saying!

Jenny: Fruit punch is, by definition, a multi-fruit venture.

Kristin: A mix of fruit, thank you! It's like, if it's the orange fruit punch, it's orange juice. You know what I mean?

Jenny: True!

Kristin: Like a raspberry fruit punch...

Jenny: Well, if it's orange fruit punch, I think it gets like Tang or something, you know?

Kristin: Actually, that's true. Yeah.

Jenny: Also, I don't know if you noticed Xander's fashion-forward, asymmetrical stitch sweater?

Kristin: I did not. Kate isn't here today, so...

Jenny: It's really an uncharacteristic wear for Xander. It looks like something that a gentleman in his early twenties, who enjoys making love with other gentlemen, [Kristin laughs] might have purchased from like FCUK, when I was in college.

Kristin: "Making love with other gentlemen."

Jenny: Is that not, is that not the right way to say it?

Kristin: No, it's beautiful. It's very nice.

Jenny: It calls up a very specific set of stores in a very specific moment in time and a very specific set of my friends. For me.

Kristin: Got you. Okay. Well I don't remember it, but I'll have to go back and look, and see if it inspires me to think about gentlemen who make love to other gentlemen. [laughing]

Jenny: I'm *sorry*. Okay, so in my opinion, the worst thing that Riley does in this episode is throw a frisbee indoors. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Yeah that's fair.

Jenny: That is his biggest offense to me.

Kristin: It's pretty, yeah, it's pretty not okay.

Jenny: It's offensive.

Kristin: Ah, okay, so this is where you get real excited about Riley, and I have feelings about Riley.

Jenny: Right. Okay, so let's talk about it.

Kristin: So, first of all, fucking Parker, right?

Jenny: This is so offensive. Remember "Beer Bad"?!

Kristin: I mean, the two twigs to the head didn't really teach him anything.

Jenny: Apparently not. One knocked it out of him, and one knocked it back in.

Kristin: Yeah, seriously. That's like the character from *Christmas Vacation*. What's her name? The cousin?

Jenny: I can't remember her name.

Kristin: It's like Mary Sue, Sally Sue, something-Sue.

Kristin: She had cross eyes. And then they got uncrossed.

Kristin: Like a donkey kicked her and they uncross,

Jenny: And then she fell down a well. Buddy [sympathetically].

Kristin: Anyway, sorry that I can't remember her name. That's very un-fan-like of me, and I'm a huge fan of *Christmas Vacation*. But Parker, up until this point, has believed himself, or at least has presented himself, as someone who believes he's a good guy. And now, it is...

Jenny: Just when you thought we had a character that couldn't even be assassinated. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: I mean, it's just like, all it took was for somebody to be like, "Yo, how is that girl in bed?" for him to be like "I *am* the snake you always thought I was!"

Jenny: Yeah, exactly.

Kristin: And he just like comes out of his fucking skin.

Jenny: Yeah, he comes up out of the hole in the basement underneath the frat house and is like "Sacrifice women to me!" [said in an evil voice] [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Literally! And first of all, he has this whole thing where he's like, "The word is *stamina*."

Jenny: Gross! Also, probably true though, probably.

Kristin: That's exactly what I was going to say. Like, really gross but also good point.

Jenny: Get those words out of your mouth, sir!

Kristin: And then he takes it to this like insane level.

Jenny: Dude!

Kristin: Where he's like, "You know what the difference between freshman girls and toilet seats is, is the toilet seat doesn't follow you around after you use it." First of all, Parker, dude, like this guy was like reading at least intelligent books. Like I don't know what—like they really go a little hard on him.

Jenny: Dude, seriously with like "whiny," "clingy." "We got physical. I mean, *fully* physically."

Kristin: Which is what I say when I sleep with anyone.

Jenny: Totally! "Fully physical"

Kristin: "What'd you guys do?" "Well, we made out and then we got *fully* physical." [laughs]

Jenny: You got to half physical, and then we kicked it up to *fully* physical.

Kristin: I don't know why, but when you said, "half physical," I pictured two centaurs making out.

Jenny: Dude, yes! Totally!

Kristin: So anyway, this is the comment that gets a punch from Riley. Now, I'm here for the punch.

Jenny: We *all* want to see Parker punched in the face

Kristin: Everybody wants to see—I mean, Parker's knockout count is rivaling Giles at this point in the show. But, I don't know. Do you want to say what you want to say about Riley and how you like him? Cause I'm going, I'm going...

Jenny: You're gonna go hard?

Kristin: I was gonna say "I'm going down on Riley."

Jenny: Kristin!

Kristin: But I meant...

Jenny: I feel like you want to stay on the other side of that. [Kristin laughs] Otherwise your argument's gonna just crumble.

Kristin: It's true.

Jenny: Um, okay. I'm really curious to hear what you have to say, but I guess I have to go first?

Kristin: Mm-mm.

Jenny: Please go forth. I'm scared of what I, how my words will sound after I can't take them back anymore.

Kristin: Okay, here's how I feel. I was like, all right, I'm glad that Riley punched Parker. Great. And then we change scenes, and Riley is like, "I can't believe I did that. I don't even blah blah blah blah blah." Like right? And Forrest being, you know, a jerk in this episode but also really on point—kind of like Veruca last episode where it's like, "well she does have a point," you know? It's like we get these lines from these characters. And Forrest is like, "Dude, I say shit that's like so much

worse than that all the time, and you don't punch me out, so like what's the deal?" So, there's your first flag, right? Why is Riley friends with these fucking guys? Like...

Jenny: Well, I think we know why he's friends with them: they work together.

Kristin: But he's like really friends with them. He's not just working with them.

Jenny: They work together, they live together. Listen: you weren't friends with people who were offensive in college? Please.

Kristin: And in the nineties, especially, I definitely was. But I'm just saying, so we learned that Riley is like totally tolerant of this kind of language *unless*, as he suddenly realizes, *he* wants to have sex with Buffy, *he* has feelings for Buffy, and so because *he* wants Buffy for *himself*, then it's like "my toy, and you may not, so I will punch you for insulting my toy," and I'm not fucking here for it. Before you even say your counterargument, if you have one, I'd like to play the jingle that I worked on with our audio engineer Lauren Klein and I sung myself. Thank you very much. Goodbye, Riley.

[GO AWAY RILEY jingle plays]
Riley, you are kind of a cardboard
Your mansplaining's best to be ignored
No one cares, you're our TA so please
Please go away

Jenny: Okay, I hear what you're saying. Okay? This is my impression. I mean, we're still getting to know Riley, and we just met Forrest, right?

Kristin: I want everyone to know that Jenny is sitting as though she's in a courtroom, with her hands folded in front of her, ready to present her arguments.

Jenny: This is what I think. I think earlier in the episode, we see Forrest being a pig, and we see Riley ignoring him, more or less, just letting it roll off his back and just being like, "This isn't even worth engaging with. I am focused on the task at hand. I have responsibilities. I am a good boy from Iowa." Sit, stay, fetch. To *me*, my interpretation of the situation, I'm not saying like, "Oh great, I wish Forrest would say more terrible things," and I'm also not saying like, "Wow, I love when men say terrible things, and then other men don't do anything about it." Don't love that.

