

Buffering the Vampire Slayer
Episode 4.14: Goodbye Iowa

Kristin: [Sings] Hello! It's December 19th, which means if you love December enjoy, there's only a few days left. And if you don't like December, congratulations, there's only a few days left. Hey guys, Kristin here in your intro for Buffering The Vampire Slayer. I have a really big announcement at the end of this news cycle here before we get into the episode. So hold your breath. Just kidding. Don't hold your breath 'cause I got a lot to say and no one will survive. Okay, let me start by saying happy holidays to everyone. We are rolling into our holiday schedule over here, so this is our last episode of the year. We will see you in 2019 on January 9th when we come back with our taping of This Year's Girl that we did live in London. So that's something to look forward to in 2019, there's at least one thing, get excited.

Angel On Top is also coming back the week after us to continue the never ending sandwich of vampire/slayer deliciousness. Angel On Top has an episode out today, so you get two episodes today because it's the holidays and we feel festive. Speaking of January, we hope you have your tickets for PodCon Seattle and also if you want your remote tickets from anywhere in the world, you can grab those as well at podcon.com. We will see you in Seattle January 19th and 20th.

Okay, well let's get into this news. I have so many things. First of all transcriptions. We are getting really close to transcribing season three and we need a lot of help with transcribing season four to make our podcast accessible. So please help us transcribe going over to bufferingthevampireslayer.com/transcribe when you want to stop talking to your uncle Dave. You know, I don't know what's wrong with uncle Dave, but he's probably going to get on your nerves. So you just say "uncle Dave, I gotta go transcribe an episode of Buffering The Vampire Slayer. I'll be right back, man." You can go on over there and find out more details on how you can help us out. You can honestly transcribe even a quarter of an episode over there and then leave it to somebody else to finish if that's all the time you have.

Another thing I want to talk to you about is our interview with Lindsay Crouse who plays Professor Maggie Walsh. We did — I did get the opportunity to sit down with Lindsey and I had such an awesome chat with her and originally I was going to put it in this episode, but Lindsey and I talked about a couple of things that are a little spoiler-y so I'm going to hold tight. You're going to have to wait a few episodes to hear that interview, but Patrons — if you're a patron of ours you will get that interview in just a couple of weeks, ahead of time. Cool? Cool. I think it's time for...

[SPOOKY NEWS jingle plays]
Spooky news!

Okay. So Spooky News. Listen, 875,000 people wrote to me about this particular news story, which is not even my choice for Spooky News, but it seems like it's really important that everyone knows this. A 45 year-old woman who married the ghost of an 18th century pirate has announced that she has split from him after less than a year of marriage. Amanda Teague traveled to international waters back in January 2018 to marry her pirate partner Jack through the means of a medium, after telling the spirit that she was no longer happy to just have casual sex. We are sorry that it didn't work out for you Jack and Amanda.

Onwards and upwards to this story that I've actually chosen for Spooky News this holiday week, which is the story of Mary Lewid or it's not a story, it's a tradition. Mary Lewid is a tradition that was first recorded in 1800 and it entails the use of a hobby horse. So, you know, a hobby — when you think of a hobby horse, probably you think of a little kid who has a little stuffed horse head on little pole and he's all cute and he's like, "look at my hobby horse." No, Mary Lewid uses a skull of a horse that's mounted on a pole. It has ribbons and stuff hanging off of it and in it's little eyeballs it's got some glass pieces and off the back of its head is a sackcloth. So it's kinda like a ghost, you know, like a sheet, like a ghost, but in place of a ghost head it has a skull of a horse. And then they take this around. This is a custom that was founded in South Wales and has happened in neighboring regions in the world and other forms.

But they take the horse skull on a stick with a ghost body and they knock on doors of people and they wassail. I don't know if I'm saying that right, but I learned that wassailing is kind of caroling where you go door to door and you sing, except for instead of just singing, you're like, "bitch, give me some fucking cider." People have cider on the inside of the house and then if you sing good enough you get some cider. So this is like that, except instead of you just going to sing, you go with a horse skull on a stick with a ghost body and you're like, "Merry Christmas". Oh 'cause this happened at Christmas time when it first started, it was at Christmas time tradition. It still is a Christmas time tradition. It declined in the 20th century.

But then in the later 20th century it came back because who can spend too much time away from a horse skull around the holidays? Am I right? I'm poking fun, but I actually think it's really fun to learn about the traditions that human beings think up. And like, where did this come from? I want to know more. I want to learn more. So anyway, I'm not gonna spend too much time on this. I just want to let you know that Christmas time is full of various traditions, some of which you knew and perhaps you did not know that one of them was horse skulls on sticks with ghost bodies, going to doorways, singing for cider. There you have your Spooky News.

[SPOOKY NEWS jingle plays]

Spooky news!

Kristin: Okay. Coming out of Spooky News, I'm going to start doing something in the top here and that is telling you the Sexual Tension Award winners for the episode prior. So in the episode itself you'll get our nominees for this episode, but for now I'm going to give you the winners for The I In Team. Coming in at the low, low 7% we have Forrest and Riley. Now the other three remaining pairings were pretty close. 23% of the vote went to Spike and Giles. Mmmm Spiles, Mmmm Gike, rough coupling name there. Willow and spanking almost won, they had 31% of the vote. I am sorry, but it is good that we don't have to mail a trophy to spanking 'cause I don't know how that would work. Anyhow, with 39% of the vote Willow and Tara took home. We may be seeing more of them in the winner's section of Sexual Tension Awards this season. We'll see.

Hey, 'tis the season and you know it. We have palm hats now that say Jenny's now infamous catch phrase 'wow, wow, wow, wow, wow', we have kids-sized 'smash the demon patriarchy' tees. Our mugs are back in stock that say 'smash the demon lizard patriarchy', we have sweatshirts and pins and stickers, oh my. So many things that you can find at bufferingthevampireslayer.com, just click on 'shop'. So, if you get any loot for the holidays and you want to get some new stuff for your body, come on over and do it with us.

A thank you to those of you who sold out our handwritten lyric sheets. We raised \$500 for trans lifeline. We're really excited to be able to give that money to them. And it's really special to also donate money to them over the holidays. It's a very particular time for so many of us and especially people who are in the trans community, going home or not going home for the holidays. As always, we send so much love and support to any of you out there who are struggling with coming out to family, or have just come out to family, or have not yet come out to family and you have to be around those family members at this time of year. Know that you are not alone. So many people are listening to this right now and feeling solidarity with you. Even the person speaking this, me, Kristin Noeline Russo, is feeling solidarity with you. So sending so much love to all of you.

As always a huge thank you to Lauren Klein, our dutiful sound engineer. You can follow Lauren if you'd like over @laurentaylorklein on Instagram. She does such good work for us. She helps us sound good in your ears and, hey, we've done it.

You listened to all the news except for the biggest piece of news, which is that, it is official, Scoobarinos. That's right, I said freakin' Scoobarinos. We are throwing another Prom this March, March 9th, and this year our Prom is in the Big Apple. The cat's meow, that's not another word for this city, but it's cool, we're throwing our Prom in New York City baby. This is your notice to save the date, New Yorkers, for

March 9th and to let you know that we have expanded capacity from last year's Prom, but not by a ton because we want to keep the Prom special and intimate and prommy. We want to have it be as special and wonderful as it was last year. And we're once again at the ACE Hotel, this time in New York City. [Sings] Did we mention that Prom is in New York City?

