

Angel On Top
Episode 3.15: Loyalty

[CHIME]

LaToya: Welcome back to Angel On Top, a podcast where we watch and discuss every episode of Angel, one by one, spoiler free and in tandem with that damn, dirty Buffering the Vampire Slayer. [Morgan laughs] I'm your co-host, LaToya Ferguson, AKA the Cordelia Chase of the Buffering verse, AKA Bones, AKA one half of the Gunn Squad—blap, blap blap!—[Morgan giggles] AKA...Theodore K. Mullins, AKA Gilly, AKA lover of long winded bits.

Morgan: And I'm your co-host, Morgan Lutich, AKA the Winifred Burkle of the Buffering verse, AKA also Bones, AKA the other half of the Gunn Squad—bang, bang—AKA Frank Scabopolis, AKA sorry! AKA also a lover of long winded bits.

LaToya: And this week, we are watching Angel Season 3, Episode 15, Loyalty. Loyalty was written by Mary Smith and directed by James A. Contner. It aired on The WB on February 25th, 2002.

Morgan: And this is the one where Wes desperately tries to make the translation read anything but “and then the father will kill the son.” [laughs]

[Angel On Top theme]

LaToya: [dramatically] Previously on Angel! Holtz, England 1764. Yes, it has England 1764 in the flashback, just so you know! Angelus and Darla took a lot from him. Holtz lets Angel and baby Connor get away, and Sahjhan is pissed. Holtz tells Justine that he needs her to find others like her, ones that have suffered as they have. Angel sends Cordy away for a few weeks with Groo. Wes reminds Angel that Connor has a role to play, and the Nyazian texts translate to “the father will kill the son.” Dun-dun-dun!

Morgan: Ahhh!

LaToya: Oh, no!

Morgan: Truly, not great. You do not love to see it. This was a tough episode to watch.

LaToya: And you cried, correct?

Morgan: Yes, I cried, and as I told you and Kristin off-mic, I cried in front of my boyfriend, who is—uh, finally watched *Waiting in the Wings* with me this week. And he was like, “How many episodes are you ahead of me?” and I said, “Two!” [LaToya laughs] And he seemed concerned, as he should be. [laughs]

LaToya: Good. Very, very good.

Morgan: [sighs] Good god.

LaToya: Yeah, we open with Wes, who has fallen asleep at his desk. And Gunn’s first line and the first line of the episode is, “You gotta admire the loyalty.” Oh, man.

Morgan: [laughs] That’s the name of the episode! And yeah, he also immediately comments after that, “Wes really needs a life.” Given that this is a dream and this is his subconscious, ouch. Like, what a time to be Wes. [both laugh]

LaToya: And yet Wes refuses—he *refuses* to get a life. And, you know, that’s not going well. So Gunn and Fred are just like, “He deserves more.” And then Fred’s like, “I wonder if he’s found out anything about Connor,” and she’s about to grab his notepad. He wakes up, says, “Don’t touch these notes!”

Morgan: He’s like, “I have them in a specific order.” And you know, he—like, we’re dealing with a very scruffy Wes. A very sleepy-looking Wes, a very haggard-looking Wes.

LaToya: And yet—

Morgan: [simultaneously] But in a deeply handsome way.

LaToya: Exactly. [laughs] He’s so tired and haggard and just disgusting. He looks so hot.

Morgan: He looks so hot. All I could think about was the *New Girl* joke where Jess does admit that she has “thought about it” with Nick, and there’s the cut to him at the bar, making two bar nuts talk to each other, and then bursting into tears. And her looking at him like, mmm! Like, what is it about a man going through something that makes Wes look kinda hot? [both laugh]

LaToya: It’s the Don Draper question.

Morgan: [laughs] But truly, he is looking good and feeling bad. Angel enters with Connor, and he's like, "Yeah, you got any answers? Look what I'm teaching him how to do." And he flips into vamp face and says, "I'm teaching him how to die." And he—

LaToya: What?!

Morgan: Eeeugh! And he takes a big ol' chomp out of his son! It's horrifying. Wes is horrified. Gunn and Fred watch, like, smiling, like this is super cute. And then suddenly, Wes's hands are bleeding all over the books and it's, um—it's a dream, thank goodness.

LaToya: Yes. It's only just a dream. A very bad dream. So Wes wakes up in the office, all alone. This time it's just Angel and baby Connor greeting him, 'cause he's been there all night.

Morgan: I would like to get, right up at the top here, your take. Do you think Wes is doing the right thing, trying to kind of figure this out on his own, before he goes to Angel about it?

LaToya: I think he definitely thinks he's doing the right thing. It's hard because, you know, Angel told him, you know, if there's anything, come to me. And Wes is doing everything he can to, like, make sure he's translating it wrong, honestly.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: So he's like, I don't need to go to him, because I'm gonna do what I can to prove that it's not correct. That's what most of what he's trying to do is anyway. So it's like, why would I go to Angel and freak him out about this if it's not even true? He's trying to get it to be said that it's not true.

Morgan: So, like, that is—I agree, like, 100%. And I know we—I wanted to get a baseline for that, since we ended last episode in somewhat of a precarious place with Wes, you and I did, given how he was acting about Gunn and Fred. But I do think—like, right now, he's trying to not cause needless alarm and panic. And I'm very much, like, on his side. Like, he does not want it to be true, and maybe because of that, he's acting, like, possibly a little foolishly. But I—it comes from such a good place, and it's out of a desire to do the right thing and to ensure that Angel is told the truth. But given how many times Angel, who, like, every other fucking sentence, is like, "By the way, you might have to kill me one day." [both laugh]

LaToya: It also—

Morgan: He does seem like a safe person to tell this news to, even if it's going to hurt him immensely.

LaToya: Yeah. It was also, though, up top at the whole Nyazian scrolls and—like, Cordy even cracks the joke to Wes about not getting, like, the translation wrong this time like he did with the Shanshu prophecies. So, like, you know, he—they've been through this and that has to be in his mind too. He's like, I have—like, he is so hoping he is getting it wrong again.

Morgan: Yes. That these, like, prophecies have a history of being finicky and the wording being difficult and tricky and there being mistakes that cause unnecessary alarm before. Like, I do think Wes is going about this pretty much, like, the right way. Like, I am—I am—I was very, like, sympathetic to Wes and my heart was, like, breaking for him this whole episode. I thought he really was, like, doing his best.

LaToya: Yeah. So Angel and Wes go to the baby doctor together.

Morgan: Oh, my. [laughs]

LaToya: Mr. Dad. Morgan, Mr. Dad.

Morgan: Mr. Dad to the rescue. Mr. Dad, check me out, I'm Mr. Dad. [laughter] I was unwell. Angel has this conversation with a couple of moms who are in with their babies. And he's—he's showing them what's what. He's like, "Have you used, like, the vacuum noise to soothe your baby to sleep? Like, if it's too loud for your other kid, have you tried taping it and placing it by the crib?" What an expert. [laughs]

LaToya: Good job, Mr. Dad.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: Angel brought Wes basically because Wes has been holed up in his office for days. None of them have really even seen him until now. Of course, Wes is, like, just also being very attentive to Connor and making sure everything's on the up and up.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: But yeah, Angel is, like, trying to help Wes, you know, get out of this funk, 'cause he's in a—he's clearly in a mood. [laughs] He's that, like, really dark, sad guy around. [laughs]

Morgan: Yes. And I appreciate that this is something every—like, that has now, like, not escaped everybody. Like, you know, you play the version of the story where it's like—like, Fred and Gunn are too busy with each other. And Angel's too, like, busy being sad about Cordy to care. But no, everybody has noticed something is wrong with Wes. And I appreciate that, and I think that that—that's just—it says so much about, like, their bond with each other and how close of a family they are. And like, the fact that they do operate as this unit and if one of them falls, things do start to suffer, like, for the group. And that is what we see here, and it is very painful to watch. [laughs]

LaToya: And much like how everything Angel says is that, you know, you're gonna have to kill me one day. Every other thing he says is, "If there's anything I can do to help, tell me." To which Wes does not. [both laugh] But yeah, they're at—

Morgan: "I sure do love my son and would never hurt him, ever." [both laugh]

LaToya: But yeah, they're at the doctor because Angel's been hearing a wheeze slash gurgle when baby Connor is eating, which is digestion. [laughs]

Morgan: Oh, buddy. I wrote "cautious dad Angel" in a heart in my notes. Yeah, Connor's declared a happy—like, a healthy boy, as healthy as a human being can be. Wes kind of pipes in like, "He's normal, right?" Like—[both laugh]

LaToya: And Angel's like, "Don't ask that!" and he's like, "He's normal, right?" [both laugh]

Morgan: Oh my god, Wes, you can't just ask if a baby is normal. [both laugh] But he is, he's normal and it's all good. And they leave and you know what's not normal and all good? The fact that one of those moms from, like, the waiting room comes in and switches out Connor's blood.