But to me, it feels like Riley is like a very— You know, Buffy is a Capricorn, right? She's very mission oriented. Riley kind of feels similar to me in that he's like, "Okay, I have a limited amount of energy and I have a lot of responsibilities"—we

learn exactly how many responsibilities in this episode—"and I'm going to use my energy the best way I see fit." Now, do I wish that Riley was a feminist? Of course. But, I think Riley is coming—I mean, you have to meet people where they're at, right?

Kristin: You're talking about us meeting Riley where Riley is at, right?

Jenny: We're meeting Riley where he's at, okay?

Kristin: Okay: in a corn field, half-naked.

Jenny: He just encountered the strongest—physically strongest and also probably mentally and emotionally strongest—woman he may have ever encountered. Well, besides Professor Walsh, maybe. He's got Professor Walsh, and now he's starting to get to know Buffy. He has these two. I'm interested to see how his relationships with those two women impact him as we move forward.

Kristin: Okay. Alright.

Jenny: I also think, *my* interpretation of him punching Parker was not like, "Me caveman. Want fuck Buffy. Nobody else can talk about Buffy." To me, it feels like he really takes very seriously his manners and like, being a gentleman and stuff. [Kristin sighs] And let me just finish before you... Okay? And to me it feels like, this whole episode we see him not understanding that he has feelings for Buffy, not even being consciously aware that he has noticed her or cares about her or is interested in her. And to me, this reads like even his unconscious is trying to be like, dude, you're into this girl! Like you did something that's pretty out of character for you because you felt like somebody was being really, really shitty to somebody that you are interested in and starting to care about.

Kristin: Mmhmm. I hear you, I hear you, but I...

Jenny: Also! Like—

Kristin: Oh, my god.

Jenny: If somebody is saying shit about me, I would hope that Riley would punch them in the face.

Kristin: Sure, we all on Riley to punch people in the face for us. I am with you there.

Jenny: Interesting.

Kristin: I mean, come on. And I see what you're saying. I understand meeting people where they are. I understand that perhaps he is nicely mannered. I do think, though—

Jenny: Look at—you said you have Riley and Xander comparisons. Look how far Xander has come in a span of a span of a few seasons.

Kristin: Totally, but look how much we called Xander out for his bullshit!

Jenny: Well, Riley's not calling Buffy a slut or like being shitty to her because she won't go out with them.

Kristin: Okay, fair point. But I *do* think that Riley suffers from the same kind of character arc that Xander suffers from, which is like, *but he's a nice guy*. I mean, this scene where he's talking about like, "I don't know why I did that, and like I always let my other friends talk shit on women..." It's like the score of the thing is the end of a *Full House* episode. It's like strings swelling cause we are—

Jenny: Oh my god, the acoustic guitar.

Kristin: The creators of the show want us to feel exactly what you're saying. They want us to sympathize with Riley, and like I'm here for it a little bit, but I'm not here to just let it slide by. I'm not here to just let it go, because Riley can be a much better dude, a *much* better dude. And he's not. He's a dude than Parker, of course. Of course!

Jenny: Most twenty-year-old men that I encounter....

Kristin: Don't—! Who are you right now?! [Jenny laughs] I'm shutting you down. I'm playing the jingle again to shut you up!

[THE PATRIARCHY jingle plays]
The patriarchy! [thunder clap, evil laughter]

Jenny: Look, maybe...

Kristin: "Most twenty-year-old men" [imitating Jenny]... You're going to get, what do you call it?

Jenny: Fired? Benched? Penalty box? [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: A Riley penalty box. The Riley-apologist penalty box.

Kristin: Uh-huh.

Jenny: So, I think maybe I'm coming at this a little stronger than I would for another character because of how strong the Riley hatred is in the fandom. And because, compared to the behavior of other men in this series, I feel like there's a disproportionate amount of hatred aimed at Riley, and we can get into that as the series progresses, of course. But, like, I think I'm coming at it from, like, that perspective.

Kristin: Don't worry, I'm here to always keep you in check, always keep you in check.

Jenny: Mm, thank you.

Kristin: Joanna and I discussed the last episode that the only good man we think that's on the series—*consistently* good man who never does anything wrong—is Clem.

Jenny: Wait, I'm trying to think about what Giles does. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Well, ruminate on all those things.

Jenny: Thank you. Clem!

Kristin: Okay, so Spike also has to go see a girl, right?

Jenny: Hot jailbreak!

Kristin: Yeah, I love the Riley, Spike back-to-back: "I got to go see about a girl" / "I got to go see about a girl."

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, yeah, mmhmm.

Kristin: Um, that's fun. And yeah, it's a pretty hot jailbreak. There's a dive that Spike does that I made a note of that I said, "Nice dive, Spike."

Jenny: Yeah, he's got like a couple hot dives.

Kristin: He does a great job with this. And like I was talking to Joanna Robinson about what I thought was a discrepancy here, which is that Spike *hurts* these men before he leaves.

Jenny: Right!

Kristin: Right. But Joanna's theory was, like a slow release. It was like the chip was like *slowly* taking effect. It gets worse and worse as he's leaving or whatever. And then then becomes unable to hurt, like to even hit, anyone. Um, so it's like either look at it as a goof, or look at it as Joanna does, which I like.

Jenny: Yeah, I like that theory.

Kristin: As like a fucking Mucinex 12-hour slow release-pill.

Jenny: Wow. Wow.

Kristin: Spike escapes. In the meantime,

Jenny: Riley swings over to talk to Willow in her dorm room: "Gee, I hope I'm not interrupting anything really depressing." [imitating Riley] He's got a point!

Kristin: I mean...

Jenny: He doesn't really know her well enough to make that joke, but we know her well enough to enjoy that joke, you know?

Kristin: No, I didn't enjoy this joke! I'm going to throw you out a window.

Jenny: Dude, I feel like the tone of this episode is like... With everything that Willow says over the course of this episode, like we're already back in Whedonland—like the traumatic and the terribly sad is being brought some levity with human.

Kristin: Totally. I just like, I dunno, like Willow's sitting in her room, she's listening to sad music, which is what you're doing when you're heartbroken. And Riley walks in, he clocks it, he clocks it enough to call it out. But then it's just like, boy joke, joke: "Isn't this depressing? And, hey, I want to ask out your friend." And like, I know he's all like twitterpated or whatever, but,

Jenny: I'm sorry. *What* is he?

Kristin: Twitterpated?

Jenny: What?

Kristin: From *Bambi*. You don't remember twitterpated?

Jenny: No.

Kristin: *Twitterpated* is what they all get in the springtime when they want, when they want to mate. But like we were children, so it was like...

Jenny: Oh my god, are you serious? [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: What?!