If you want your tickets, they are not for sale yet. This is your warning to know, March 9th in New York City. If you're flying here, cool, but wait until you get your tickets. Tickets will be released on January 9th when the next episode is released. So, stay tuned over at bufferingthevampireslayer.com/prom, you can find all of the details, our new design done by Diana Kreskey, again, who did our last year Prom design. And you might be pretty excited about the design this year because it includes some polaroids "taken", in quotes 'cause they were drawn, of us at Prom last year. It's a really, really special design. We are so freaking excited to have Prom in New York City this year. So stay tuned over there also on socials and know that January 9th is when those tickets will be released. Okay. I think we've done it. Happy holidays to all of you. Happy new year to all of you. We will see you on the other side of this episode in 2019. Let's fricking do this thing.

[Buffering the Vampire Slayer theme plays]

Jenny: Hello and welcome to Buffering The Vampire Slayer, a podcast where we are watching and discussing every episode of Buffy The Vampire Slayer one at a time, spoiler-free. I am Jenny Owen Youngs.

Kristin: And I am Kristin Russo. And this week we're talking about Buffy, Season 4, Episode 14, Goodbye Iowa. Stay tuned at the end of this podcast every week for an original song written by Jenny Owen Youngs recapping the Buffy episode we are discussing. And if you haven't yet started listening to our Angel podcast, Angel On Top, hosted by Brittany Ashley and Laura Zak, you should be. And today's a really special day because you have one episode from us one episode went up them all at the same time. Blam.

Jenny: Happy holidays! Goodbye Iowa was written by Marti Noxon, directed by David Solomon and originally aired on February 15th 2000, just one day after Valentine's Day.

Kristin: [Laughs] God, what were you doing on Valentine's Day in the year 2000?

Jenny: I literally don't even want to think about it. You?

Kristin: I was, well, I guess I was — February of 2000... So I started dating my first girlfriend Randy in 1998 and we were together for two years. I believe we may

have been celebrating what would unbeknownst to us be our last Valentine's Day together as Valentines.

Jenny: [Laughs] I'm sure it was very romantic. I'm sure many a hemp necklace was a hand-woven and gifted.

Kristin: Yes, 100%. [Laughs] This is the one where tension erupts between Buffy and an ailing Riley as they pursue Professor Maggie Walsh's killer.

Jenny: By ailing, do they mean increasingly sweaty?

Kristin: They mean so sweaty. Do you think that Marc Blucas saw David Boreanaz's performance in the — what is it, Becoming? When he's all sick, or which season finale is it when he's super fucking sweaty and he's trying to make out with Oz?

Jenny: Oh, that's at the end of season three after Faith has shot him with an arrow.

Kristin: Right, yeah. So I feel like Marc Blucas was studying up on a previous sick, ailing Buffy boyfriend and was like, "yo, I can out-sweat this dude. I've got this."

Jenny: "I can out-sweat this dude..." Important advances being made, you know, competition is healthy and yields achievement.

Kristin: Yes. Yes. Also though, I don't think that Marc Blucas out-sweat David Boreanaz. I think that David Boreanaz/Angel still holds the title.

Jenny: Well why can't they just get into a room together and both sweat is my question.

Kristin: Wow, Jenny [laughs].

Jenny: [Shouts] Anyway! So here we are in this fucking episode.

Kristin: Oh my god. This fucking — it's like these two episodes really. Goodbye Iowa and The I In Team just back to back. Fucking Adam times infinity. I literally can't, it's really. Yeah...

Jenny: [Does impression of Adam] "I'm a monster!" I just... Uh.

Kristin: [Laughs] I believe he actually says "what am I?"

Jenny: I know, I know, I know.

Kristin: But, Jenny, don't worry 'cause in case you didn't get enough of that clip of Adam saying "mommy" we get it again.

Jenny: [Laughs] Oh my god. Yeah, the 'previously on' of this episode is definitely like, "here's all the things that you don't care about and that you wish weren't happening this season."

Kristin: [Laughs] I mean —

Jenny: I'm like, where are — have Willow and Tara done any spells?

Kristin: Oh my god, they have. Jenny, I don't know if you saw the thread that I started for us on Twitter, but I'm really excited about it. It is a dating guide for queer women narrated by, of course, our favorite two witches, Tara and Willow.

Jenny: I did see that, oh yes.

Kristin: I planned to add a GIF to it every episode that something witchy happens between these two that is obviously coded language for doing it.

Jenny: Was there anything in this episode? Was there any doing it in this episode, do you think?

Kristin: Um, Jenny, seriously? We'll get there.

Jenny: Well... Okay, okay, okay, we'll get there.

Kristin: There was definitely witchy doing it in this episode. But do you mean did they actually do it or were they referencing doing it?

Jenny: No, no, no, no, no. I'm just talking about was there any magic that was interpretable?

Kristin: Well, so right, that's what I mean. There wasn't any magic that happened that was doing it, but there was a lot of talking about magic as a coded way for fucking.

Jenny: Oh yes and I can't wait to get there. Oh god, reminded me of what's to come.

Kristin: First let's start with — has Spike already been calling Buffy Goldilocks a bunch? I feel like I don't remember if I just haven't noticed it as much as I did in this opening scene.

Jenny: I don't know. But people who live in glass blondie bear houses shouldn't throw Goldilocks stones.

Kristin: [Laughs] Well, but blondie bear is simply a commentary on hair. As a certain thread of patriarchal beliefs would have it, Jenny, when someone says Goldilocks, they are not only referring to the golden locks upon one's head, but also they're demeaning them for being a lady. So why don't we get in that nice patriarchy jingle here for Goldilocks?

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

Jenny: Wait, wait, wait, wait. Kristin, whoa, hang on. I'll listen to the patriarchy jingle all day, but do you really feel like Goldilocks is synonymous with negative stuff? Because if you recall, I feel like — doesn't Goldielocks —

Kristin: Isn't Goldilocks an asshole? [Laughs]

Jenny: Doesn't Goldielocks win and um —am I crazy? What happens in Goldielocks?

Kristin: What do you mean, "does she win?" What does she win?

Jenny: Okay, so there's 3 bears. Doesn't she defeat the bears? [Laughs] Okay, let me just see if I can sort this out for us, 'cause we all know how good I am at retaining the nuances of story arcs. So Goldielocks goes into a house, she's really tuckered — she's been hiking all day. Oh LA, it's so tiring! You're always hiking somewhere. Oh god! I really could go for some kombucha, but I'm nowhere near a store. Let me just pop into this deserted house and see if they have any booch in the fridge.

So she goes into the house and then she's like, "gee whiz, I'm so sleepy." No, she is not sleepy first, first she's hungry, maybe? And there's porridge and some of it's hot and some of it's cold and some of it's just right. So this shows me that Goldilocks knows what she wants out of life. Then something else happens that I can't remember. She does something other than eat and then encounters a similar too something, too something, just right. And then — what a great episode of our podcast —

Kristin: [Laughs] Yeah! It's going great so far.

Jenny: And then she's like, "I'm so tired". She gets into a bed and she's like, "this bed is too hard". And then she gets into another bed and she's like, "this bed is too soft". She's just striving — she knows that she deserves what she wants out of life. Then she gets into the third bed and it is just right and she falls asleep. And then some bears come home and they're like, "did you see that there's kombucha in the fridge?"

Kristin: What are you even talking about? I don't remember what happens after she falls asleep in the baby bear's bed. I don't remember what the —

Jenny: I think it's actually the mama bear's, I believe.

Kristin: What?! No!

Jenny: Isn't she all about the mama bear's business?

Kristin: No, she's all about — [laughs] such a queer reading of Goldilocks, Jenny. And you're like, "doesn't she love the mama bear though?" No, Goldilocks — okay, I love your interpretation, but in my mind, Goldilocks broke in to some fucking house that is owned by a lovely family of bears that just want to have peace. And she eats their food, and judges it, and then sleeps in their beds and judges them. And for some reason the baby bear — I don't remember who's this too hot and who's is too cold, but I think that the parental units are too hot, too cold, and the baby bear's is what was just right.