LaToya: You can't trust anyone!

Morgan: Yeah, you truly can't. I did not care for that one bit. [both laugh]

LaToya: What is good is that Angel has gone on the web, to buy things. 2002, it's "the web."

Morgan: Ah, yes. So Angel has memorized Cordelia's credit card information and is using it to online shop. How nice of him. [both laugh]

LaToya: He gave her a wad of cash, it's okay.

Morgan: Oh, yeah, I guess if you consider that a credit, yeah. He has bought a bunch of stuff for Connor, including tiny little hockey sticks and a little jersey that is, like, custom made that says Connor on the back. Oh my god. I love this scene so much. Gunn comments that hockey is the whitest sport ever. [laughs]

LaToya: He has a point. But Angel also has a point, which is the night games and it's indoors.

Morgan: Oh my god, I screamed. And I love that Gunn's like, "Alright, fair." Angel says this thing...

[Clip from episode plays]

Angel: Okay, look, I know it's a little bit too early to be thinking about stuff like this. But I...I can't wait to watch him, you know, grow up. For him to lose his first tooth. Learn how to ride a bike. [chuckles] I just can't wait to see who he's gonna be. I know that's mushy, but he just—he makes me so happy.

Morgan: We watch Wes overhear this. And if you have somehow, through this episode—like, through the first, you know, seven minutes of this episode—not managed to feel crippling sadness for Wesley and the position that he's in. Watching him listen to his friend talk about, like, the joys of fatherhood that are yet to come to him, knowing what he knows. Um, ow! That hurt me. If you don't feel anything, you're made of stone! [laughs]

LaToya: Yeah. You can only assume it just makes him want to, like, find out that this translation is wrong even more, overhearing this. And he says a line which is, "I know that's mushy, but he just makes me so happy." And you have to imagine also, like...because I looked in the script.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: So in the script, it notes Wes's reaction for, like, most of that speech. But the difference between the script and the episode is that there's no—in the script, there's no reaction to the "makes me so happy" line, whereas in the episode, there is.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: Which makes me think, like, it's kind of a choice where Wes is also thinking in the back of his mind, well, a moment of true happiness. 'Cause I know we've had people ask us about that, specifically—

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: Connor being born, how couldn't that, you know, trigger a moment of true happiness.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: But here, he's talking about how he just makes him so happy. And with what Wes is seeing now with the father will kill the son, and how happy Angel is, and—you can only imagine. Maybe that's also factoring in, too, just in case this is true.

Morgan: Yeah. That is a really good point.

LaToya: And also, with the hockey stuff, I believe Boreanaz is a hockey bro, so that's also part of it.

Morgan: Oh, that's cute. Angel and Gunn play a little game and they almost immediately shatter a window. [laughs]

LaToya: And by they, you mean Angel. [laughing] It was Angel, he did it.

Morgan: Yeah. It was Angel.

LaToya: And also, while Angel is saying all the stuff about how much he loves his son and can't wait to—for him to grow up. Wes doesn't see this, but he is just casually drinking a big old glass of blood. Strangely, in a clear, big old glass. Not a mug like usual. Huh.

Morgan: Hm!

LaToya: Hm!

Morgan: Huh!

LaToya: Wesley's not seeing it, at least, now.

Morgan: Yeah. Interesting. So post-hockey, post-broken window, a potential customer walks in. Good that this woman ends up being a fake, because that would have been really unprofessional and a bad way to start off a relationship with a client. So—[laughs]

LaToya: But she is hot, and this is also how his relationship with Virginia began, too. So. [laughs]

Morgan: Yes. She is very hot.

LaToya: Yes, this actress is Wendy Davis, who is best known for playing Joan on Army Wives. The one who is married to Sterling K. Brown's character, who loved army more than she loved her family. I told you about her before.

Morgan: I have heard about her. I can't imagine loving army more than my husband Sterling K. Brown. Couldn't be me.

LaToya: At the end of the series, Sterling K. Brown makes her choose between army and her family. [laughs] If you listen to any vampire podcast I'm on, I will talk about Army Wives. That's just the way it is.

Morgan: Apparently, yeah. And I love hearing about Army Wives. So we cut to a scene, we're in the Hyperion lobby. Like, the whole team is assembled with this customer whose name is Aubrey. She explains that her son, Timothy, snuck out late at night, went out to the pier, and he came back before dawn, mean. Something was wrong with his face, he demanded to be let in. He was scaring her, and she didn't let him in. And when the sun rose, he burst into flames.

LaToya: Sounds like a vampire to me.

Morgan: Yeah. Kinda to me as well. And she is just really broken up, and she's like, "Should I have let him in? You know, what should I have done?" And Wes is like, "If you let him in, he would have killed you." And Gunn backs him up and is like, "That's not your son, that was something else." And Angel piles on and says, "Yeah, there's no turning back from becoming a vampire. Like, you're just this evil thing."

LaToya: And Wesley's like, hmm.

Morgan: Hmm. [laughs] So Wes—like, you know, when we're deciding what to do about this. You know, we're like, you know, maybe...we can't save this woman's son, but maybe we could save other people—

LaToya: Mmhmm.

Morgan: That the, you know, vampire or vampires who turned him might go after. So Wes sends Gunn to the pier for a recon-only mission. We have this moment where Gunn kind of bristles. Like, he's like, "No, I can go armed up and I can just, like, kill shit." And Wes is like, "No. That would be dangerous. Like, just go for recon." And Gunn is like, "Fine, but I'll bring Fred." So things are still testy between the two of them.

LaToya: It's interesting because in this case, unlike last episode, Wes isn't, like, doing something just to get rid of Gunn. This is, like, a legit, like, just go check it out, basically. He's—the whole—like, the whole gang's here so it's not even like he's having the time to think, "And this is how I'll get him away!"

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: It's literally like, "Gunn, like, just go check it out." 'Cause Gunn wants to, like, just go in, guns blazing, basically.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: And then, Gunn throws the Fred thing back in Wesley's face, when he's, like—Wes is not even thinking about that right now. He has other things on his plate.

Morgan: Yeah. And so this is a bummer, and this—so, to talk about, like, Gunn's state of mind. We've been firmly, like, you know, Team Gunn, in terms of the love triangle but also in terms of the fact that, like, last episode, Wes was being a dick. And it was not a good look and Gunn was just, you know, trying to enjoy his new relationship. [laughs] Like he is completely entitled to do. But this is getting—this, like—this is the first time I think Gunn is being, like, a little out of bounds. Like, I don't—it's an understandable reaction to last episode and the stuff that happened. But this has nothing to do with that. Like, this is reasonable, to say, you know—like, Wes is telling him to take care of himself and stay safe. And so we're seeing some of Gunn's, like, impulsivity, which later, Aubrey notes when she goes back to explain everything to Holtz.

LaToya: Mmhmm.

Morgan: Yeah. So we—[laughs] I wanna say, we cut to what I describe in my notes as a bad guy meeting. [both laugh] So we reveal that Aubrey works for Holtz. I write in my notes, “Holtz shaved and it’s bad.” I can’t believe I prefer the goatee, but I prefer the goatee. [laughs]

LaToya: Because it’s that plus the leather jacket. Keep the goatee.

Morgan: Yeah, this—the new look was not good. And this is where Aubrey says that thing about, like, you know, maybe we can use Gunn’s impulsiveness. She has all these pictures of Team Angel. She’s kind of outlining, like, this is Fred. Like, don’t know if she’s a fighter. Like—and this is Wes, he seems like the books guy, and all of that stuff. And it is worrisome—

LaToya: Yeah, she—

Morgan: That they’ve gotten this close already.

LaToya: She notes that Wes is the boss, that like, he’s in charge of everything. I’ve noted that Angel, his picture—like, it says specifically “Angelus” on it, of course.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Of course.

Morgan: Of course.

LaToya: Just this scene alone, I’m like, make Aubrey the right hand woman instead of Justine?

Morgan: Yes? She is very compelling—

Kristin: Dude, yes! Yes! [laughter] Yes! I’m so sorry. I didn’t mean to jump in, I’m gonna jump right out, but I couldn’t contain myself. I had the same thought. Why is Aubrey not playing the character of Justine?