Kristin: The skunk, I don't remember the skunk's name, but the skunk and *Bambi* or whatever.

Jenny: Flower.

Kristin: Oh, Flower [wistfully]. Yeah, they get twitterpated. That's the word that they use.

Jenny: Disney, what the fuck! [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: You can talk about romance with children; they get it. They don't need to know the—

Jenny: Being "twitterpated" does not sound *romantic* to me. It sounds like a whole other thing.

Kristin: You can rewatch *Bambi* on your own time.

Jenny: Okay, okay, okay.

Kristin: But, what I mean to say is I understand that Riley is distracted because he's just realized that he has feelings for Buffy or whatever. But I do wish that he had taken a little bit more sensitivity into the room—especially since just a few days ago he was telling Willow not to walk into traffic, which wasn't necessary, but in his mind was. [Jenny chuckles] So, like, just a little sensitivity.

Jenny: That wasn't great. But later,

Kristin: He gets there, he does.

Jenny: Yeah. Later, we see a softer side of Riley that's very sweet.

Kristin: "A softer side of Riley." But this is a good—apart from that like me feeling like, come on, man, I do really like this scene. It's a very fun scene.

Jenny: Oh my god. It's so fun. Fucking, with Willow's description of like the whole arc.

Kristin: Let's, ah, let's play Willow's monologue.

[Clip from episode plays]

Willow: Okay. Say that I help, and you start a conversation. It goes great. You like Buffy, she likes you. You spend time together, feelings grow deeper. And one day, without even realizing it, you find you're in love. Time stops, and it feels like the whole world's made for you two and you two alone. Until one of you leaves and rips the still-beating heart from the other, who's now a broken, hollow mockery of the human condition.

Jenny: And then he says, "Yep, that's the plan." [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: So, points to Willow. It got a good laugh out of me, that monologue.

Jenny: Me too, me too.

Kristin: And, you know, she does throw him a crumb, a cheese crumb.

Jenny: *Four* crumbs, actually.

Kristin: Really?

Jenny: Cheese, stuffed pig named Mr. Gordo, she loves the Ice Capades not ironically, and she'll also be at a party tonight that happens to be at Riley's house.

Kristin: Wait, it's at Riley's house?

Jenny: Yeah, he's like, "That's my house. I live there."

Kristin: Oh my god, I missed that entirely. And I was wondering why the elevator to the Initiative was in this random party house, so that really clears up some stuff for me.

Jenny: Also, Riley's like, "Has she ever mentioned me?" and Willow's like, "No."
[Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Willow has a really good episode this episode.

Jenny: Yeah, she's crushing it. She's also like, "I'm not your accomplice!"

Kristin: Yeah. And then fully acts as his accomplice. But before we get there, let's get to my favorite lady.

Jenny: The greatest thing I've *ever* seen is Harmony putting up a unicorn poster.

Kristin: Oh my god. I like almost jumped! I was watching this episode in bed. I almost jumped up out of my bed cause I forgot that Harmony was even in the episode. And oh my god, is she in this episode. I love Harmony. I think that I'm transferring some of my Cordelia feelings to Harmony. I'm not comparing them even as characters, though, of course, Harmony is a Cordette. But I think that some of my missing of Cordelia is really elevating my love for Harmony.

Jenny: Yeah, totally, totally, totally. Also, I'm just having a realization. Think about this: Spike becomes a vampire, and then he's like, "I'm going to wear black leather and engineer boots and like a red-blood shirt and dah, dah, dah, dah." And Angel becomes a vampire, and he's like, "I'm going to wear leather pants and velvet shirts." Harmony becomes a vampire, and she's like "I love pink and unicorns!"
[Kristin laughs] Like none of them...

Kristin: She does rock like a red leather pants later.

Jenny: Yeah, but she has like a much... Like, they all dress differently and present differently than when they were human. Like Harmony was not into unicorns as like a high school student.

Kristin: Was she not?

Jenny: I really don't think so. She was very, you know, contempo-casual.

Kristin: That's true. Well, I mean, remember when Angel tells Willow that becoming a vampire does actually bring out like some of *you*, the real you, that

maybe you just didn't know yet. So like, maybe Harmony's deepest, darkest pieces were loving unicorns and loving to braid her hair. So, she takes Spike back.

Jenny: Oh my gosh. Well, wouldn't you take him back if he called you "mon petite crème brûlée"?

Kristin: I would. If he said, "Big Daddy's home," [Jenny shrieks] I would say, "Okay!"

Jenny: There's so much "daddy" in this episode, implied and overtly.

Kristin: I think I was the one who brought daddy in earlier, but Spike brings us daddy.

Jenny: He's like, "It's just going to be you and me now. All I have to do is kill the slayer first." And Harmony's like, "Let's leave her alone. She's just going to slap you around, and I can do that." Hell yeah.

Kristin: Yeah, which is pretty hot, Harm, pretty hot. Harmony's great.

Jenny: Who's the daddy and who's the *daddy*? [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: If you know what Jenny means. So yeah, they get together, but, of course, we learn in just a short minute that that doesn't last very long. Before we get there, we get what I am going to absolutely turn into a GIF, Jenny, which is Xander and Giles in the woods. Xander: "*Ma ma ma ma ma*," [imitating Xander] and Giles saying, "Oh, shut up," which is a moment many of us have been waiting for it.

Jenny: Oh yeah. I want to see that video edited for like the Charlie Brown adults talking over Xander. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: I mean it's basically already done. [Jenny imitates Charlie Brown adult babble] Yeah, so after this, we go to the party.

Jenny: Yo, let's talk about—can we talk about something?

Kristin: Yeah, I that's what a podcast is for.

Jenny: Sorry. I'm not going to get into this whole thing yet, but I just want to make a mental note that there is a Moby song playing when they enter the party.

Kristin: Oh! There's also a That Dog song playing later.

Jenny: Just wait! Please wait! Please wait!

Kristin: What? I just was really excited cause I forgot that was a band. Okay.

Jenny: Okay. Moby song, top of the scene.

Kristin: Great. And Willow now—

Jenny: Willow has this very specific read on exactly what every aspect of Buffy's outfit means. Meanwhile, Buffy's just like, "I just picked something out slutty."

Kristin: Right, but it's not slutty!

Jenny: I mean, well, it's backless.

Kristin: *Oh*, I didn't notice it was backless.

Jenny: Yeah, that's right. No bra.

Kristin: Wow.

Jenny: I noticed. I was like, let's see how slutty this is, and I paid close attention for the whole time she's at the party. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Good to know what your hosts are paying attention to when they critically watch an episode of television.

Jenny: I'm detail-oriented!

Kristin: So then Willow. I wrote that Willow is a "love operative" here. I don't know where I came up with that, but it just came right out. But she's like, we're going to get the three guys like going into the thing and they're all like secret agents, blah blah, blah. But it's like this scene is kind of set up...

Jenny: Willow might as well be like talking into her wrist.