Jenny: I see.

Kristin: However, I don't think the story of Goldilocks is rooted in a patriarchal trope, to get back to your question.

Jenny: But I feel like your reading is definitely a filtering through the patriarchy. As we often know, we're all victims. We all live inside the patriarchy.

Kristin: No, no. Jenny —

Jenny: She was judging their food. Judging it! She was just seeking what she wanted.

Kristin: No, no, Jenny, can you just calm your Goldilocks pants down over there? The only thing I was trying to say before this episode turned into a five hour special on Goldilocks was that I think that Spike's using of the phrase Goldilocks has a tone

to it that is patriarchal. He's not just commenting on her hair, because the next thing he says is talking about her bad taste in men and how she should get a better boyfriend because her boyfriends are always fucking her over. So it's super, you know, talking to her in a very — there's a couple of references in this episode to her being like, "I'm going to play the dumb blonde." She says something like that later, which I wrote down and we'll get to, but I just was trying to say that I think that Spike is being a bit demeaning in a way that I read as dude to lady demeaning with his choice of phrase here.

Which does not happen with blondie bear. Blondie bear is, you know, it's Harmony's —

Jenny: It's a fun pet name. I don't feel like Spike needs to rely on some kind of demeaning a woman trope in order to insult Buffy because he's constantly hurling insults at everyone in the Scooby gang.

Kristin: Yes, I agree. But I still think this is a patriarchal moment, but we can —

Jenny: [Shouts] Agree to disagree! Two Titans converge on the battlefield to discuss whether or not Spike's use of the word Goldielocks to Buffy is specifically demeaning from a anti woman angle.

Kristin: And talk amongst yourselves. Please send us all of your feelings on which Titan you side with.

Jenny: Do let us know. So we are now — we're at around 12 minutes of talking and we've covered the first sentence of the episode. So this is good.

Kristin: The first line. Oh, but that's okay because, you know, Jenny, there's not a ton in this episode, so I think a few tangents from us won't hurt anybody. This opening scene apart from the moment that we just talked about is really all here for them to establish that Buffy is like, "yo, Maggie tried to fucking kill me" and for the Scoobies and Giles, especially, to be like, "but why? Why would she want to kill you?" There's way more to think about now because before Giles just thought she was a fish wife and now he's, you know, wait, this lady is hiding something is their theory, which, of course, is correct.

Jenny: I do kind of wish we saw a little more like, "ha!" from Giles about this.

Kristin: [Shouts] Yes! Right. I wrote the same note. I said — well, I actually said props to Giles for not gloating, but I felt the same way. I was like, dude, you hated this lady, you're not going to even give one dig in here?

Jenny: No he's just holding it all in. He's just too excited to be main dad on campus again.

Kristin: [Laughs] So we sort of turn the corner of the scene with them being like, "but what would she want to hide?" And then it cuts to a barn, which who knew Sunnydale had barns, but apparently they've got one which Adam, you know, staggers out of. But I mean the monster can barely walk. He's the most horribly assembled monster I have ever laid my eyes.

Jenny: If we're to believe — well, you've seen the pit, you've seen how technologically advanced The Initiative is. They have so much tinfoil! How could it be that they assembled this guy and he kinda is a little janky. He looks like he could fall apart at any moment.

Kristin: His middle, his abdomen middle section looks like they were like, "I think there was some leather strips down the hall. You give me a big needle" —

Jenny: [Imitates person from The Initiative] "You got some big staples?"

Kristin: [Laughs] It's just really a mess. Maggie is supposed to be this genius and I think she could work on her surgery skills. Just my opinion. So we roll right into the credits, don't we, Jenny?

Jenny: We certainly do.

Kristin: The credits are as they always were, though I will say I noticed that Faith and Buffy were dancing right after all of the Marc Blucas clips, which I enjoyed. I felt like I got a lot of your favorite butterscotch hunk and then I got an immediate reprieve from heterosexuality into queer dancing.

Jenny: Well, something for everyone, isn't it?

Kristin: Exactly. I mean, personally I do think a butterscotch hunk is for everyone, but I won't put that on anyone else.

Jenny: But everyone might not agree with you.

Kristin: Yes, I agree. So we're back Giles', and this is when the plan to hide out at Xander's comes into play.

Jenny: Yeah, not a popular plan.

Kristin: The two most offended people by this plan are certainly Anya and Giles.

Jenny: Yeah. Hard to spank or be spanked when you're having a slumber party.
Also —

Kristin: I know that you were talking about Anya and Xander, but because I had said the two most upset people were Anya and Giles and you immediately said “hard to spank or be spanked” I got really turned around in my fan fiction.

Jenny: Good god.

Kristin: So I've righted myself. I've righted myself. Where were you gonna go?

Jenny: Well she is a thousand years old so she might be too old for Giles.

Kristin: [Laughs] That's true. That's true.

Jenny: But somehow not too old for Xander. My main concern — so Giles is like, “I'm above this” but what is Mrs. Harris thinking? About, “hey mom, I'm going to have a sleep over my girlfriend and these two other girls and then also our high school librarian who is currently between projects.”

Kristin: Well, I mean, it might've been proposed like, “hey my friend and this person and this person and also your side boyfriend Mr. Giles is coming over.”
[Laughs]

Jenny: Then why is he sleeping on the beanbag chair or whatever?

Kristin: It's true. It's true. I think Xander's mom has no idea for the most part what goes on in that basement, for whatever reason, whether it's because she's busy working a million jobs or 'cause it's that she doesn't care, or a combination there in. I don't think that she is super, super concerned with what the hell Xander is doing down below.

Jenny: Right.

Kristin: Shout out to the fact that the bat with the hook is still a weapon being used.

Jenny: Hooray! Do you remember when that first came into the universe?

Kristin: You know, I don't remember. Though, I mean, I think I felt like it was fairly recently, I want to say season three? It doesn't feel like something that was

with us for a long time, but I just really remember being like, "wow, that's a hook taped to a bat." [Laughs]

Jenny: Definitely an instant classic whenever it came into play.

Kristin: Yeah and you know, Jenny, we've seen a lot of cosplay, but I have not seen too much cosplay with the bat hook. So a call to —

Jenny: Probably hard to get a bat with hooks coming out of it through security at various conventions.

Kristin: [Laughs] So another major thing that happens in the scene, of course, is that Giles is like, "probably no one even knows that I live here" moments before Riley walks in the door. Bud dum dum.

Jenny: Yeah dude.

Kristin: Right. And Riley... Are you excited, Jenny, to go through the many progressions of sweaty Riley in this episode?

Jenny: Well, yes, I am. Of course! He's just getting started. He's just begun to sweat.

Kristin: He hasn't really, even. I mean, maybe he's sweating, but we just can't see it yet in the scene. And then it advances later on. But yeah, you know, basically, Riley walks in and Buffy's like, "yo, fucking Maggie tried to kill me" and he's like, "there has to have been a mistake. This can't be reality. Because I trusted this person and also took orders from this person." And this is something that will unfold more and more for him as the episode goes forward.

Jenny: But he also is like, "oh, hey, it's hostel 17, just hanging out. We've been looking for him."

Kristin: You know, I'm upset that when we were hanging out with James Marsters in London, we didn't get to hear him say, [imitates southern accent] "I'm just a friend of Xander's."

Jenny: Yes. It seems like a tragedy in retrospect.

Kristin: Right? So right, Spike is like, "you know what" he tries to pretend for half a second and then he's just like, "fuck it, I give up. I'm your fucking guy." And they're like, "but he's not bad." One of the classic tropes of Season 4 is Spike continuously trying to remind everyone that he is a fucking vampire.

Jenny: That he's bad. He's so bad. He's such a bad boy.