LaToya: Yeah.

Kristin: It’s correct.

LaToya: It’s—

Kristin: I am a third in this camp. [laughter] 'Kay, continue, goodbye.

Morgan: [sarcastically] Well, I'm sorry, but Justine found Aubrey when she went and walked out on the streets of Los Angeles [LaToya laughs] looking for people with sad eyes. So don't you wanna give a little bit of credit to her? [laughs]

LaToya: Who in LA doesn't have sad eyes? [laughs]

Morgan: Again, I was like, you will end up with *me* as your recruit, and I will *not* kill Angel! [both laugh] I won't do it! So in this—like, so we cut to another scene in what I've described as "Holtz's house." [both laugh]

LaToya: Really? You didn't even put any effort, 'cause I called it Holtz's fighty mansion.

Morgan: Oh, that's cute. I love the—I love alliteration. I just—it makes me laugh every time. Justine's like, "Well, why would, like, anyone work with a vampire?" And Holtz is like, "I mean, I made a deal with a demon once. Things aren't always black and white." And I'm like, bitch! [laughs] You're the most "things are black and white" person there is. And—

LaToya: Well, it's interesting—

Morgan: So Justine points that out, yeah.

LaToya: Yeah. The whole "things aren't always black and white," which is, like—this is why she needs to be younger. Because if you have to explain it to this grown-ass woman? What the fuck? [both laugh] And also, it's really funny. 'Cause he says, "I'm sure they believe their reasons are good, however misguided." Which I'm like, I do like the fact he doesn't necessarily begrudge the members of Team Angel. But then, my other note is, in all caps, "pot, kettle, black." To him and all of these people. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah, abso-fucking-lutely. And yeah, so Justine is like, "Yeah, well, what about Angel?" And he goes, "Yeah, no, Angel, he's evil. He's bad, he's all the way bad." [laughs] And I'm like—

LaToya: Like, how can they see and read in this dark-ass room? [both laugh]

Morgan: Fools. We have a moment where, I guess for training purposes, they have these vampires chained up? And they fight them, and one gets loose and Justine has to, you know, be a badass and like, stab it and get it re-chained. And Holtz is

so proud of her, and I am like, are they gonna have sex? [laughter] Like, truly. Like, I cannot understand the vibe between these characters, these actors. Like, it remains not working for me. And again, don't wanna yuck anybody's yum. If this is working for ya, more power to you. But...I don't care for it one bit. [laughs] Luckily, Sahjhan shows up to, you know, give some—to give things a little bit of levity. [laughs] And Justine, like, tries to stab him but he's incorporeal, ha-ha. He tries to pressure Holtz into, you know, getting to it and doing his bidding. But Holtz is like, "You can't fucking do anything. Like, not only are you incorporeal, but if you could have done something about me not listening to you, you would have done it already. Like, it's clear that you need me to do the work for you and that you have to be a bystander in all of this. So, uh, I'm not scared of you."

LaToya: I mean. Ten points to Holtz, honestly, he figured that shit out. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah and like, alright, fair enough. Like, good for him. And like, Sahjhan tries to bait him. He even brings up his dead wife! [laughs]

LaToya: Yeah. And this is, like, the first time we get confirmation of exactly what they did to the baby, 'cause that was a question. 'Cause obviously they weren't gonna show that.

Morgan: Fair enough, yes. And Holtz, like, you know, not to be trifled with, threatens Sahjhan right back. He's like, "Look, I'll trap you in a fucking magic urn for eternity. I don't give a shit." And Sahjhan is, like, you know, appropriately scared and leaves, but he does say that this isn't over. Our next scene is in Wes's office. He's on—[laughing] he's having a phone call with a wizard.

LaToya: Of course, as you do. He's asking the wizard for help. He's also paying the wizard, so he better fucking help.

Morgan: Yeah, come on. So Fred comes in and at first Wes is like, "What?!" Like, you know, like, "what do you want?!" [both laugh] And she's like, "I'm here to give you a compliment." [both laugh] And he's like, oh shit. Like, I'm a piece of shit—like, you can just see him be like, oh god. And he's [sic] like, "You were really there for, like, that woman, Aubrey. Like, you were really good with her." And he's like, "Aww, well, thanks." And he, like, smiles and it's very nice. It's nice to see him not brooding. [laughs] And she's like, "Why don't you get outta here? Like, you know, you've been cooped up in here so long." And he kind of starts to lighten up, like, wow, it's so nice that, you know, Fred—who happens to be my crush—is, like, saying nice things to me and taking an interest in my wellbeing. And then she's like, "Yeah, you should get outta here. With Aubrey, 'cause she's really pretty." [LaToya laughs] Ughh!

LaToya: And that's when he turns, and that's when I have to turn on Wes again for this episode. Because, like, oh no, Fred's only being nice to him as his friend! How dare she! Like, does he think she's being nice to him in any way other than platonic? Like, what does he think is happening here?

Morgan: Yes. I—I agree, but I will say, like, I—he says, "We're not here to date. We're here to do a job. So why don't you, like, go do yours at the pier?" Which, I write in my notes, kind of a dick move, but I'm willing to let it slide because there is so much dead son stress. Like, it feels—while it definitely has—you know, it's not unrelated to his feelings for her and all of that stuff. I would argue that, like, he's under a lot of dead son stress. But yeah, it—you're right, it does suck. Like—

LaToya: Like, imagine him saying that to Cordy and see what happens.

Morgan: Oh, yeah, I mean, Cordy would bite his head off. [both laugh] Like, yeah, I just think that he's—it hits too close to home and he doesn't have the emotional bandwidth to deal with it. And that is—while it comes from a good place from Fred, like, we acknowledge later that Fred knows Wes had feelings for her. You know, she's not oblivious to this. Like, I do think that is—I think that's a bad move on her part too. Like, she should not—like, and I think that as a friend, it's a bad move. Like, don't tell someone who likes you to date someone else, like, when you work together, at work. Like, that also just feels, like, too messy. [laughs] Like, I think everybody—everybody's being far too messy. [both laugh]

LaToya: Messy, messy, messy.

Morgan: Our next scene takes place at Wolfram & Hart. We're with Lilah. It opens unexpectedly—

LaToya: Mmhmm.

Morgan: With Lilah on the phone with her mom, who is, like, crying, who doesn't seem to know who she called or why Lilah, you know, can't come over to her. Lilah has to explain that she can't come, she's in Los Angeles. Like, it's, um...it's a new color on Lilah. And it's sad.

LaToya: Yeah, and all really Lilah has to offer her for help is money, honestly. And—

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: This is really only, like, the second time we've gotten any context into who Lilah is outside of work. And the first was Untouched in Season 2, but even that was still related to Wolfram & Hart, you know. It was also written by Mary Smith.

Morgan: Oh, wow. Oh, very cool. I have—you know, it's no secret I love Lilah. I [both laugh] enjoy—I enjoy this, like, this definition of her. Like, it—I think it's really beautifully played by Stephanie Romanov. Because I think there's a world where she plays it like super soft and really troubled by it. But instead, there's something about it that's still very much, like, "I'm at work. I'm at a distance. There isn't much I can literally do." So she's, like, playing this shade of being affected by it, but also very much with, like, a wall up and with, like, a fair amount of distance and kind of iciness. And I just—I think it's—it's really good. Like, everything they do with Lilah is usually, like, kind of removed, and you know, she isn't, you know, in our, like—she isn't number two on the call sheet. But I just appreciate everything that they do with her to develop her, like, piece by piece. I think it's so well done. And she's so pretty. [both laugh]

LaToya: Agreed and agreed. And then Sahjhan pops in.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: So...and she isn't surprised by him. And he's, like—he's surprised that she's not surprised.

Morgan: Yeah. I absolutely love it so much. Yeah, she's like, let's cut to the chase. And he—and she kind of says, "Look, I get what you want. But it's Wolfram & Hart policy to let Angel live." But then she writes on a little notepad—on a legal pad, "Count me in" in big letters. So she is willing to take down Angel, with Sahjhan. Love, love this. So shady. So wonderful.

LaToya: So very, very shady. And of course, she knows who he is because of files and records downstairs. [both laugh] And Sahjhan's like, "I need something very rare and valuable." And it's—like, the joke is—like, you see it coming a mile away.

Morgan: Oh, yeah, and it's still great. He's like, "Yeah, it might be almost impossible to get." And he's like, "Connor's blood." And she's like, "Got it." He goes, "Got it?!" [both laugh] Amazing. And she's like, "Yeah. It's like, really normal blood though. Nothing cool about it." And Sahjhan's like, "That's because, like, your people do not know what they're looking for."