Kristin: Exactly. It's set up to like mirror that, but for getting Riley a date with Buffy, which is fun. I *love* when basically she's like, "If you fuck her up, I'll fucking kill you with a shovel." [Jenny laughs] And then her line where she's like, "A vague disclaimer is nobody's friend."

Jenny: It's really good. It's really good, and I think Riley gets so flustered by both that threat and also talking to Buffy that he just starts talking about, "Did you do the reading?"

Kristin: Yeah, which, now you know how I feel about Riley, I think. But I did have some room in my heart for Riley not knowing how to flirt. And, like, he got me. Marc Blucas got me in this scene where I was like, alright, he's kinda cute, he doesn't know how to dance, and like whatever. That trope of the dude who doesn't know how to flirt with a lady, it got Kristin Russo this time, human beings. [Jenny laughs]

Jenny: Hooray!

Kristin: So, yeah. But then before we go back to the party... This is good.

Jenny: Yo, Xander's wandering through the woods and his hair is pushed forward. He looks like he's in like an old Hollywood movie about Rome.

Kristin: I'm kind of into it actually. I was kind of into his shaggy hair.

Jenny: I don't have a problem with it; I just thought it was very... It called up something very specific for me.

Kristin: Okay. And then we get, so you think that this scene... Harmony has a pile of Spike's clothing. She's taking a fucking page right out of Angel's book with fucking matches and gasoline. It's like, lady, do you know that that kills you?

Jenny: Yeah, careful, girl. Plus, she's probably wearing so many like polyblends, like *she's* very flammable.

Kristin: That's true. So, she sees Xander. Xander's like, "Stay right there," and then, before we know where this scene is going to go, we get this *amazing* line from Harmony where she's like, "I can kill you where you stand." And I'm like, fuck yeah!

Jenny: So great! You're so ready for, like, the fight of the century! And that's what we get!

Kristin: Yeah we do.

Jenny: According to Wikipedia, Mercedes McNab, who plays Harmony, said that they're both wearing like knee pads and stuff, but they, and I quote "did all their own stunts." [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Amazing. I hope we can get Mercedes McNab to come on the show because she's just such a fucking dream.

Jenny: Oh my... Yeah she's so good.

Kristin: And this scene is so special. And it's like very nostalgic for me to watch, because like Harmony and Xander went to high school together.

Jenny: Yeah, they were antagonistic then; they're antagonistic.

Kristin: Exactly. Harmony has been ragging on Xander since the dawn of time. Xander has been ragging on Harmony since the dawn of time, and here they are just like brother and sister.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah. I could have sworn that we had seen Harmony fight in a real, like, fight-way previously.

Kristin: Did we? Well we saw her, I mean she fought Oz and Willow when she first appeared on the scene, where they like knocked her with the mic stand, but did we see her fight more than that?

Jenny: Maybe not. Maybe she was just fighting and then got shooed away.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Okay, I buy this fight interaction.

Kristin: I think that Harmony *can* fight, but I think it's just like, it's Xander.

Jenny: Also, they're talking about the pile of stuff, and she's like, "That's not my stuff; it's Spike's. Like I'd listen to a band called 'The Sex Pistols.' Ew!" [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Yeah, Mercedes McNab, oh she's good. She's real good. So, Harmony doesn't set herself on fire, thankfully. And then, we go back to the party where That Dog...

Jenny: That Dog? More like "Frat Dog," am I right?

Kristin: Oh my god, Jenny. Is that why you got upset when I already said it? Cause you were waiting for your joke setup?

Jenny: Well, there's that. There's, okay—so we've heard Moby, we've heard That Dog, and then a Dingoes Ate My Baby song comes on, and—

Kristin: Oh, I see where you're going.

Jenny: And aww Riley makes the DJ change it because he sees that Willow got sad. That is really nice, and I really liked that.

Kristin: AJ.

Jenny: AJ! I'm motioning across my throat the way that Riley does in the episode. And then, in this exchange, Riley's like, "It's a tape of some bands from last year's party." [Kristin laughs] So, last year's party featured a performance from Dingoes Ate My Baby, That Dog, and Moby.

Kristin: Um, don't forget about fucking Bif Naked.

Jenny: Is that? No, that was a party *this* year.

Kristin: Oh, okay. This was from last year's party.

Jenny: Who is booking these Sunnydale parties?

Kristin: Great, great bands. But yeah, also just a note to AJ: like shout-out, man. I don't know how you're DJing on a fucking tape, but... [Kristin laughs]

Jenny: Oh yeah. Well, do you remember when old cassette players could sense the break?

Kristin: Predicted the gap? I actually, I didn't until you started that sentence.

Jenny: But also, it goes way too fast for that to have been a thing.

Kristin: I think he just changed the tape.

Jenny: Yeah, sure.

Kristin: But I remembered this That Dog song. I loved this song; it was a really good song.

Jenny: Um, all That Dog songs are fucking great.

Kristin: I forgot all about them as a band. Um, but yeah, Riley has a good moment here. I'm here for it.

Jenny: And Willow is like, "Go find Buffy," and he's like, "There's no hurry, if you want to talk." Aww, Riley, I love you!

Kristin: Oh, okay. Make your own jingle, godammit. [Jenny laughs] We'll have the competing Riley jingles.

Jenny: Also, I noticed something about this party. Literally, every extra that you see is in a two-person group, and it's a man or a boy and a woman or a girl talking to each other. It's all—

Kristin: All couples, all the time?

Jenny: All that.

Kristin: All-couples skate?

Jenny: Yeah, exactly. I mean, I don't know that they're couples, but like it just seems like in college were you ever like, and "I will talk to a boy now" or "I will talk to a girl now" and only one of them.

Kristin: Also, I don't know if you recognized or remember this, but in the beginning of the episode, Buffy, when she's talking about the party is like, "You know, there's girls on my hall, and they want to go to a party." And I would like to say,

Jenny: Have you ever seen Buffy talk to a girl on her hall?

Kristin: No! [laughing] Cause I'd like to meet these girls, Buff.

Jenny: Do you think she just overheard other people talking about a college experience, and she was like, "I should use this when I talk to Giles."

Kristin: Yeah. So Xander comes in, and Xander's like, "Yo, Buff, we gotta talk business," and Buffy's like, "Of course we do," fucking leaves the party, Riley's like, "Oh, another dude left with my girlfriend."

Jenny: No, that's not what he says! He says, "It's not like she blew me off. She just left with another guy is all."

Kristin: Jenny's going to have a goddamn Riley tattoo before the end of this fucking season. [Jenny laughs]

Jenny: It's a Riley tramp stamp. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Just Riley's face, like, on your bicep.

Jenny: Oh my god. Hell yeah.

Kristin: That'll be good for when we surprise you one day with Marc Blucas. [Jenny shrieks]

Jenny: Wait, can we just like...? I was thinking about this earlier today when I was watching the episode. Can we just talk for a second about that email?

Kristin: Yeah, but you're going to have to... Cause only the patrons heard the mailbag episodes, so you're going to have to loop all of the listeners into what you're talking about.