Kristin: That he's really bad. But the more he tells us that he's bad, of course, the less threatening he becomes. [Laughs]

Jenny: True. What else is happening? We're seeing in this scene that Riley is growing increasingly tweaky. He's starting to exhibit behaviors that we don't typically associate with Riley.

Kristin: Right. Yeah, he's edgy or — not edgy. On edge is what I'm trying to say.

Jenny: On edge, yeah. Totally.

Kristin: He's on edge and he — you know, his disbelief of what Professor Walsh has done is understandable. Xander's really being super protective and defensive of Buffy, which is like a Xander trademark.

Jenny: Totally.

Kristin: But it's sort of well placed in this scene. You know? It's not as like, "uh Xander" as it has been in previous things 'cause he basically — I mean, I think he says "literally your boss just tried to make monster food out of her, so maybe you should fucking chill for a second dude" and he's fucking right. And, you know, I see all the sides of it, but I'm here for the defensiveness and the protectiveness of Xander in this moment. It's a little like puffing the chest. you know, all of the dudes are puffing chests here, but I think that it's pretty solid. And I give Xander a thumbs up for defending Buffy. But then Riley, of course, leaves really upset.

Jenny: Yes. And we all hate to see Riley upset.

Kristin: [Laughs] Well, you know, you bring up, I think, a good point, Jenny, in that, you know, up until now in the series I've mostly been playing my jingle, which is, you know, insisting that Riley please go away and having very little sympathy for him and his stuff. And I stand by my feelings. But I will say that this journey, this arc of Riley's is something that does move me and that I feel sympathy for him, with that he has been essentially — and this episode really unpacks this — programmed, right? And they take it another step. It's not just that he has been trained to follow the rules, but he's also, we find out, has been drugged to make him even more compliant and more able to follow the rules and follow these missions.

So, you know, I do have space in my heart and mind for the fact that this guy — his entire universe has been turned upside down. All of the things he thought were true weren't true or at least are in question right now. He's really lost. And he's going through withdrawal. So I — this is one of my — I think, I don't know past this, but I think this is one of my top Riley episodes in terms of really being able to sympathize with him and feel for him.

Jenny: Yeah. He's having a hard time. Everything is being called into question, he's also put in this position where he's being physically affected on a biological level by withdrawal from what The Initiative was feeding him. And he's also lost what we understand to be his mother figure and also his leadership figure. And she's in direct conflict, or the organization that she was attached to, is now in direct conflict with the woman he loves.

Kristin: You know what's funny, apart from that last bit about the woman he loves, is almost everything you said could also describe what Maggie's other child, Adam, is going through, right?

Jenny: Guh. Oh my god.

Kristin: I will say that I have no sympathy for Adam. I don't like him and I don't care for him in the least. But you know, that's the parallel here, right? That essentially Professor Walsh had affection toward Riley as a son, and also had affection toward Adam and really sort of created Adam and was a mother figure to Adam in that sense. And Adam spends this episode trying to figure out what he is. Which gets us to the next scene where he literally says, "what am I?" [Laughs]

Jenny: [Laughs] His voice! His voice!

Kristin: I know. And I just can't handle him. And I — we already talked about this, but my note in this scene was, "has anyone ever assembled a monster so poorly?" Because —

Jenny: Right?!

Kristin: Like, come on!

Jenny: It seems like they gave up halfway through or something.

Kristin: Maggie did or the department of props and makeup?

Jenny: Maybe both. It just he's just seems stitched together so shoddily.

Kristin: Right, exactly. I mean, that's what I had been saying. It looks literally like he's a poorly assembled football with a metal plate.

Jenny: [Laughs] A poorly assembled football!

Kristin: [Laughs] But essentially this scene is just us seeing Adam talk to this little boy and we see him get the light bulb idea, "oh, I can just take you apart to find out how you work and that will maybe help me understand how I work." Whatever, Adam, murder this child, do what you need to do. I hope that you're not in this Season too much.

Jenny: I love that you're just like, "do what you have to do."

Kristin: Do what you gotta do, man. Can you just — can we get the next Big Bad please? Can we move on with our lives? [Laughs] I don't know. I'm saying normally we don't trash on Big Bads too hard because I know everybody has different opinions, but I feel like generally speaking, the opinion collectively of Adam as a Big Bad is like, meh.

Jenny: I think he's probably fan-ranked as the least fave Big Bad.

Kristin: Yeah. So and, you know, if you disagree with us and you have a thing for Adam, let us know. I would love to hear an opposing view more than anything. So, Jenny, now we get to the scene where Dr Doom, whose name I can literally never remember —

Jenny: [Laughs] Dr Engelmann.

Kristin: Dr Engelmann. Dr Anglerfish is like —

Jenny: [Laughs]

Kristin: "Let me come into the room and look for Professor Walsh." And, I mean, my first question in this scene is why do the lights not work? Because I don't think that was something that Adam destroyed.

Jenny: Yeah, what the hell?

Kristin: Right? And you made the point, Jenny, of this scene being really long and there being a lot of —

Jenny: He walks into a very small room and he looks left and he looks right and he looks to the middle distance and to the far wall and he looks all around the room

and take some steps and then he slips in some blood and falls. But when he falls and sees Professor Walsh on the floor — he would have seen her in his field of vision like 7 times while he was surveying the room. You know?

Kristin: Right. Maybe that's why they made the lights not work for no reason.

Jenny: Oh yeah, maybe.

Kristin: Right. So Dr Anglerfish learns that Maggie is dead.

Jenny: [Laughs] Dr Anglerfish is really working for me.

Kristin: He somehow manages to get blood literally all over his entire body [laughs]. He slips in it and puts both hands in it. And I'm just like, dude, come on. He's really — I feel like after the scene cuts, he also, in shock, wiped his hands all over his face, you know?

Jenny: Oh yeah, totally. And then do you think he said, "oops"?

Kristin: Yes I do. I really do.

Jenny: Maybe that's the vibe.

Kristin: So we leave oopsie doctor slipping in blood to go back to — or not back to, but to Xander's for the first time where we get a closeup on their sleeping arrangements, which — I'm sorry that Giles is in his beanbag chair, which he refers to as a beach ball, but I'm pretty into the fact that all the ladies are sharing the foldout couch together. I think it's fun.

Jenny: Fascinating. 3 women on a pullout couch. I'm sorry, I guess that didn't require re-stating. I just got excited!

Kristin: [Laughs] It was funny because you restate it because I felt like the restating was supposed to be sexy, but it felt halfway through, you realize that the end of it was 'foldout couch' and so it just sort of went down in its cadence by the time you got there. This is a small foldout couch though. And I'm just saying I feel like probably you have — even if you don't want a spoon you kind of have to spoon. So...

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: I know. There's a part of me — it's weird 'cause when we talk about Buffy and Faith we get really into it. But I just got really self conscious because I feel like

I'm a 30 — well let's see, when does this air? The 19th. So by the time you hear this, I am a 38 year old woman. And, you know, these are people who are freshman in high school. I mean, I guess Anya is, as you mentioned, older but sometimes — just now I felt creepy being like, “yeah, three teenage girls in a bed.” I'm trying to pull up the queerness and be excited about potential queerness, but also maybe I need to cool my jets. I don't know. Talk amongst yourselves.

Jenny: Well... I mean, I just think that, you know, we're out here looking for [clears throat] relevant material and all the actors on this show — at this point, we're looking at Sarah Michelle Gellar is like 22, probably 24 or something like that. Alison Hannigan, too. Emma Caulfield I think might be a couple of years older than them.

Kristin: Right, right, right. Yeah, it's not like they're kids and also —

Jenny: Also, wait. You just called them high school girls, but they're in college.

Kristin: They are, they're freshmen in college.