LaToya: Hmm.

Morgan: Hmm. Our next scene's at the pier. We're with Gunn and Fred, and Fred—like, you know—her ears ringing with, you know, Wes's command to stay professional—is like, "Let's work. Like, you know, we gotta stay on task and do everything we're supposed to do." Whereas Gunn is like, "Ooh! Ring toss!" [both laugh] Himbo excellence.

LaToya: And he's like, "Fred, win me something." [laughs]

Morgan: I almost died. Like, he was like, "I'll be macho and win something. Never mind, you be the macho one." I am writing hearts all over my notes. He's like, "Win me a bunny!" I am—I'm melting. So Fred is like, "Hey, but we're supposed to be working." Gunn gets really annoyed with Wes and says...

[Clip from episode plays]

Gunn: Actually, this was my job. Wes never said to bring you along. Probably wanted me out and about so he could chat up my girl.

Fred: Wesley wouldn't do that. I'm your girl? Wes knows about us and you knew he knew and you didn't let me know?

Morgan: This is, I think, the moment where, like, finally, we start to deal a little bit more with, like, Fred's point of view—

LaToya: Mmhmm.

Morgan: On this whole thing. Which I appreciate, that we're finally in a spot to hear what she thinks about this. I kind of wish we could have heard more, but still, it's like, at least we're getting something. How did you feel about...

LaToya: Well, yeah, like I said, this is why communication is key. Because again, after last week, Gunn thinks that Wes sent him out on a wild goose chase—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Like they did last week. But yeah, the wild goose chase had tree branches sucking him in, so maybe it's good.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: But yeah, so now he's upset about the thing that was happening last time, [both laughing] when it's not happening this time. But, you know. And as for the

Fred of it all, yeah, she should have known—instead of having this little macho pissing contest that they started.

Morgan: Yeah, and—

LaToya: 'Cause she was, like, internalizing things [laughs] without even knowing why they were happening.

Morgan: Yeah, and I gotta say, I was a little bit bummed because he's like—Gunn is like, "Okay, Wes said something to you. Did you tell him that we're adults and it's none of his business?" And Fred's like, "Um..." And I—like, at that, I was kind of a little bit annoyed at. 'Cause I'm like, well, that's not necessarily fair. Like, that's her boss. Like, and while they—while, like, everyone is friends here, like, this is awkward. And like, if she, you know, didn't have it in her in that moment to, like, stand up to Wes, you don't wanna, like, make her feel bad about that, do you, man? [laughs]

LaToya: Also, yeah, she's new to the group. She doesn't have, like—she's not as close to Wes as, like, they are. And she doesn't feel comfortable enough to, like, challenge him the way, like, the rest of them would, you know?

Morgan: Yes. I feel really, like, sad. And I feel really bad for Fred. And she's like, "Look, maybe we should just, like, work at work." Which is, you know, like, reasonable. And Gunn is like, "No, come on. Maybe it's selfish, but I want both. Like, I want us to be able to have it all." Which is also really sweet and lovely. Even if maybe I wonder how realistic it could be. And he's like, "Come on, let's go, like, look for vampires." And I write in my notes, this is weird. Talk more! [both laugh] Like, I'm like, you're not done having this conversation. [both laugh] Again, the antithesis of television drama, me just screaming, "talk some more. Air this out fully. Be healthy." [laughs]

LaToya: Again, that's why you gotta watch In Treatment. [both laugh]

Morgan: You're absolutely right.

LaToya: [laughing] It has everything you want in a television show. It's just talking out their feelings and problems.

Morgan: [laughs] Our next scene takes place in the Hyperion lobby. Angel's playing with Connor, Wes is on his way out. And Angel is like, "Hey. What is going on?" [both laugh] "'Cause, uh, your vibe is visibly off." [laughs]

LaToya: Angel being the one to point out when someone's just, like—they're clearly being a little weirdo. A little dark weirdo. [both laugh]

Morgan: Hello? I don't know this man.

LaToya: 'Cause Angel surprisingly is not sulking nonstop now that Cordy's gone. 'Cause again, he has his son.

Morgan: Yeah. Like, he has this thing that makes him want to be alive. And it's so lovely and it's so nice to see him being a good friend. Which I'm sure makes everything for Wes even harder. And Wes, like, you know, brushes off his question. And Angel's like, "Look, I just wanna thank you for being a good friend." Like, just twisting that knife! [both laugh]

LaToya: The episode's titled Loyalty! [both laugh]

Morgan: Ahh! I want to lay face-down on the floor and yell. We go back to the pier, it is nighttime now. And Fred's like, "Hey, it's night. Should we get outta here?" [laughs] And—but Gunn's spidey sense is tingling. And they—he's like, "Something weird is going on here." And we see someone breaking into the carousel. Gunn is like, "Come on, let's finish this now." And Fred is like, "I don't know, what if we left now?" [laughs]

LaToya: Um, yeah, Gunn saying there's, like, a tingle. Is there, like—could he not say "spidey sense?" Was that, like, a...a rights thing?

Morgan: I wonder if it's a rights thing or if they didn't wanna make—or if they, like, felt that was, like, too nerdy for him? But given, like, that recently, the whole joke in the, like, Marvel Spiderman movies is like, calling his spidey sense, like, "the Peter tingle." [LaToya laughs] This felt particularly nerdy to me anyways. [laughs]

LaToya: By trying not to be nerdy, it got nerdier.

Morgan: So the carousel starts up. And suddenly, they are surrounded by vampires, and it was not a good idea to do this.

LaToya: Yes, this is one of those very vivid memory set pieces that I have for this season.

Morgan: Oh, yeah.

LaToya: Yeah, spooky carousel with vampires just popping up.

Morgan: I love a spooky carousel. Like, that is good spooky stuff. The Punisher has, like, a big carousel fight scene that absolutely rules. So I'm fond of a carousel set piece. We go to commercial, we come back. We reveal that Justine and one of her and Holtz's goons are hiding away and taping this. Gunn is like, "Hey, Fred. Leave. [laughs] Like, go when I say." He's gonna fight all the vampires himself. Yikes. Fred does leave, seemingly. There's a big fight and Gunn is...not gonna make it. Like, it just—like, he is outnumbered pretty vastly. And it's really scary for a second. And Fred ends up running back and saving him, and like, thank goodness she did! Or else he probably would have died.

LaToya: Oh, yeah, he very much would have died. Wes was right? [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah! Wes was right. And it's interesting because, like, Justine and this other guy, they're like, "Should we do something?" and Justine's like, "No, no, we're just here to observe," you know? So I guess they—I guess she maybe doesn't have the sympathy for Team Angel that Holtz kind of has.

LaToya: Or, you know, this guy, who's clearly not brainwashed enough to [laughs] wanna just let them die, so.

Morgan: [laughs] Yeah, fair enough. So Justine, like, you know, watches the save and is like, "Ah, would you look at that?" So now we have it confirmed that Fred can do a little bit of fighting. And Gunn is like, "Why are you here? Like, why'd you come here?" And Fred's like, "Because I've got your back!" [laughs] They smooch, they hug. It's sweet. It's really nice. Like, it's—they're so lovely. They remain so cute. The next scene is less cute. But it's not entirely devoid of cuteness, because Wes—on his, you know, like, mystical quest with directions from the wizard—arrives at a statue, as it was described. But it is a statue of an anthropomorphic hamburger for a, like, burger drive-thru.

LaToya: Called Jolly Burger.

[Clip from episode plays]

[mystical sounds]

Deep voice: How dare you call on the Loa?

Morgan: I—I couldn't handle this guy. [laughs]

LaToya: It is, uh, quite wild. It's a moment. That's also something that sticks in my brain.

Morgan: Oh, how could it not? Yeah, do you recall your first viewing of the big burger? [laughs]

LaToya: Yeah. Wesley's talking to a big old burger! [laughing] That was my first memory and, like—I was thinking, like, he's talking to a burger! What's happening on this show? What is the tone? Teenage me was asking.

Morgan: [laughs] Ugh, such reasonable, already, like, great TV critic questions teenage you is asking. [laughs]

LaToya: [laughing] Fourteen-year-old me is asking, what is this tone?

Morgan: Love it. So big burger says in his booming voice...

[Clip from episode plays]

Deep voice: You have answers, human. You search now only for the question.

Morgan: Which is what Angel said in Wes's dream. And Wes is like, "Okay. Will Angel kill his son? And the burger is like, "Yeah." [laughs] And Wes is like, "Okay. Well, how do I stop it?" And the burger's like, "You can't!" and zaps him!