Jenny: If you want to hear the whole thing, it's available in our most recent mailbag episode on Patreon. But Kristin organizes the emails for the mailbag, and she decides which one of us is going to read which one. And we got like three-quarters of the way through the episode, and I got to an email that I was supposed to read, and like with every sentence, my voice got higher and higher. [Kristin laughs] I just like shrieked so many times, because the email was from somebody who used to hang out on the—

Kristin: You didn't read it!

Jenny: Wait, you read it?

Kristin: I read it. And you shrieked *as* I read it.

Jenny: God, my memory.

Kristin: Or you were really, entirely, really in it.

Jenny: I was having such an experience that I don't even have a clear memory.

Kristin: I think I read it...

Jenny: Well, one of us read it.

Kristin: Yeah, sure. [Jenny laughs]

Jenny: And it was from somebody who used to spend time on the original *Buffy* message boards in real time. And she really didn't like Riley, but she had a friend who was really into Riley, and she was like a member of a subgroup on the forum that was like "Ladies Love Riley" or something. [Kristin laughs] And there was, like, a big convention where people from the message boards, I believe, were meeting up. And the girls from like "Ladies Love Riley" were having a lunch all together. And this girl's friend was like, "You should come with me even though you hate Riley, cause it'll be fun. And you'll, like, meet people."

So they go, and then they're all having lunch—just some ladies who love Riley and one lady who doesn't love Riley. And fucking *Marc Blucas*! Marc Blucas just walked in! And was like, "Hello, I'm Marc Blucas." And he also had the guy who plays Graham with him. Kristin hates it. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Cardboard and more cardboard enter room.

Jenny: They just, like, hung out with these ladies lunching, and like it just sounded so sweet, and it made me feel so warm towards Marc Blucas and the guy who plays Graham whose name I *really* should look up and remember. I just...love it.

Kristin: If you're a patron already and you have it, you should really listen to it.

Jenny: Yeah, if you have just not been listening to it, it's worth it, I think, for that one email.

Kristin: I mean, Jenny loses her entire mind,

Jenny: I fucking lost it!

Kristin: And really gave me a goal, and perhaps out there you want to help me with this. Someday, when Jenny is least expecting it, [Jenny laughs] I *really* want Marc Blucas to just walk into a fucking room, and I want to video—

Jenny: I would straight up lose my shit.

Kristin: I know. Like, we all need it. Like we all need it so deeply.

Jenny: One thing I want to say is that he like, I don't think he like acts anymore. He just like has a farm in Pennsylvania with his family.

Kristin: Have you been having phone conversations?

Jenny: Well, I looked him up on Instagram when we were like, I think, talking about guests and stuff of people we wanted to reach out to. And it's like, oh, he doesn't act any more. He just like has a beautiful, perfect family and drives a tractor on his farm in Pennsylvania. Fine.

Kristin: Listen, that's okay. That's all right. Doesn't mean he won't talk to us.

Jenny: Oh my god, if you get him to drive up to me in a tractor, I think that would be—

Kristin: Okay...

Jenny: Like, while we're dreaming things.

Kristin: Moving right along! Fucking Riley is like, okay, you know, Buffy left, and then he finds Graham and Forrest, or they find him, or whatever. And then there's this scene where they're just like walking and talking super cas. They get to the mirror, their eyes are scanned. Everybody's like, what the fuck is happening?

Jenny: Forrest fixes his eyebrows.

Kristin: Yes, he does. He licks his fingers and pushes his—

Jenny: Gross. Remember when that used to be a thing?

Kristin: I don't want to remember, but I do. And, so they get like retinal scan happens, and then the mirror opens up to a very recognizable color palette.

Jenny: Oh yeah: sterile white, interesting.

Kristin: Sterile white. And we're all like, what the fuck? *What the fuck?* And then they get in the elevator, and then Riley uses his voice, in mid-conversation...

Jenny: I love how he just leans over and it's like "one girl."

Kristin: And then it's like "Special Agent Finn, Riley," and we're all like *what?* And then the music *swells* as the elevator opens. Villain music swells. And Fucking Walsh has this turn, where she's like faced fully away from the camera and she like spins around as the villain music just comes up volume and it's really, it's really a reveal. Here we are. So, turns out Riley is more than meets the eye.

Jenny: I want to say something.

Kristin: Mm, yes, Jenny.

Jenny: So they were like, let's get an airplane hangar or whatever. And then they were like, let's make it look really wild and high-tech and like, wow, we're doing like crazy, advanced science on all these demons, or whatever. So they dig a pit, fill it with tin foil. Everything is just like tinfoil everywhere. There's like six demons down in the pit, and then there's cameras on the demons, and there's people watching the TVs that have the camera feed live, but they were like only like twenty feet away from the pit.

It reminds me a lot of *The X-Files*. Like, every time Mulder stumbles onto like a huge tent in the middle of a cornfield that's full of government operatives doing autopsies that you never can prove that they were on aliens or whatever. Just like the blinding-white and tinfoil was like the nineties aesthetic for like, then people will know this was expensive, governmental, and top-secret!

Kristin: And related to monsters!

Jenny: Yeah, totally.

Kristin: Well we learn, as well, that Spike is Hostile Number 17, which I like because my birthday is on the 17th of December. It's a good number for me. It's one of my favorite numbers. So I feel, you know, I already felt a connection to Spike, but now I feel extra connected to Spike. It was suggested to me by one Joanna Robinson that perhaps we should think about having a shirt that says "Hostile 17."

Jenny: Wow!

Kristin: Which could be kinda fun, just putting it out there.

Jenny: That's a great idea!

Kristin: Right? So, we'll think about it, we'll think about it.

Jenny: Okay, hot idea. Also, just noting that we learned pretty quickly Riley is in charge of this gaggle of military operatives. So, it's kind of like we see this parallel between Professor Walsh and Giles and Buffy and Riley. Think about it.

Kristin: Oh, that's good, Jenny.

Jenny: "That's good, Jenny, yeah." [laughing]

Kristin: Good job. No, I didn't think about it like that. I like that.

Jenny: Can I have a cookie now?

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Thank you!

Kristin: Please pause. It's like *crunch, crunch, crunch*. [Jenny laughs] So, we go back to Giles's house, and Xander has this kind of flashback moment. We haven't heard Xander really say anything about Buffy in like a jealous way at all, but he kind of falls back into that pattern for a minute with Riley calling him "Teutonic," which I'm into.

Jenny: Wait, what does Teutonic mean?

Kristin: It means like archaic, when I looked it up, but it sounds like *bulky* [laughing] to me, so I don't know if Xander's using it in the way that it was intended, if I looked up the wrong definition of the wrong kind of Teutonic or what, but um...

Jenny: Archaic.

Kristin: Archaic, yeah. I mean maybe. Yeah. I don't know.

Jenny: I mean, that checks out later when Buffy says, "That is so Teutonic." But we'll get there, we'll get there.