Jenny: A lot has changed since you left town, Angel. I'm in college now. I'm a big girl.

Kristin: [Laughs] Wow. Jenny.

Jenny: You know?

Kristin: I hope that somebody takes a sound clip of you saying “I'm a big girl” and does something fun with it. And not to like — whatever, I think you make a solid counterpoint and I'm sure it's all fine, but also just to go a little bit deeper into it. Fanfiction, right, and stuff like this is like — especially when, I mean, I know fanfiction can go in any direction, but a lot of fanfiction is queer and is sort of written to bring together characters who wouldn't have otherwise gotten the chance to be together a lot of times because it's queer pairings and what have you. And so I think there's an element at play, an element of sexuality at play. When we think of pairings — that certainly doesn't erase age. It's not suddenly okay to, you know, be writing fanfiction about kids. But it does take away some of the ‘me’ in it, right?

It's not like I Kristin would like to be the 4th spoon in this bed. Maybe I would, I dunno, but that's not what it's about, when I say that, it's more about like, ooh the fun I can have in thinking about pairings that wouldn't have existed or that don't exist. That could be fun.

Jenny: Right, right. Yes.

Kristin: Anyway, they have a lot of girl talk, as you do when you're sharing a bed. They're like, "what about this boyfriend, Buffy? Can't you ever have somebody boring?" And Anya is like, "hands off my man" [laughs]. And then —

Jenny: I feel like you're leaving out the best part of that, which is Anya saying, "you should get a boring boyfriend, like Xander, you can't have Xander specifically. But, you know, just somebody boring like him."

Kristin: it's really not — I mean, we're going to get plenty of opportunity to talk about Anya, but Anya's approach to things is really refreshing, right? It's like, Anya has chosen Xander because Xander really fulfills all of the needs that she has, like spanking and you know, she's not there for drama, she's not there for a lot of complexity. Xander is reliable, he's loyal and apparently he's good in bed. Sorry everyone, but Anya's into it.

Jenny: Well, I don't think you have to apologize for Xander being good in bed, we think.

Kristin: I always feel like I take some of our listeners off guard when I suddenly put an image of Xander sleeping with somebody in their ears, you know? I apologize, you just had to picture that and maybe you didn't want to. But you're right.

Jenny: [Laughs]

Kristin: Anyway, I just love an Anya spin on stuff and I think it's fun that she's like, "dude, what do you need out of a boyfriend? Here's my list and Xander fills all of the points. So maybe pick a guy like him". Jenny, then we, of course — well, whatever, they find out that the little boy has been killed. They suspect it's the Polgara demon, but —

Jenny: Ooh, they find out on the TV news when Xander comes downstairs and says, "turn on the TV" which had previously been showing cartoons, channel untouched. But as soon as they turn it back on, it's on the special Sunnydale 'a child has recently been murdered in a suspicious or potentially supernatural way alert' channel.

Kristin: Well, you know what though? Here's a thought, Jenny, you know how when — I don't know, the President gives an address? If it's for a really big deal thing, like an announcement that all the people in the nation need to find out about, they'll interrupt your programming. Or if there's a State of the Union, right?

They do that too, on at least the cable or — what do you call the channels that you get when you don't have cable? Those channels, ABC, NBC, Fox, etc. Maybe Sunnydale is so under siege all the time and on a Hellmouth, so perhaps — we know the cops aren't super advanced in this town, but maybe the media people are and they have that kind of broadcast system so that when young boys are speared by Frankenstein demons, they have a way to tell people, “hey, there's a Frankenstein demon on the loose” or whatever.

Jenny: I suppose this is a real possibility.

Kristin: You know? I don't know. I'm just a pause-it.

Jenny: No, no. I think it would be — it would behoove them — it's almost too good of an idea for Sunnydale to actually be doing it.

Kristin: Yeah. That's also a good point.

Jenny: They're not the most responsible, they're not the most thorough town. As you may recall, the previous mayor was just trying to ascend to pure demon form.

Kristin: Wait, who's the mayor now?

Jenny: We don't know.

Kristin: Do we ever find, I mean, I guess whatever, don't spoil it for me.

Jenny: Is it perhaps Helene Schneider at this point?

Kristin: [Laughs] This is when her term began, what's going on?

Jenny: Yes, friend of the pod, Helene Schneider, mayoring about.

Kristin: So before we leave this — yes, I can hear, you're going to go there, Jenny, this is a really important ending of a scene for you.

Jenny: Buffy has had enough. She's not gonna take it anymore. She's got big plans and a strategy and she's in commander mode and she does her whole monologue and then she's like, “hmm”, looks down at herself and realizes that she's wearing a matching set of pajamas, yummy sushi pajamas. Sending up a flare for me for ‘Sunnydale matching pajama set watch 2018’ and also kind of undermining her very leadership oriented speech that she just gave.

Kristin: Yeah, I mean, it is the first time when Buffy herself makes the point that you've been trying to make all Season. Which is that sometimes a matching set of pajamas takes a little of the oomph out of your oomph. [Laughs].

Jenny: That's what I'm saying. I mean I guess in the right situation they could add much needed oomph, but this is not one of those situations.

Kristin: Yeah. What would be a situation where matching pajamas would add — I guess if you are trying to tell people what the meaning of Christmas is, your matching pajamas might add the oomph that you're looking for.

Jenny: The meaning of Christmas pillow fight —

Kristin: Oh, nice, nice, nice.

Jenny: Yeah. A slumber party movie marathon.

Kristin: Right. Okay, great. So yeah, again —

Jenny: But anyway!

Kristin: Moving right along to —

Jenny: It's time for Riley and Forrest to retire to the balls suite.

Kristin: [Laughs]

Jenny: Another great shot of Riley's balls poster.

Kristin: I love when you talk over me because I know that something — that you have a sentence that is critical that you get out in one piece.

Jenny: [Laughs] You gotta get it out while it's there, man, or I don't know what's going to happen.

Kristin: You were like, “no, if she talks about them being in the room, I won't get to say my line about the ball suite.” [Laughs] The things that are really important to us in our work here at Buffering The Vampire Slayer.

Jenny: [Laughs] Yes, truly. Truly.

Kristin: Yeah. This is more of Forrest being like, "where were you all night? Oh, probably having sex with your girlfriend when you could have been having sex with me."

Jenny: [Laughs] Yeah, there's just a lot of like — they're really, you know, I'm sure some people are like, "why do you keep talking about Forrest and Riley having sexual tension?" And it's like, dude, there's no other reason that he would be so bana — he's so over the top.

Kristin: He really is.

Jenny: There's so much misplaced tension, you know? And Riley's trying to confide in Forrest about what's going on and Forrest is like, "well, you ever think if Professor Walsh wanted to kill Buffy, maybe Buffy needed killing. She's always asking questions."

Kristin: Rough!

Jenny: And then Riley's like, "why are you so bummed out that I'm hanging out with her? Is it because she's a better soldier than you?" Which, A) Buffy is not a better soldier than Forrest or anyone. She's a great warrior, but she's a terrible soldier.

Kristin: Right, yeah. She does not follow orders, which we're here for. But I definitely don't think she's gonna win too many medals of honor in her soldier career.

Jenny: No, she only wins parasols.

Kristin: And Jenny, I wanted to just say very briefly, slight spoilers for The Magicians, I guess, I don't know, so skip a minute if you haven't watched it yet, but it's just a minor spoiler. But this actor, I was looking up his name while you were talking, but I did hear you. Leonard Roberts is his name and he —

Jenny: Who plays Forrest?

Kirstin: Who plays Forrest, sorry. Yes. The actor that plays Forrest and Leonard Roberts. You were talking about like, you know, maybe you're wondering why we're always saying blah, blah, blah, but we think there's sexual tension there. What's really fun is that Jenny and I have watched The Magicians and this actor, Leonard Roberts, plays a gay dude within the universe of The Magicians. And I felt like —

Jenny: Well, I think he's — isn't he bisexual?