LaToya: Morgan, Morgan, Morgan.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Have you learned nothing from me? The burger doesn't just say, "yeah." The burger's exact words are—

Morgan: Please.

LaToya: That the vampire would devour his child is certain. Everyone, put that in your Shanshu prophecies, please.

Morgan: Mmm. The burger even goes so far as, after that, saying that, you know, "Maybe I should just kill you, Wesley. You know, betrayal and agony lie in wait for you." And Wes is kind of like, alright. Like, might as well fucking kill me. Like, which absolutely breaks my heart.

LaToya: Is this where you cried? During the burger scene? [laughs]

Morgan: Nope. No, I did not cry during the burger scene. [both laugh] But I probably got misty during the burger scene, 'cause it's me. So Wesley's like, "Okay, when is this going to happen?"

LaToya: "This—the first portent shall shake the earth. The second will burn the air. The last will turn the sky to blood." And Wesley's like, "An earthquake? That's the first portent? We live in California!" [both laugh]

Morgan: Big burger turns back into a little burger. And Wes is left alone and unsettled. So we cut to a bar. Lilah's there. She gets a scotch. I write in my notes, she's so hot. Is this when she's in her red outfit? It was a great outfit.

LaToya: Why would you ask me? You know I'm not gonna remember that. [laughs]

Morgan: I know. She had a red outfit in this episode, and it was—

LaToya: Probably, I guess?

Morgan: Amazing. I loved it. Sahjhan shows up and Lilah's like, "Cool. Just want you to know that the plan is on. Bye!" And he's like, "Come on! Like, don't you wanna talk? Like, would it impress you that I invented daylight savings?" And I'm like, no, it wouldn't. And Lilah's like, "God, what do you want?" Like, she's just like, ugh, this sucks. Why do you want Angel dead? And like, they kind of, like, both admit that they have history with him and that it's not easy. And Lilah's like, "Okay, well, all you need to know is that the plan has started." Now, I think we might have a little bit more information on Lilah and what she may be wearing from a certain corner?

[KRISTIN'S CORNER jingle plays]
Kristin's Corner! Kristin's Corner!
It's all Riley sucks and what the fuck
And horny is hot
Kristin's Corner is the place
For very deep thoughts

Kristin: Oh, hey. First of all—

Morgan: Hi!

Kristin: First of all, LaToya, why was your immediate response, “Why would you ask me that, I would never know what Lilah is wearing?” Do you—are you not—

LaToya: I would never know what—I never know what anyone’s wearing when Morgan’s like, “and they’re wearing—” I’m like, I didn’t pay attention to this, I don’t care. [laughs]

Kristin: Well, I just think that’s an interesting—you know what I mean? Like, some people are like, noting the clothing—like, attracted to the clothing on a person. But I feel like that indicates—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

Kristin: That you are looking somewhere else. It’s not about the clothing for LaToya. So—

LaToya: Yeah—

Morgan: That’s beautiful.

LaToya: When I look at Lilah, I never think about the clothing. I just think about what’s underneath. [laughter]

Morgan: Just her and her beautiful soul?

LaToya: Yeah, her beautiful soul. [laughter] I’m thinking about Lilah’s big, flawless soul.

[laughter]

Kristin: Wow, I mean—

Morgan: [simultaneously] Big, heaving, natural soul.

[laughter]

Kristin: If my purpose in this Corner was simply to get LaToya to talk about imagining what’s underneath Lilah’s outfit, then I have succeeded. I don’t know if I’ll top this one. [laughter] She’s wearing—this is—

LaToya: [simultaneously, laughing] And I don’t know if I’ll top Lilah.

Kristin: This—[laughter] this is not the red outfit, Morgan. This is—she’s wearing kind of a lilac, like—

Morgan: Lilac for Lilah.

Kristin: I think it’s a suit. It’s very dimly lit in this bar.

Morgan: Mmm.

Kristin: But it’s sort of like a lilac, dark purple maybe, suit. So like, a jacket over a sweater, perhaps?

Morgan: Right.

Kristin: This is a great episode for Lilah. There’s a couple of things that I would love to say. One is—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

Kristin: All I want in the universe is a spinoff series of Sahjhan and Lilah. [laughter] I think that they are definitely—

LaToya: The dream team?

Kristin: They’re the dream team. They are, like—the, like—like, Sahjhan trying to joke and fucking Lilah not having any bit of it. And like, her knowing shit—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

Kristin: That he didn’t know and him being like, “You’re such a Gen Zer and I’m such a boomer.” Like, it’s like—[Morgan laughs] there’s just, like, a generational gap that they’re fucking struggling with. And anyway. So I request that, and then the second thing is that you just—you just ran right by the first scene between Lilah and Sahjhan, where fucking Lilah, leaning back in her chair, is like—

[Clip from episode plays]

Lilah: Great. Let's shorthand. You're a time-shifter. You recruited Holtz in the eighteenth's century, put him on ice for a couple hundred years, so he could pop up and stake Angel when he's least expecting it. But considering that I have yet to put on my boogie-shoes and dance on Angel's pile of dust,

I'm imagining that Holtz isn't working fast enough for you. Which leads me to believe, you think my firm could expedite the process.

Kristin: She says "boogie shoes" and she still...is so hot. And that is the essence of Lilah Morgan. That, that. And that is why I love her and why I don't remember if I chose her for my Fuck Watch, but when you get there, just imagine the ethereal Kristin, choosing—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Lilah saying "boogie shoes" as my Fuck Watch pick. Thank you for listening. Thank you for giving me my Corner. I will now retreat. Retreat—I guess you can't retreat from a corner. You kind of escape from a corner, right? You can't go any—

Morgan: Yeah.

Kristin: You can't retreat any more. [Morgan laughs] I'm already as retreated as I can be, I have a corner, so.

Morgan: So maybe we retreat from your corner.

Kristin: [laughing] Yeah, yeah—

Morgan: Leave me alone! Get away from my corner!

LaToya: You're keeping us hostage in your corner. [laughter]

Kristin: Oh! One more thing, and I don't have to keep this in the episode, but I just—Morgan, I thought that your question on if Wesley is making the right decision—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

Kristin: By not telling Angel was such a good and important question. And like, my—the immediate thing that came to my mind is that the minute that he tells Angel and the minute that Angel finds out, Angel won't have these moments with Connor anymore. Regardless if he's gonna—like, regardless if he kills Connor or not, like, he will only be able to be afraid that he will kill his son. And so for that reason, as fucked up as it is that, like, you know, Angel doesn't know this and can't, like, work on it. I think—

Morgan: Yeah.

Kristin: Probably the biggest gift that Wesley could give him is that he's preserving some of these moments that he has with his son. So.

Morgan: Yeah, I think that's really sweet. And I'm gonna end your really sweet thing by saying, do you know if Lilah and I got married, my name would be Morgan Morgan.

LaToya: [takes deep breath] Boo!

[Morgan laughs]

Kristin: So you should do it. Just like Angel's—I know Angel's name isn't Angel Angel, but I forgot that his first name had been falsely been put down as Heraldo. [laughter] And so when I saw Connor's blood, I was like, wait. So...is he Angel Angel? [laughter] Angel Angel and Morgan Morgan. Okay, get the fuck out of my corner.

[laughter]

[KRISTIN'S CORNER jingle plays]
Kristin's Corner! Kristin's Corner!

LaToya: So contentious.

Morgan: [laughs] The feud rages on.

LaToya: Ah. But yeah, she wants to know what he wants with Angel. And he's like, "I have my reasons."

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: "We have our history." [laughs] People think she's, like, talking to nobody, right?

Morgan: I know—yeah, 'cause if he's incorporeal, yeah, she just—if he is only visible to her, she must look quite silly. I was thinking and wondering—I'm sure it'll be revealed to us what Sahjhan's beef is with Angel. But since he can travel through space and through dimensions, I like to imagine that it's a future beef with Angel, and that in, like, 2080, Angel stole Sahjhan's parking space [both laughing] and he's forever furious.

LaToya: Angel double parked, 'cause that's what Angel does. And—'cause like, Angel doesn't know anything about the Sahjhan of it all with all the Holtz stuff.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: He knows, like, something brought Holtz back. He doesn't know what—who it was or anything like that.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: I'm sure he's ruled out it being Wolfram & Hart. They already, like, did that with the Darla thing. He's like, they wouldn't just repeat the same old tricks. [both laugh]

Morgan: Yeah, you don't just try that again. But yeah, it's an interesting scene between our two—like, both of them are, like, keeping their cards pretty close. Like, neither of them wants to reveal anything to the other that they don't have to, even though they're working together. And that's how you know that they're both, you know, professionals at doing shady shit.