Kristin: Right. So, Buffy wants to kill Spike, obviously.

Jenny: She's like, "Doesn't he get this is *my* town? And it's my night off!" [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: And then we cut to this very brief moment with Spike where he's looking up where Buffy lives. There's a little—

Jenny: Dude, papers everywhere!

Kristin: Yeah, but there's a little Easter egg in this scene, which I missed actually, but I read about, which is that the names listed in the other rooms are names of the crew and writers of the show.

Jenny: Oh my god, that's really, really cool. Speaking of Easter eggs, can I tell you something that you may not know?

Kristin: Please tell me.

Jenny: Okay. Have you watched the most recent season of *Westworld*?

Kristin: I did not. I tried, and I failed.

Jenny: Okay, I know the first episode was like, "Oh, okay..."

Kristin: Yeah, I got to the third, and I still couldn't do it.

Jenny: It got so fucking wild, and it got so much wilder. I'm not going to say anything except that I when I finished watching it, I did not have a full understanding of everything that had happened. But then, once I finished the season, I went back and listened to Joanna Robinson's *Westworld* podcast, *Decoding Westworld*. And when I got to the finale episode, I was like, holy fuck! It like blew my fucking mind.

Okay, so first of all, if you watched *Westworld* Season 2 and you have the television comprehension level that I have, I would highly recommend listening to *Decoding Westworld*. But, *also*, I learned in that episode that the Amazon cylinder, whose name I will not say just in case me saying it in your home right now activates it.

Kristin: Oh my god, Jenny. Amazon cylinder.

Jenny: This is how Dave Chen and Joanna did it, and I want to be respectful. I don't want to, like, start a robot revolution over here, you know what I mean?

Kristin: Okay, okay. Sure.

Jenny: Okay, I found out that there is a *Westworld* game via that cylinder, and there's an Easter egg where if you go into a particular saloon or brothel or something and you ask the lady in charge if she knows Joanna Robinson, you, like, get a secret thing.

Kristin: *What?*

Jenny: Yeah, that's right!

Kristin: Wait, how does this connect with the cylinder?

Jenny: Sorry, Joanna, if you're listening. It's like a game [to Kristin]. So this is, like, very limited understanding since I don't have one of those cylinders and I never will...

Kristin: And how does this connect to the Initiative?

Jenny: Because you said, "Easter egg," and I got really excited.

Kristin: Oh my god! [laughing]

Jenny: I just thought it was so cool! Imagine if your name was an Easter egg in a game about a complicated show that's interesting to watch.

Kristin: This has been your Easter egg segment from Jenny Owen Youngs.

Jenny: Sorry, I just want to talk about Joanna! You got to talk to her for like an hour last episode. Hi, Joanna! [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Okay, so moving right along. We are at campus now, and Buffy is trying to bait spike, and, of course, they're trying to catch Spike. And, of course, Riley sees Buffy and is like, "We're absolutely not using her as bait; I will not allow it," which stands in stark contrast to Xander's relationship to Cordelia, which was *always* using her as bait. [both laugh]

Jenny: But somehow, it was like hot when Cordelia was bait? [Kristin laughs] Is that fucked up?

Kristin: I mean, you know, we all have our things. Okay, listen, not to bring up Joanna too many times in this fucking episode, but she pointed out to me that Riley changes his clothes like 18 times.

Jenny: Wait! Oh my god, yes, he changes, wait, but we need to go back for one second.

Kristin: Please.

Jenny: He changes in the bushes to go out to talk to Buffy, but before that, they come down in plain clothes and they start talking to Professor Walsh, and then the next scene happens with them there, and they're wearing totally different clothes. Did they all strip down and put on their military clothes in front of Professor Walsh? Inappropriate! She is a *professor*, just mentioning.

Kristin: Is she a professor?

Jenny: Well.. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: So, right. Riley is like, "Buffy, what are you doing here?" And she's like, "What are *you* doing here?"

Jenny: Wait! When he first walks out, she like cocks a stake at him really hard. And then just like puts it away. Like he didn't notice that?

Kristin: I know, I mean is a trained operative, so...

Jenny: They're both distracted though cause...

Kristin: Cause they're both trying to not let on...

Jenny: Diffuse the situation, and get away from it as quickly as possible, and get the other person to safety too, cause Spike is about.

Kristin: Totally. And I like it, I like it. But I'm really not here for how handsy Riley is with Buffy in the scene, and Buffy is also not here for it.

Jenny: Yeah, no, no, no, no.

Kristin: There's a lot of times when she's literally like, dude, get your fucking hands off me; I'm fine. There's a moment when she's like, "So you think men are fine and women aren't?"

Jenny: "You think that boys can take care of themselves and girls need help?" and he says, "Yes." Riley! You're hurting my case over here, but also...

Kristin: Points for team Kristin over here!

Jenny: It also give Buffy the opportunity to say, "That is so Teutonic." Also, I just feel like, you know, he's just getting to know Buffy, and she's going to help change his perspective on that topic. [Kristin groans] And also, I love when she's like,

Kristin: I'm gonna kick you off this show.

Jenny: No! I love when she's like, "I need space." And he's like, "We're outdoors." And then she's like, "I need some alone time" or—

Kristin: Emotional space!

Jenny: "I need some space, emotionally"! "I mean, emotionally." [both laugh] It's like really, really good.

Kristin: It is. My notes are, "Riley is just trying to help *by* Riley" because I don't fucking like it. "Oh my god, get your hands off of her..." Whatever.

Jenny: We already talked about that.

Kristin: So, then we hear a scream, and everybody runs away.

Jenny: And they both run away. Okay. Hmm...

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: There's a knock at Willow's door and she's like "Come in."

Kristin: Yeah. This is rough, but also....

Jenny: Oh, but you love Spike, so it's fine! [sarcastically]

Kristin: No, listen, I have talked at length and will continue to about what is wrong with me that I love Spike so much. I cannot help it. This is rough.

Jenny: Something to note, like right when he comes in, he's like, "I'm definitely going to kill you, but I can leave you dead or I could make you like me." Hot! We know we already love vamp Willow!

Kristin: Right? I know that's literally in my notes: "Ooh, a vamp Willow offer." [both laugh] Like, we'll take it! Everybody in the studio audience is voting for vamp Willow, please.

Jenny: Then we see him attack her, and *obviously* there are parallels that we don't even, like we *can* talk about, but they, you know, articulate themselves with like the use of force, the taking of something, use of power, and taking away somebody's autonomy; but this is more than we've seen, I think, in most cases. And it's two characters that we are invested in, and it's like, it's really rough to see this duration of this side of Spike with the straddling, and like the music is up, and like it's a whole—it feels really bad.

Kristin: Especially, I mean, it would always feel bad, but we're especially at a time when we're like, *Ah, what the fuck?* cause this is obviously super sexual assaulty. We're on a college campus, you know? There's a lot of shit here.