Kristin: Oh I'm sorry. He is bisexual. Yes, he is. What I meant to say is we get to see him with a dude and being super romantic and sexy with a dude.

Jenny: And also being referred to as a DILF.

Kristin: [Laughs] Solid point.

Jenny: Greatly underused acronym.

Kristin: Yeah, agree.

Jenny: Everybody's always talking about MILFs, but nobody's ever talking about DILFs.

Kristin: I agree. And I'm glad that we got a little bit of that and it just felt like — especially 'cause The Magicians really pulls a lot of, you know, there's a lot of Buffy stuff that happens in that show. So it almost felt like an extension of the universe where I finally got to see Forrest being his true self.

Jenny: Truly.

Kristin: Anyhow, Graham walks in and as Graham does, gets told to go screw, and he's looks really upset. And so Forrest actually notices, you know, Forrest picking up on the facial expressions and moods of his fellow soldiers, of course, cause he loves them.

Jenny: Uh huh. Hot, yes.

Kristin: He's like, "I noticed that something's up. So what's up?" And Graham's like, "Professor Walsh is dead." which is like, "what the fuck?!" We've known, but they haven't known and they didn't know. And so they go down to see what the fuck is going on.

[Ad music begins]

[Ad segment]

Kristin: Support for today's show comes from Lola. Lola is a company founded by women, offering a line of organic cotton tampons, pads and liners. And now they offer some sex products too, including ultra thin lubricated condoms that are made of natural rubber latex and individually tested for contraception and STI protection. They're ultra thin design and premium medical grade silicone oil lubricant ensure

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Something that I am also really conscious of is what I put in my body. Which means what I eat and also what tampons I use. Tampons can have all sorts of dyes and chemicals and other nonsense and it's pretty messed up that we have all thought for so long that it was OK to put those things in our body. I do not, and I try as hard as I can to always get organic and untreated cotton in those products and so I love Lola for that reason.

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[Ad music fades out]

[Episode resumes]

Jenny: Upon seeing Professor Walsh's body for one second Forrest is immediately like, "oh, that wound, the only thing that could have done that is a wooden stake wielded by your girlfriend."

Kristin: Which is not factual information at all.

Jenny: No, no. And then Riley and Forrest start to tussle and Angelman breaks it up and is like, "show some respect" and then we see Riley scratching his hand.

Kristin: Yes, the first —

Jenny: Indicating an increase in his agitation.

Kristin: Yeah. And Jenny, this actually — this whole Riley arc of his withdrawal symptoms, I'm not somebody who has seen the X Files yet. I know. Gasp, gasp, gasp. I need to get on it. But every time, Jenny, I've seen you sing the song Clean Break, which has been a lot of times, you often tell this, you know, you use this

metaphor of an X Files episode where there's, I think, cockroaches underneath people's skin?

Jenny: Yes, yes, yes.

Kristin: So I haven't seen the episode, but it's so — you tell it very well, it's really inside of my brain visually. And so I was thinking about that as Riley was describing later to Buffy what he's feeling when he's itching his skin.

Jenny: Well, well, well.

Kristin: It's so rare for me to get to talk about an X Files reference since I don't have any. So I just was really excited.

Jenny: Congratulations. Also a testament to me, such a vivid songwriter and compelling stage presence. I'm kidding.

Kristin: [Laughs] Oh yeah. I'm like, that's my shtick. I tell people all the time that I'm a natural talent.

Jenny: Yes, yes. We know you're a natural talent.

Kristin: A number one quality of a natural talent is they tell you all the time they're a natural talent.

Jenny: It's just natural for you to tell people.

Kristin: So anyway, this scene, I think the important things in this scene are Forrest is bullshit, which you said, in trying to blame Buffy. It's so ridiculous that I feel like Riley doesn't even give it a beat, he's just like, "this is ridiculous. You're ridiculous." But the other big thing I think is that Riley directly disobeys orders and I don't know that we've ever seen that really happen before. This is a pretty major thing for him. Buffy does it all the time. Riley does not.

Jenny: It's hot!

Kristin: Yeah!

Jenny: Disobey those orders, mmm.

Kristin: Yeah. Maybe he needs to take a lesson from the 'Anya spanking'... Bye.

Jenny: Okay. Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

Kristin: Gotta go!

Jenny: So anyway [laughs]

Kristin: To the cemetery in full combat gear in broad daylight.

Jenny: Broad daylight! And Forrest is really ready to take out his anger and sorrow on any demon that he sees, which he declares will die.

Kristin: Yeah, it's really — also, the scene is whatever, we don't have to spend a lot of time on it, but the fact that they walk into this crypt and they're like, "somebody's obviously been living here. Is it a homeless man?" When the only thing out of place is a television set is just —

Jenny: Aso, what's that TV plugged into?

Kristin: Hmm. Good question. Maybe it's a really fancy mausoleum that has power outlets. [Laughs]

Jenny: I don't know. Also how did Spike get positioned so perfectly underneath that corpse and the silk sheet that it's laid out on?

Kristin: Yeah. Well —

Jenny: Don't you think even if he was scooching down underneath it, that he would have disrupted the bone structure?

Kristin: Well, but the bone structure — did you notice when he sat up later, when there's the reveal that he was under there the whole time, when he sits up, the bones of the skeleton are in these little see-through glittery bags. Did you notice that?

Jenny: Oh my god, what?! No, what?!

Kristin: Yeah, I'm describing the fabric very poorly. We need Kate — Kate, are you here? What's that fabric called? But it's like a gauzy kind of a fabric and it's almost like the skeleton is — [laughs] I'm really glad we're talking about this. I didn't think I was going to be talking about the skeleton's pants, but it's kind of like the skeleton is wearing little gauzy pants.

Jenny: Mmm, yes.

Kristin: And I imagine that the reason they did that was for this exact reason — that Spike couldn't really sit up without knocking the bones every which way unless there was some semblance of keeping it together. But I don't understand — there's a lot of questions here, I guess, which is do they put gauzy things around? No, right? 'Cause — wait, so people aren't burying —

Jenny: No, maybe it's just a set dressing thing.

Kristin: People aren't buried naked. They're buried in clothes. So if this crypt — right? This skeleton would ostensibly have had clothing on — whatever.

Jenny: It's just been there for so long. The clothes have deteriorated except for the gauze pants.

Kristin: Except for the gauze pants. Anyway, I think that probably — it seems like this is a place that Spike is used to hiding. It doesn't seem like this was the number one first time that he's ever hid.

Jenny: Oh, so maybe those are Spike's gauzey pants.

Kristin: Oh my god, please let it be that Spike went to the magic shop and then to the fabric store and was like, "I need some gauzy material to make a pair of pants for the skeleton in my crypt" [laughs] to make a better place.

Jenny: [Laughs] Yes, yes, yes.

Kristin: Anyway —

Jenny: Anyway, we're taking way too long to get to the most beautiful scene in the episode, which is Buffy Summers standing on a sunny hillside. Oh, the sun is so bright and she's looking so far off into the distance that she must shade her eyes with her hand for a very long time and look onward. Seriously. Very seriously. This is such a serious matter. A child has died. Rest in peace tiny child. So sorry to see you go so soon. We hardly knew ye. But anyway, back to Buffy, staring off into the distance, shading her eyes with her hand.

Kristin: It's pretty dramatic. It's pretty dramatic. And also it's —

Jenny: This is a pose she learned from Angel.

Kristin: Oh wow. From our friend...

[DETECTIVE ANGEL jingle plays]

Detective Angel!

Jenny: I mean, he wouldn't be shading his eyes against the sunlight, but he might be shading them against streetlights.