LaToya: But yeah, the plan has...already started. Ooh.

Morgan: Pew-pew-pew. [laughs]

LaToya: Now we got Wes—[laughing] sleepy old Wes, creepy old Wes—staring at a baby.

Morgan: Uh, and Aubrey comes in, is like, sorry to interrupt your weird staring. And she thanks him. She gives him a check. And, like, Wes kind of almost catches her in something, being like—she's like, "Thanks for killing all those vampires." And he's like, "How did you know there was more than one?" And she's like, "You said it might be a nest?" and he's like, "Oh, okay." [laughs]

LaToya: Is this where we do our fantasy booking? 'Cause what I like is that if we have her early in the season as, like, a client, we don't learn that she's working for Holtz for a while.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: So maybe she and Wes do have a little thing. [laughs]

Morgan: That would be nice. I just—I would love—just, like, I do agree. Like, Wes needs to go outside. Wes needs to touch grass. [both laugh] Please. Aubrey's like, "Are you okay? Like, also, would you like to get coffee?" And I'm like, someone else likes broken men! [both laugh]

LaToya: It's like, we know she's faking, but at the same time, like, yes, do it, Wesley! [laughs]

Morgan: Do it!

LaToya: This is good for you. [both laugh]

Morgan: And so Wes is finally like, you know what? You're good. And Angel pops up and is like, "You set us up." He's like, "I liked the, like, calling me lonely thing." And they are pissed. They know it was Holtz. Angel says...

[Clip from episode plays]

Angel: You're right to protect him. Holtz is one of the good guys. He has every right to hate me. And if he ever comes close to any of my people ever again, or tries to touch a hair on my son's head, I'll kill him and anyone who gets in the way. You might wanna mention that.

LaToya: It's interesting. You'd think more of Holtz's people would start to question his methods, like the guy who was—like, when Justine wouldn't let him help. Or even Aubrey here, 'cause she seems confused when Angel says "Holtz is one of the good guys and he has every right to hate me." Like, she's like, wait. And you're not gonna kill me? Like—[laughs]

Morgan: Yeah, it's interesting. And we now have seen, like, two of Holtz's cronies kind of have experiences where it seems like Holtz is—Holtz and Justine are much worse than Angel is. So I wonder if that is something—like, I mean, he says it's not all black and white. But I hope that they can maybe—maybe some of them can see the light.

LaToya: I mean, he only said it to Justine. He probably should have given that speech to everyone? He was just, like, doing his whisper thing to Justine. So only she heard that—

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: In the darkness.

Morgan: So I know you've kind of discussed Holtz is like a cult leader—

LaToya: Mmhmm.

Morgan: Like, building up a following. And the thing is, like, with a cult, there's something positive that keeps you coming back to the cult. [laughs] And I'm like, what's fun about being in this cult? [LaToya laughs] Like, you know—like, there's like, positive affirmations or you, like, get drugs or you have, like, weird orgies or something. Like, there's reasons to, like, stay in cults. And I'm like, what are these people getting other than, I guess like, community because they're very broken and alone?

LaToya: Yeah. It's—

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: 'Cause it's a grief cult and like, revenge is basically their version of "yay." Like, they have the vampires they can beat up all the time. That's their fun, basically.

Morgan: Ugh. [laughs]

LaToya: Like, eradicating vampires, that's like, the good part for them. [laughs]

Morgan: Alright, worst cult ever. [both laugh] Check out CW's *Cult* for a better cult. I have not seen it.

LaToya: [laughs, simultaneously] I prefer my cults to be all about kombucha. [both laugh]

Morgan: Allegedly.

LaToya: Allegedly, it was a cult.

Morgan: So then, there is a little baby earthquake and Wes is fucking horrified because what if this is the one?

LaToya: So Holtz is looking back at the footage of Fred and Gunn, showing them, you know, Fred survived because she was prepared to die for the cause. And they have to be even *more* prepared to die for the cause. [laughing] I don't really know

how you get to be more—like, that seems like just being reckless and foolish when you're fighting.

Morgan: I don't think there's like—yeah. I fully agree. I was like, this isn't good. He's like, "You have to study this video a bunch." I'm like, I don't there's, like—she just kinda runs in. [both laugh]

LaToya: She runs in and help—like, just be good at being a partner and don't cut and run.

Morgan: Yeah. And then Aubrey returns and is like, "Hey, so! [laughing] Things didn't really go to plan." And we reveal that Wes followed her there, and now Wes is at Holtz's house. Or—what—did you call it Holtz's fighty mansion?

LaToya: Yeah, his fighty mansion. [laughs]

Morgan: Some guy try—really tries it and Wes punches him in the face.

LaToya: The fact that—I mean, obviously Wes has become a better fighter—we know this—over the years.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: But he's just so much tougher than any of Holtz's band of losers. That is scathing. [laughs]

Morgan: That is hot to me. [laughs]

LaToya: And you know what? It tracks, based on what we have seen from Wes over the years. Like, he is at that level where he is actually a badass, even if he's like, you know—when he's still goofy Wes, we know he can hold his own. But just watching him completely, like, wreck this guy's shit, immediately. Holtz, you need—you need, maybe, more than people just who are sad. [both laugh]

Morgan: Again, just stop the first couple of people with sad eyes and cardigans that you found in Los Angeles is not enough!

LaToya: You know who Holtz should have recruited? [both laughing] And I don't think Kristin will be happy about this. And I don't know if anyone will be happy about this, when I say it. It's Riley Finn. [both laugh] I mean, there are multiple ways you could have gone with Riley Finn. And I think the Holtz direction is one way.

Morgan: I mean, he does hate Angel.

LaToya: It's probably, like—besides, obviously, the casting issues, a money thing. If they could get, like, Kate and also Riley Finn. And like, get like—a third one. It's basically like an alpha version of the Trio. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah. I like that idea. Like, a Suicide Squad, if you will, of—you know, like—former people from the Angel, like, rogues gallery—

LaToya: Yes.

Morgan: So to speak. Like, I love that as a thing and I love that as an idea. Like, it can be so fun. It—there's a—

LaToya: That's right, guys.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: I came up with a great idea that involves bringing back Kate Lockley and Riley Finn. Suck it. That's how good I am at storytelling. Someone staff me, please.

Morgan: Well, if Holtz needed an army, like, given how things ended in That Gang of Mine [sic], like, the idea—like, Gunn's friends could not be, like, particularly happy with Team Angel. So.

LaToya: Yeah, Rondell? Like, he would—I could see him teaming up with Holtz. And that would actually be, like, a really good thing. 'Cause you know, one thing they need is leadership, to the point they let Gio, who was brand new, take over the crew.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: Like, Rondell doesn't see himself as a leader, clearly.

Morgan: Yeah, and they're searching for someone to kind of center things around and they have this beef that they have with Angel. And this kind of—this issue seeing the—like, seeing things as anything other than black and white and like, seeing the middle with it. Like, that is kind of what some of their—a lot of their conflict has been about—[crosstalk]

LaToya: Ooh, this is really good. I'm so glad I came up with this. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah. [laughs] Look, Suicide Squad always works. It's always good. As evidenced by every iteration of the story [both laughing] ever told in cinema. So yeah, Wes punches that guy. Whew! So Wes is like, "Hey, guys. Maybe you don't fucking know, but Angel has a soul. He's a good person. Like, you should not be trying to do this." And Holtz is like, "I don't give a shit that he has a soul. I want justice."

LaToya: Yeah, uh...he's like, "He's a good man." And he's like, "He's not even a man." Like, yeah, yeah, yeah. And Wesley's like, "You know what? Angel's no more responsible for the crimes of Angelus than I am, why don't you just fucking take me then?" [laughs]

Morgan: Again, like—for the second time in the episode, it is pointed out that maybe Wes just wants to die. [both laugh]

LaToya: Yeah, at this point, he's like, come on. [both laugh]

Morgan: I am hurting. And Holtz is like, "No. Like, I won't take you." And he's like, "I guess you're here because you're afraid Angel's gonna kill his child? And I just want you to know, you're right. He probably will." And—ow! Don't care for that, don't care for that. Holtz is like, you know, "The work that I'm doing to try to kill Angel will protect that baby. Like, come on. Like, I'm doing the right thing here." And Wes is like—

LaToya: [sarcastically] "Ohh, you just care about a baby." [laughing] Like, he gets real sarcastic voice about it.