Jenny: Right. And I think that the people who make the show are thinking, then we'll come back from commercial and it would be this hilarious like double-talk impotence thing, right? And that does, you know, help, but...

Kristin: But, it's very close, and they didn't have to go that hard on the...

Jenny: Yeah, they really didn't have to go that hard. I read that they wanted people to think Willow was actually dying.

Kristin: Oh wow.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: But, I still don't think they had to go that hard.

Jenny: Yeah, it really didn't need to be like this.

Kristin: And at no point did I really think Willow was going to die.

Jenny: No. Ineffective and also offensive.

Kristin: Yeah, if the scene that preceded it wasn't as intense as it was, I'm a big fan of the scene that happens after the commercial break, if you will. With this, like, I mean the impotence thing is like funny, whatever, but I just really enjoy Willow getting really discouraged and like, "Oh, it's like everybody's always telling me that I'm like a sister to everybody" and like whatever. And he's like, "I've thought about biting you..."

Jenny: Yeah like, "When you were wearing this one particular number."

Kristin: "This fuzzy pink number"!

Jenny: And she's like, "I couldn't tell." And he's like, "I hate being obvious."

Kristin: Right. It's just, like, the dialogue is really fun and good.

Jenny: Then, she's like, "Why don't we wait a half hour and try again?" [laughing]

Kristin: We learn that Spike is 126, approximately half the age of Angel.

Jenny: Hot! A younger man!

Kristin: Yeah, just a wee pup. Just a wee pup. I mean a human could almost live that long, you know?

Jenny: So what—are we thinking that vampires sire someone approximately every 50 years?

Kristin: That's a hundred and,

Jenny: No, but in between them.

Kristin: There's in between. Right, right, right. Yeah, I guess. I mean, it seems like they sire a lot more than that, but maybe they really sire...

Jenny: It seems like they sire when they're recruiting, and they're less, uh, less particular.

Kristin: Than for love. For love! Ah, miss you, Dru.

[DRUSILLA jingle plays]
Dru-silla, you filla my heart with dread
And still I'm led right back to you.

Kristin: I mean, we don't get a lot of chances to play that Dru jingle, so we just tossed it in there today.

Jenny: The more that I think about—I'm sorry to bring it down.

Kristin: That's okay.

Jenny: But the more that I think of this playing this impotence thing off of the scene that precedes it, the more that I'm kind of like bummed out on it. Like the parallels that we're kind of used to seeing in not just this show but other vampire pop culture that, you know, it's like virility, feeding, it's like this whole thing. I know they're evil, so maybe I'm just reaching too far to be like, "Ugh, does it have to like..."

Kristin: You mean, you don't like the attack—

Jenny: Maybe I just hate the preceding scene so much that it's infringing on my enjoyment of this delightful romp.

Kristin: I think you just hate the preceding scene. I think we all hate the preceding scene. I think that's totally fair, super fair. And then we have like one of the worst

fight scenes that I think I've ever seen. It's just very confusing. [Jenny laughs] It's very cloudy; there's fireworks going off in the hallway.

Jenny: I think it's confusing for everybody. Buffy fires the flare gun that we saw earlier. We see a gun, we know it's going to get fired at some point, right? It's a flare gun, temporarily damaging the eyesight of all the guys wearing the night-vision stuff.

Kristin: Right. And I get like the point, like I know they're supposed to not recognize each other or whatever, but it's just like...

Jenny: It's just like so much. But also, Riley does recognize Buffy or *thinks* he recognizes Buffy.

Kristin: Yeah, he definitely, I mean she doesn't see *anything*. He sort of...

Jenny: He sees her shape and is immediately like "abort."

Kristin: Right, but I don't think, I mean I don't remember, but it didn't seem like he knew.

Jenny: Oh my god, he's Teutonic! Maybe he just was like, "Wow, this is like a five, two tiny woman."

Kristin: Dude. No, he probably thought it was a small man. [laughs]

Jenny: I think he could see that it was a girl wearing a slutty outfit. That was a joke... I just think he was like, I'm fucking Teutonic, I'm not going to keep fighting this tiny girl.

Kristin: Right, okay. Hmm. Well...

Jenny: No, you don't think so?

Kristin: No, maybe. I hadn't really thought about it.

Jenny: He either recognizes Buffy or is like, that is a woman.

Kristin: I don't think he does, because he's super chill with Buffy in the last scene.

Jenny: That's true.

Kristin: Yeah. If he had recognized that it was Buffy, then...

Jenny: If anybody has intel...

Kristin: I think he doesn't know yet. I think he doesn't know yet. And I think that I could have had this fight scene be about half of its length. Um, I get it, I got it, whatever. So, of course, they don't recover Spike. Spike gets away again.

Jenny: Walsh is pissed!

Kristin: When will we ever see Spike again? [sarcastically]

Jenny: I don't know! In the credits, next episode.

Kristin: That is my literal note: "Walsh is *pissed*!"

Jenny: Me too!

Kristin: So pissed.

Jenny: Um, Riley looks good with his like wet hair.

Kristin: Okay you've had enough. [Jenny laughs] You're cut off; you're fucking cut off.

Jenny: I love a sweaty hunk! [Kristin imitates a stop button noise]

Kristin: You've met your Riley max for the episode.

Jenny: How dare you.

Kristin: But yeah, Walsh is pissed they lost the thing. But, we learn now about the chip in this little exchange cause she's like, "Is the chip at least working?" And Riley is like, "It is. He's not able to harm another human being," so now we know—

Jenny: "Another living creature" actually.

Kristin: Another living creature, right.

Jenny: So, he can't even, like, catch a rat.

Kristin: So, he can't eat. Can vampires starve?

Jenny: Uh, I think they can grow very weak. We saw Angel in a flashback get very, very weak. I don't know what the like, how long they can...

Kristin: Maybe they just are super weak, but they get killed from another thing cause they're so weak.

Jenny: Right, right, right. I think probably his only option is like go to the butcher?

Kristin: Oh yeah. Right. Of course, the butcher.

Jenny: Of course, Sunnydale butcher.

Kristin: Yeah, you just call up the butcher, and get the Angel Special. [both laugh]

Jenny: Uhh, I'd like the number seven, "The Angelus." [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Yeah. And then after we leave the Initiative, we get this one last scene [Jenny laughs] with Riley and Buffy, which is just set up—and this is why I don't think that they recognize each other, cause I think it's just set up—to let us know that they didn't recognize each other.

Jenny: "Did Willow tell you I like cheese?" What a line! [Kristin laughs] How is this guy not just like *covered* in women?

Kristin: Oh my god. And with that, actually, with *that*, since you're all riled up, Jenny, why don't we fucking go to our final segment of this episode, the Sexual Tension Awards.

Jenny: Absolutely.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Jenny: Okay, hey! It's time for the Sexual Tension Awards! Yes! First of all, let's talk about last episode's winners from "Wild at Heart."

Kristin: A rough episode for sexual tension.