Kristin: You know, what's crazy about Angel is he would shield his eyes from the sunlight even if it weren't there. That's how dramatic he is.

Jenny: Mmm, yes.

Kristin: So —

Jenny: Speaking of dramatic butterscotch Angel is like “Maggie's dead, happy now?”

Kristin: Yeah. God, I mean —

Jenny: Then Buffy's like, “how dare you? I'm surrounded by death. Look at all this death. How could you possibly think death makes me happy?” Just really intense. tI mean, she's right.

Kristin: Yeah, she's right. And Riley gets a little bit of a pass —

Jenny: This is very intense.

Kristin: Yeah, he gets a little bit of a pass in this episode since we know that he is withdrawing from drugs and stuff and the — you know, there's more at work here than just — so normally I'd be like, “fuck you Riley!” But this time I'm like, “oh, he's going through a complete emotional crisis and also withdrawal.” So I'll give him some room to do those things.

There's a really weird — and you know, I don't want to spend too much time on this, but wanted to say I noticed that Buffy goes away, She's like, “I'm going to fight the demon. I'm going to find this fucking demon, see ya.” And then Riley looks over his shoulder back at the camera and I don't understand what we're seeing, but probably those of you who work in film and TV could tell me. The shot is weird. It has blackened corners. Almost like there's a lens on it or there's not a lens on it or — I have no idea but it looks like you're seeing him through something, which is not intentional because it wouldn't make any sense. It's not someone else's seeing him through a telescope or something.

Jenny: Right, right. Any DPs out there got the hot goss on what's going on here?

Kristin: Yeah. What did the editor mess up here? What happened here? I want to know, Oh, but Jenny, it's taken us a while to get to this scene. [Laughs]

Jenny: [Shouts] Yes, it's time! It's finally time! It's finally time.

Kristin: Oh my god. "I got your message" says Tara. "I had class. I was just about to call you. Please don't ever think that I am not obsessed with you because I am. Are you obsessed with me too?" "Yes, I am. Let's be obsessed with each other together."

Jenny: Listen, let me tell you something. "I've been thinking about that last spell we did all day."

Kristin: Jenny, for the delight of our listeners, I'm going to just play that entire sound clip starting with —

Jenny: Please!

Kristin: Yeah, let's just go right into it.

[Clip from episode plays]

Willow: I had so much fun the other night. Those spells...

Tara: Yeah, that was nice.

Willow: I hope you don't think that I just come over for the spells and everything. I mean, I really like just talking and hanging out with you and stuff.

Tara: I know that, but you want to do a spell?

Willow: Yeah, but only because it's really important. There's this —

Tara: No, you don't have to explain, I don't mind, really. I've been thinking about that last spell we did all day.

Kristin: Ooooh, [sings] Willow and Tara doing your witchy stuff, which also means you're having sex with each other.

Jenny: Okay, alright.

Kristin: I'm sorry, but no, I really want to talk about the line that that sound clip began with which is, "I hope you don't think I just come over for the spells" which is — I mean, they're playing with witchcraft, the writers or whatever, to allow us to hear about these two women doing some stuff together without talking about it. And I don't even think it's — I'm not saying that as — they're not talking about sex 'cause they don't want to, I think they're having a damn good time with the analogy of, you know, witchy spells are to queer ladies doing it. I'm here for it. I like it.

Jenny: Alright, alright. I mean, I also — I'm obviously here for it.

Kristin: [Laughs] So then they — Tara is a little hesitant when Willow suggests that they're going to conjure the goddess Thespius. We'll come back to see how Tara handles her hesitancy. But first we should go to Willy's place, the new and improved Willy's place.

Jenny: Yes. Important piece of world-building: demons love chicken fingers in the Buffyverse. And why wouldn't they? Chicken fingers are delicious or vegan chicken fingers if you prefer.

Kristin: Yeah. I'm sure that Willy has both options 'cause he's classed up the joint, you know —

Jenny: Yup, yup. Willy's place.

Kristin: He tells Buffy like, "yo, I don't two-time anymore. I don't do this." We get a lot of the Italian stereotype in this episode with Willy's place and the later with Spike and the music that's playing, we'll get there. But Willy's essentially like "I don't fuck around anymore" which basically just means "Buffy, punch me in the nose and then I'll tell you what you need to learn."

Riley walks in and is like, "the fuck?!" This is a little upsetting. I mean, of course, it's upsetting. It's meant to be upsetting. But I felt upset and threatened with Riley in this scene for a couple of reasons. One, he's so sweaty and anyone that sweaty seems like they might pose a risk of some kind. Why are you that sweaty? And two, he's really violent with Buffy, which is so far out of his character that we know and we trust that it's really jarring. And he's really out of it and so it's just a bad combination of things. He grabs Buffy, he's shaking, his hands are shaking, and then he does something that we hate in the Buffy universe. He pulls out a gun.

Jenny: Yup. Yup. And he points it at a tiny frail lady in a bucket hat who I'm going to say is a non-vampiric demon of some kind.

Kristin: That's the question I was going to ask, is it a human?

Jenny: Is it a human woman?

Kristin: Yeah —

Jenny: I think based on her hat, I'm going to say demon.

Kristin: Wow.

Jenny: Don't you think?

Kristin: Fucking rude!

Jenny: There's just something — No! There's just like something — her whole getup. She just looks so small and frail that it looks like she's trying to look small.

Kristin: I guess that's true. She's a demon where she looks — right, she looks harmless and that's her advantage is she looks like the helpless little lady and then her eyes pop out of her head and her jaw opens up and swallows it.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, exactly, exactly, exactly. Or I was thinking what if she was attached — since you said angler fish earlier — what if there was a demon that had basically a small frail human woman as it's angler fish lure?

Kristin: Dangler? Yeah.

Jenny: It's angler dangler.

Kristin: [Laughs] It's angler dangler!

Jenny: And then somewhere behind her there's just a massive land fish demon trying to gobble up some humans. Just a thought.

Kristin: Oh god, wow. You know, this is our holiday episode and I feel like we're really giving you a lot to take home for the holidays. [Laughs]

Jenny: Yeah. So festive.

Kristin: So okay, so we go to —

Jenny: Hey, I mean, bioluminescence is not so far removed from Christmas lights.

Kristin: That's true, that's true. Oh my god, what a cool way to decorate your Christmas tree. A bunch of little angler — not real angler fish, don't worry PETA, no angler fish were harmed in the making of this podcast.

Jenny: No, heavens no.

Kristin: Anyway, let's get to Xander's house, which is divided by tapestries into rooms. Nurse Buffy is here with Riley wrapping his hand.

Jenny: Nurse. Buffy.

Kristin: Oh, you want to stop me there for a second?

Jenny: Nurse Buffy! No I just wanted to shout nurse Buffy a couple times. I'm good now.

Kristin: [Laughs] She's using — Now, Jenny, I know you watch the size of Mark Blucas' palms a lot and not only would he dwarf a full sized bandana with his palm, but this tiny ass bandana, I'm going to say, I think would look even tinier next to his giant palm than it does in this scene, right?

Jenny: Dude. Dude.

Kristin: It's so tiny.

Jenny: That bandana. It's just like a bandaid or something.

Kristin: It's like if a real bandana sneezed, it would be what came out. [Laughs]

Jenny: [Laughs] Wow. I like that a lot. Thank you.

Kristin: So this scene, you know, we've talked about this a little bit already, but the lines that are — the words that Riley is saying in this scene are so sad. "I thought I knew, but I don't, I don't know which team I'm on, who the bad guys are. Maybe I'm the bad guy" which is pretty terrifying. I know, it's really sad. And Buffy has gone through, not this specific journey, but I remember — this kind of made me think of when Giles and Buffy were in the cemetery, I believe it was after Jenny Calender got killed, and they're talking about the fact that bad and good, there's no dividing line. It's really — there's a grey area and it's really hard to place things on one side or the other.