Morgan: Yes, I wrote in my notes, "Wes, LOL, no." [both laugh] And Holtz is like, "Okay, cool, then it's war." [both laugh] Great, yes. When you're the guy declaring war, that's how you know you're the good guy, the righteous person. And like, predicting a bloodbath, great guy. Very cool. And Wes is like, "That's not war, that's revenge." And this is where Justine decides to interject and is like, "What's wrong with revenge?" [laughs]

LaToya: Yeah, and this is where I write, Alexis and Keith are doing so well. And then she pops in, like, "I'm a cool girl!" It feels like she's trying to strike out from the kids' table. [both laughing] Only, again, she's not a kid.

Morgan: Yes. It—I fully agree and I think we even said it before when we were kind of talking about the idea of the, like, warped Slayer/Watcher dynamic. She

should be younger. Like—and I get that, like, you don't want that to feel creepy, to a certain extent. But he's a bad guy.

LaToya: [simultaneously] I mean, it's The WB. She should probably be younger. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah. It already feels creepy right now.

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: Like, you haven't avoided it feeling creepy. So it might as well feel creepy successfully.

LaToya: [simultaneously] It is creepy. So just let it be creepy. [both laugh]

Morgan: Yeah, sometimes things are creepy. Like, especially when it's bad guys. So, yeah—

LaToya: He's literally grooming her. That's what is happening. I think it works better if the scene is just the two of them going back and forth and like, that button. I think—I think the Justine detour in the scene is unnecessary.

Morgan: Yeah, I think it does kind of, like, throw a wrench in things and it kind of ends up falling a little flatter than it should. But it's still, I think—the power of this scene is really strong. Like, what Wes is going through is very fucked up. [laughs] Our next scene's at the diner with Gunn and Fred. And this is where Gunn has, like, had some time to process. And he's like, "Look, I've been thinking. And I'm not mad at Wes."

LaToya: To which—

Morgan: "He's under a lot of pressure."

LaToya: [laughing] To which I say in my notes, "If only he said this to Wes so we can—all caps—heal!" [both laugh]

Morgan: Ugh, don't you wanna heal? God, I could go for some healing.

LaToya: I'm now on the Morgan train where I'm like, just talk! [both laugh] Obviously, the point is for Wes to feel isolated, for all this to happen. But yeah, Gunn really should tell Wes this too. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah. Like, I'm glad you have had this realization. But the next step is telling Wes you've had it.

LaToya: Reconnect with your best friend!

Morgan: Please!

LaToya: I miss the lads!

Morgan: Ugh. I miss—I miss their movie podcast. So Fred is like, "Look, have you changed your mind? Like, you don't wanna have it all and, like, be with me and do the job?" And I love Gunn in this scene so much. He says, "What if it doesn't work?" and Fred says, "What if Wes makes us choose?" And then Gunn opens up.

[Clip from episode plays]

Gunn: I've been fighting vamps and demons since I was a kid. That sense of doing good, of waking up in the morning and making the world safer, better...I've always had that. But I've never had a Fred before. If we have to, I choose you.

Morgan: So—!

LaToya: Is that—yeah, that's where you cried?

Morgan: No.

LaToya: [laughing] Oh my god.

Morgan: Not quite. I was very—I was tearing up quite a bit. I was very emotional. I was unwell. This is lovely. Like, he—that he says all of this stuff and that that's not the end of how cute the moment is. Because then he gets shy? And he's, like, almost embarrassed that he said all this stuff. And Fred is like, "Don't you worry. Like, Wes is a good man. He'll do the right thing, he always does." [happily] Ugh!

LaToya: So you know, with Vampire Diaries, on our podcast, The AMPire Diaries, we talk a lot about Michael Trevino being, like, a leading man who is very much not treated that way. I would agree the same with J. August Richards, although I think this show treats him far better than Vampire Diaries ever treated Tyler Lockwood.

Morgan: [laughs] Yes. This speech, this moment, for Gunn I think is so beautiful. And it's so lovely to know that he and Fred can be this way together, because I

know we talked about that moment that I think was in Waiting in the Wings that got cut out, when he is talking about his sister.

LaToya: Mmhmm.

Morgan: And he's like, I just feel like I can do that with you. The idea that...we get to see him be vulnerable. Because that's not really something we see a lot. Like, he and Cordy, like, they had this kind of understanding. And they have what happened in First Impressions, which is this moment where they come to a little bit more understanding of each other. He and Angel are always gonna have something slightly combative between them because, like, Angel is a vampire. And I feel like Gunn feels the need to keep, like, somewhat of a distance. Him and Wes are in this kind of icy place right now. But the idea that, like, with Fred, he can really open up is such a beautiful thing and such a thing that I feel like he deserves. And that I think we're so fortunate to see. Like, having Gunn in a romantic and vulnerable relationship really gets to open him up as a character in ways that we haven't been able to do with him so far. And it's so special and so important to do for him, because, like, he really just is—[laughing] what a—again, a beautiful soul. I really do just adore him and the idea that he just, like, really is a hero, that this is—and that this is a show about, like, what can a hero look like? What can a hero do? What can a hero have done? Like, Gunn is a hero.

LaToya: Do you wanna play it?

Morgan: Please! [both laugh] Hit it, bitch!

[GUNN jingle plays]

Check that tux, check that bod

Sign me up for the Gunn Squad

Did someone say Golden God?

I'm all in on the Gunn Squad

Gameboy-playing himbo king

Sign me up for the Gunn Squad

Even when he's curmudgeonin'

I'm all in on the Gunn Squad

Bang bang! You know Charles gonna shoot his shot

Bang bang! Cracking skulls up and down the block

Bang bang! Got a smile that make the panties drop

Bang bang! Gunn Squad, Gunn Squad

LaToya: What a good jingle.

Morgan: Pretty good, yeah.

LaToya: And you know what? [laughing] I also think it's time for Fuck Watch.

Morgan: Yes, please!

[FUCK WATCH jingle plays]
Flirting, understanding consent, and kissing
Flirting, understanding consent, and kissing
Fuck Watch!

LaToya: Who are you fuckin'?

Morgan: So I was gonna pull a fast one and say, um, Alexis Denisof's acting. [both laugh] But in talking about this episode, I think I'm just gonna say Wes. He is sad. He has scruff. Like, I think—it's Wes. Yeah. It—there's something—sometimes there's something about a very sad, broken man. [laughing] I think I could help him.

LaToya: [laughs] I can fix him!

Morgan: [laughing] I can fix him.

LaToya: Yes, he is extremely hot in this episode, even though they're all like, "You look like shit." I'm like...no? [both laugh] This looks good to me.

Morgan: Good to me.

LaToya: Even when we have, like, the one scene where we're like, come on, don't be a little piss baby. But like, the rest, it's like, aww! Wes! But also, uh...so, I only have the one time to do it. I'm fucking Aubrey, actually. [laughs]

Morgan: Hell yes you are! Good choice.

LaToya: She's so hot and you know what? In another world, she and Wes are fucking all night long. [laughs]

Morgan: Uh, congrat—yeah, and—if we could just make our Fuck Watches fuck. [both laughing] Then we could really, like, fix everything.

LaToya: Yeah, we could bring on world peace if we let our Fuck Watches fuck.

[FUCK WATCH jingle plays]
Flirting, understanding consent, and kissing
Flirting, understanding consent, and kissing
Fuck Watch!

LaToya: Gunn says not to worry too much, 'cause you know, Wesley's a good man. He'll do the right thing. He always does! Cut to Wesley in the hotel, the weight of the world on his shoulders. [laughing] Another reminder again that the hotel set is the most beautiful set in the history of television.

Morgan: Yes, it is—it is so, so beautiful, so pretty. So Wes and Angel have this talk. And Angel admits, like, that he completely understands Aubrey's rage and that he would do the same thing, if he were in her position, and that that scares him. So this is the first time he's kind of admitting, like, that there could be, like, a dark side, quote-unquote, to his love for Connor, that you know, could compel him to go to some dark places. Which is the exact kind of thing that, like, Wes has been fearing hearing from him this whole time. And I think this scene is, like, loaded in that way, so beautifully. In that, like, Angel's being vulnerable and admitting this thing. And that is, like, giving Wes a stronger case against him in that moment. And you can tell that that is just, like, stabbing at him and feeling horrible. And he's just like, "I love my son." And Wes says, "Love can be a terrible thing." [both laugh]

LaToya: To which Angel does not react. [both laughing]

Morgan: I am screaming. This is when I am starting to cry. [both laugh]

LaToya: I mean, yeah. Because then Angel goes on about how love is something that he used to believe could, you know, swallow you whole and, like, rip you up inside. Like, everything he said in *Passion*, with that voiceover. *Passion*, my favorite *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode, actually.