Jenny: Oh my god! Coming in fourth place, with, are you ready? 1%: Xander and thrift. [both laugh] That makes me *so happy*. We had 503 votes, so that means 5 people voted for Xander. In third place, at 22%, we had: Willow and Buffy's academic excellence (Willow and Buffy's brain). Second place, it can't be denied, even though we hate looking at it, with 27%: Veruca and her fucking microphone.

Kristin: Yeah, did you see that somebody started a Twitter account that's just Veruca's mic?

Jenny: Dude, yes! [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Okay, cool.

Jenny: *Amazing.*

Kristin: Pretty fun.

Jenny: And coming in first place, with *50% of the vote*: Spike and villainous monologuing from afar.

Kristin: Yeah! Good, good. Did good. Good job, Spike!

Jenny: Good job, Spike.

Kristin: Spike hasn't gotten an award in a minute.

Jenny: And he earned it. Tell ya what.

Kristin: Yeah, he really did.

Jenny: Okay, for this episode, for "The Initiative," let's talk about your options and other like romance lists.

Kristin: It's like last season, we were just *awash* in sexual tension.

Jenny: Yeah. I guess we don't even need people to be actually engaging in romance. We just need some heat, intended or otherwise.

Kristin: Yeah. We don't have a lot of *heat* so far, but Jenny's been digging deep.

Jenny: So here we go. Vote on these if you'd like. [Kristin laughs] Harmony and her unicorn poster—that Lisa Frank looking shit.

Kristin: Yeah! Yeah.

Jenny: Okay, next up we've got a Buffy and the Froyo machine. They had a heated exchange; there something there. Then how about Giles and Xander, or *Gander*, if

you will, and a sense of purpose—that's a throttle nomination. Giles, Xander, and a sense of purpose. And Willow and the death of love. She's *really* into it.

Kristin: Yeah! She really is. Wow. That's a hard one. You know, my vote is going to my favorite vampire of all time, Harmony. [both laugh]

Jenny: It might be a close race. Some really great options. Please cast your vote on our Twitter poll, which will be up momentarily. We are @bufferingcast.

Kristin: Yes. And many of you were *very* upset with me last week, even though I've been doing this—or two weeks ago—I've been doing it this way for quite some time that I leave the Twitter poll up for three days. Well, listen...

Jenny: Three days is not enough!

Kristin: Not enough! The people have demanded a week, and the people shall get their week!

Jenny: People are busy.

Kristin: Yes, the Twitter poll will be up for *a week* now. So, don't come complaining to me. You got seven whole days to get your votes in for the episode. And, I for one, am wondering what the fuck that mailing address for a unicorn is going to be, but we've got some time to figure it out, Jenny. [both laugh]

Jenny: Definitely on a cloud somewhere.

Kristin: Yeah, that's true: 1234 Cloud Lane.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Great!

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Jenny: Well, that about does it for this episode of *Buffering*, of course. I, as you may be aware, but I never want you to forget, am Jenny Owen Youngs, and when I'm not making this podcast with Kristin, I'm usually writing and recording songs. You can learn more about me at jennyowenyoungs.com, and you can give me a shout on Twitter @jennyowenyoungs.

Kristin: Yes, and I am Kristin Russo, but you can find more about me on my website, kristinnoeline.com that's K-R-I-S-T-I-N-N-O-E-L-I-N-E, or you could just listen to this jingle and remember it forever.

[KRISTIN NOELINE jingle plays]
Kristin with an I
N-O-E-L-I-N-E

Kristin: You can also find me on Twitter and Instagram @kristinnoeline, learn about the work that I do with LGBTQ people and their families and loved ones and educators. I do a ton of stuff with, especially these days, putting a lot of focus over at mykidisgay.com, which is a resource for parents and loved ones and educators of LGBTQIA people. So, check that all out.

Jenny: *Buffering the Vampire Slayer* is on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook @bufferingcast, and you can always email us! [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Five, five, five Moviefone! [imitating Jenny's enthusiastic voice]

Jenny: I know, I have so much extra zest this episode! You can always email us at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com!

Kristin: Yes, and if you want to support our work, we would just adore it if ya did.

Jenny: That would rock!

Kristin: So many of you already do. You can support us in a very simple way by going on over and rating and reviewing us on iTunes.

Jenny: Please!

Kristin: It's a way of letting people find the podcast and find each other. You can also go on over to our store where we have crop tops and mugs and zines about sexual tension between our two favorite slayers, Buffy and Faith.

Jenny: *Well*, I think there's a three-way tie between our favorite slayers.

Kristin: Well, the two slayers we would like to make out together the most, [Jenny laughs] and you know, plenty of "Smash the Demon Lizard Patriarchy" T-shirts and onesies, all sorts of fun stuff. Bufferingthevampireslayer.com. Click on "Shop." And last, but certainly not least, you can join us over on Patreon. We have a thriving community over there. We just added a new level—the \$25 level. And actually, I'm gonna remind you—I reminded you at the top, but I'm going to remind you here at

the backend as well—that if you want to get the first round of exclusive merch, that's a T-shirt right now. We know the T-shirt is going to say "Giles in the streets, Ripper in the sheets."

Jenny: Hot.

Kristin: And then, we're voting on an enamel pin. It seems like it's going to be between an enamel pin that says "The Council is trash" or "Support your local alewife." [Jenny laughs] So, some really good shit happening over and that's exclusive. You only get it if you're at the \$25 level, but you have to pledge before the end of August to get that first round of merch, because you have to be a patron for a certain amount of time to get those. So, if you want to get in on that train, now's the time to do it. You have until the end of August to get that merch, which will ship at the end of September.

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: I think that's all I got Jenny.

Jenny: Well then, [inhales loudly] til next time...

Jenny and Kristin: Awoooooooooo!

Jenny: Ooooo—really getting in some extra leftover from last episode—oooooooooooo! Yeah.

[Jenny performing "The Initiative," off the album "Songs from Season Four" by Buffering the Vampire Slayer]

Ayo defeated by some fro-yo today

I know my preternatural grace ain't always in play

Who has time for ballpoint pens

When you're trying to support your friends

Cause Willow, she's been mopin' and you know that I was hopin'

We could dance until she smiles again

I don't mind the cemetery grind

But this is one of those times

I need to party please

I need to party please

Ayo looks like there's some commandos to chase

Don't know what's underneath that ski mask but this task ain't great

I don't have time for teutonic men

It's more important to support your friends

Cause Willow, she's been gloomin' but you know I'd been assumin'

That we'll dance until she smiles again

I don't mind the cemetery grind

But this is one of those times

I need to party please

I need some party cheese

I want a night off - Xander and Harmony they could fill in for me

Every headliner needs a break so they don't break

Ayo Spike got into the dorms oh my god

Willow my best friend she ain't gettin' bitten on my watch

When will Spike learn that this is my town

I'll kick his ass and still have time to get down

I don't mind the cemetery grind

But this is one of those times

I need to party please

I want some party cheese

I need to party please

Bring me some party cheese