Morgan: Oh, *Pass*—that's a great choice. I'm an Innocence girl, but I'm right there with ya. Yeah, he is like, "Now I don't feel like—the fear that I'm feeling, it isn't terrible. Like, I think it's beautiful." And then...Wes just laughs?

LaToya: Yes. [laughs]

Morgan: I am—so obviously, I'm crying. I'm crying. Wes is laughing. Angel starts laughing. [both laugh]

LaToya: He's like, why are we laughing?

Morgan: And Wes smiles and he's like, "Life is funny. Like, you know, I'm just worrying about things that could never even happen."

LaToya: I mean, this is so real. Tired Wes just breaking down and laughing. We've talked about doing this ourselves before. [laughs] Like, it happens. And this is, like, the most realistic moment in the episode.

Morgan: Yes. The way the tension breaks there and the way it—we almost get to this point where it's like, okay, oh no. Like, the worst is being confirmed. And then he—like, Wes watches his friend say all this stuff. He looks at this man and he knows in his heart, my friend could never hurt his son. And everything—and I know that truth. So even if I tell him what's going or if I—if, like, things come to light, like, everything's going to be okay in that I know Angel loves his son and we're gonna do the best thing for everyone. And he has this, like, moment of catharsis and relief in the laughing. And he's like, "Yeah, I was just worried about something that's, like, not even a problem anymore." Earthquake.

LaToya: The big one.

Morgan: Ugh, the dread that I felt in this moment. The heartbreak, the horror—I just think it is so beautifully done, in like, the journey that it takes you on. It just breaks my heart.

LaToya: Yeah. So there's the earthquake. And the fire, because Angel is, like, warming up Connor's bottle—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: On the stove, so that causes a fire. [laughs]

Morgan: Yep.

LaToya: And then the blood...Angel's gushing blood. [laughs]

Morgan: Yes, and we cut actually and, like, Holtz and Justine experience the earthquake as well. He, like, saves her.

LaToya: And that's where it gets weird again, because he, like, saves her from being crushed. Damnit. And then they, like, look in each other's eyes and I'm like...

Morgan: I hated that.

LaToya: No?

Morgan: I hated that so much.

LaToya: Of course you did. 'Cause why wouldn't you hate that?

Morgan: Yeah, because I'm a human being. I felt ill at the sight of that. Angel saves Connor, then he goes and he saves Wes too.

LaToya: Yes, because Wes is in shock and he is just staring at the fire 'cause he's like, aw, fuck.

Morgan: And then, as they're outside the room, Angel is just bleeding all over Connor's sky blue blanket. And Wes just, like, watches it happen. And...he's horrified.

LaToya: Yeah, 'cause Angel makes a joke about how they get stuck there, but at least he'd have something to snack on. He's talking about *his* blood.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: But all Wesley can think is Connor. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah. 'Cause you know, the baby and his blanket are covered in the thing that Angel would have been snacking on.

LaToya: Mmhmm. And again, throughout this, Angel is drinking from a big old glass of blood. Clear glass instead of his usual mug. There are scenes where Wes is there when he's just sipping on his blood, while with his baby.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: So like, they are reminding you, Angel: a dangerous vampire who drinks blood. [laughs]

Morgan: And yeah, that's where we end things. And it's grim as all hell. And you know, with Wes, it's this big question of loyalty and who is he supposed to be loyal to? You know—

LaToya: That's the episode title.

Morgan: Angel or his son? And it's—it's becoming difficult to be loyal to both. And...ugh! No. Remember when we were having fun? [laughs]

LaToya: This is still fun to me, I don't know what you're talking about. There was a carousel. They were on the Santa Monica pier. That's fun!

Morgan: [laughing] Uh-huh.

LaToya: We're still in a better place than Buffy is. [laughs] In Season 6.

Morgan: Well...oh my gosh, okay. Stepping over the lowest bar ever. [both laugh] I am unwell. I am sad. I could really use the warm and comforting embrace of something on The WB.

LaToya: Oh, really?

Morgan: Yeah, really.

LaToya: Okay. Hit it, bitch.

[DUBBA-DUBBA-WB jingle plays]
Angel is a vampire
Does he even like TV?
"I think he'll *like* The WB."
They got that hot teen drama
To ease the pain and trauma
And here's the episode that he
Needs to see (aw yeah!)

LaToya: So this one was a tough one for me.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: 'Cause I was like, this episode's also kind of, like, paired with the episode after. I'm like, should they just be one collective episode? But you know what, I wasn't gonna do that to y'all.

Morgan: Mmm.

LaToya: I decided to choose an episode...technically, you could watch every episode of this 'cause it's, like, seven episodes. [both laugh] It was another one season WB show.

Morgan: Hell yeah.

LaToya: And actually, you know, usually I say this is what Angel should watch. I think this what Wesley should watch, 'cause he needs help.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: And it is the one season, seven episode WB series—I believe the final season of The WB. Modern Men. [Morgan laughs] Which is a series that starred Eric Lively, Max Greenfield...

Morgan: Ooh!

LaToya: Some other guy I don't know, and Jane Seymour. And in Modern Men, it's about three single men and lifelong friends who hire a life coach—that's Jane Seymour—to help them with their love lives. [Morgan laughs] And really, Wesley needs a life coach to help him with his entire life. Not just his love life. He needs someone to tell him to touch grass. [both laugh] He needs someone to help him tremendously, 'cause he is a modern man.

[DUBBA-DUBBA-WB jingle plays]
Angel is a vampire
Does he even like TV?
"I think he'll *like* The WB."
They got that hot teen drama
To ease the pain and trauma
And here's the episode that he
Needs to see (aw yeah!)

Morgan: And with that—I mean, do you have anything else you wanna say about this episode? I thought it was fucking great.

LaToya: It is fucking great. Morgan, are you ready to, like, really cry?

Morgan: I am so worried. Like, the anxiety and the worry and the sadness I felt while watching this was quite real. And yet, I was aware that it was about to get so much worse. [laughs] So, um, I'm not ready to cry as much as I'm gonna cry. But I am trying to be realistic about how bad it's gonna get. And I am going to weep.

LaToya: I can tell you that the next episode, young me had nightmares after it. [laughs]

Morgan: Oh, great! [laughs]

LaToya: It, um, traumatized me. And you might be thinking, oh, it's like a big horror episode. No. It's just one moment, and it, like, fucked me up.

Morgan: Oh, great. Um. [laughs] Hopefully by the time I watch this, my boyfriend Michael will be fully caught up and I will not have to watch it alone. And that will perhaps be a little bit of comfort. [laughs]

LaToya: When you watch, I want you to, like, text me and be like, [laughing] is this the moment that fucked you up?

Morgan: Oh, I—

LaToya: I think you'll know which moment fucked me up when you watch it.

Morgan: Hell yeah I'm gonna search for that. That's my favorite kind of thing to do. [both laugh] Time for plugs! If you would like to follow us on social media, you can follow us @AngelOnTopCast, at both Twitter and Instagram. You can find us on Patreon by going to angelontop.com. We do fun stuff on there. We did a live watch for First Impressions a while ago that you could catch up with, should you so choose. And we have a little mini podcast called Girls on Film, where we talk about movies. We have Down With Love and a Legally Blonde episode up. And next, we will have an Anna Karenina episode, which should be pretty dang cool. And if you would like to email us, you can do so at angelontoppodcast@gmail.com. LaToya, where can the people find you if they would like to do such a thing?

LaToya: [sighs] Fine. You can follow me on Twitter @lafergs, but if I'm telling a joke, don't ruin the bit and take it seriously, please.

Morgan: Be cool. [laughs]

LaToya: I'm dying here. I can't joke about Colin Farrell being hot or the show Cheers [Morgan laughs] without people being like, "Well, actually!"

Morgan: You can follow me on Twitter @LorganMutich. And my jokes come pre-ruined, so. [both laugh] No need to worry there.

LaToya: You want bad jokes? You go to Morgan. You want good jokes? Go to me, but you don't tweet at me about them. You don't do it.

Morgan: Don't reply. [both laugh] Don't at her. And with that, I guess we'll see you next time, for Sleep Tight.

LaToya: Sleep tight...

[Angel On Top theme plays]