And Riley has lived a "simple life", in quotes, up until this point because he has —

Jenny: A very black and white — like everything is laid out for you. You don't have to ask questions.

Kristin: Right and now he's so turned around that he doesn't know what's good and what's bad. And because of that he doesn't know if he's good or bad, which is really powerful. And he's in this tiny fetal position which, you know, I mean it's as small as Marc Blucas can get himself to look. I think he does a pretty good job. [Laughs]. And then we go to the other side of the tapestry where Xander is wearing something lovely, Jenny.

Jenny: What is he wearing?

Kristin: He's wearing a shirt that says 'I love dirt' —

Jenny: Like 10 times in a row! Why?!

Kristin: Why?! What is the shirt?! We lived in the 90s and I don't remember it. I want to know what is going on.

Jenny: What could it mean? It's so mysterious.

Kristin: Anyway, Xander is called to duty, of course. They really go hard on this 'Xander used to be a soldier so anything soldier related we'll call Xander in for'. Anya is not super thrilled about it 'cause she wants a boring boyfriend. She doesn't want a boyfriend who's going to have to risk life and limb.

Jenny: Yeah. It's interesting how, you know, it seems like she's already aware of the sort of Scooby contract, but suddenly in this — I wonder what it is about this situation that's got her all riled up, like extra defensive of Xander.

Kristin: I think she's getting more attached to Xander, you know, I think that's what's happening. I think she's just falling harder for him and getting more attached to him. And the risk of losing him is seeming more and more dire to her. That's my analysis. Speaking of things being dire, we go back to our witches in the next scene.

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: And essentially — here's what I took away from this spell. We both blow at the same time and it makes a mist. So I'm just gonna say, we both blow stuff at the same time and then it makes a mist come. Okay. Thank you for going down that journey.

Jenny: Ummm, I wonder what you could mean — I wonder what that could possibly be [clears throat].

Kristin: So a thing that I do want to talk — well, there's two things that I want to talk about in this scene. One is Tara and what is going on with Tara, but the other thing is really small, but part of the spell that they incant. Is that what you would say?

Jenny: Oooh yes, I love that.

Kristin: Thank you. Is 'we walk in shadows'. That's part of how they are calling the goddess Thespia, which I don't know if it was intentional or not, but, you know, queer literature, lesbian literature, a lot of it was in the sixties and seventies with pulp novels.

For example, a really famous lesbian pulp series is called Beebo Brinker and if you give me just a half second to go down this alleyway. Beebo Brinker is a series that was written by a woman whose pen name was Ann Bannon, and Ann Bannon was married to this dude and she was coming into the city to do "research" in hard quotes for her book that was about women falling in love with women, whatever.

She wound up leaving her husband and was totally queer. And she wrote these books and they were published and the covers especially were designed to attract men to buy them, right? Women in the shadows, what do they do to each other? And that was my first point is that 'women in the shadows' was like a very major, phrase used at that time, especially in talking about lesbians or women who liked other women. But to just round the Ann Bannon Beebo Brinker story out, what was really fun about this series is that it was marketed to — they would put it at bus depots. They were pulp novels. So they were really cheap and they would put them at bus depots so that dudes would buy them before they got on the bus. But what happened was that so many queer women were seeking out these books because they talked about Manhattan and the places that queer women were going in Manhattan to find each other, to meet each other. And so they were used as a guidebook by women who didn't have resources to find other women who liked women, which was just really fucking cool. I did a whole paper on Beebo Brinker. So thank you for indulging me and letting me talk about women in the shadows. [Laughs]

Jenny: Did — in any of the Beebo Brinker books, did two women take four various gem stones, place them in a square, get a fistful of mystic sand and then and encant together and then blow the sand all over the square?

Kristin: No, I missed that part if it happened, but I would have been really there for it. The question I have, and you don't have to answer this cause there's probably an answer that I just don't remember, is why doesn't Tara let this spell happen? She pulled —

Jenny: Oh why does Tara sabotage? Why does Tara tuck her fistful of powder under her doily bedspread? Wow. When she finally meets Buffy, they're going to have so much to talk about.

Kristin: [Laughs] She's like, "oh my god, I had those pillows and I had the bedspread. Did you?" And Buffy's like, "no, I just got the pillow." [Laughs]

Jenny: [Laughs]

Kristin: But yeah, I don't as a viewer know why Tara has done this and maybe —

Jenny: How interesting. I wonder if we'll ever find out.

Kristin: Okay, great. So that lets me know that we will and I just don't remember. Great. Great. Great. But yeah, Tara blows this spell up. And the one thing I do want to say before we go to the next scene is that Tara. — she takes her fistful of witchy dust and she puts it under her doily bedspread. But then when she takes her hand back out, she must worry that Willow will open her eyes and so she pretends to throw the dust and it's really funny. If you didn't see it, go back and watch it. 'Cause it's just so Tara, the way that she fucking does it is the most Tara thing that's ever happened.

Jenny: It's very good.

Kristin: Buffy's going undercover, which means another tiny pair of glasses.

Jenny: [Laughs] Oh my god. Don't you think it's interesting that Buffy's scientist outfit — government scientist costume is just a Buffy outfit with a lab coat and some glasses. It's kind of every nineties teen romcom where they're like, "look at that shit bomb in the paint splattered overalls with the ponytail and glasses." And then she takes off her glasses and shakes her hair out and they're like, "whoa, prom queen!" Except this kind of in reverse.

Kristin: Right, right. She dons a tiny pair of glasses and a white coat and suddenly is a doctor.

Jenny: Remember how tiny glasses used to be?

Kristin: Oh my god, Jenny. Okay. You and I just went to London, which meant I had to dust off my passport because I don't travel a lot. And I opened my passport, which was taken only in the year 2000 and — wait, it was eight years into it and — 2010! It was 2010 that is that long ago. The glasses on my head looked like I stole them from a baby. Looked like I took them from a baby, off of a baby's head.

Jenny: One of those pair of baby glasses that are like elastic-banded on, that kind of look like swimming goggles?

Kristin: [Laughs] Yes! They are so tiny and that was only 2010 so, whew, we really went through a tiny glasses phase. Anyway, the retinal scan, which is a retinal scan, not what Xander thinks it is, is complete. Buffy gets in the elevator and here's a question. No-one monitors who the fuck goes in and out of The Initiative. All of that tinfoil technology and they don't fucking monitor who comes in and out?! That's weird.

Jenny: Yeah, it does kind of raise some questions. There do seem to be some security loopholes, but also, the leader of the pack has just been murdered and so perhaps things are in disarray.

Kristin: That's true, that's true. Xander coming in hot gets to The Initiative and is so bowled over by the beauty and the splendor that is —

Jenny: The majesty!

Kristin: — the pit that he says, “now I get it. Can I have sex with Riley too?”

Jenny: Ooh, can he?

Kristin: You know what, Jenny, I didn't get excited about Xander in a Speedo. I didn't get super excited about Riley and his stuff, but I have to say that I am really here —

Jenny: Your interest has peaked?

Kristin: It has peaked. I will take this pairing and bring it home with me. I would like to have this pairing. So thank you for it.

Jenny: Honestly, now that I'm thinking about it, the pairings or desired pairings that we've seen or been made aware of. Okay. Xander and Buffy, Xander and Cornelia, Xander and Willow, Xander and Anya. I feel like Xander and Riley makes more sense than all of them.

Kristin: Don't forget about Xander and angel for god's sake.

Jenny: Oh my gosh. Xander and Angel, Xander and Ampata, Xander and Natalie French, the sexy substitute teacher/praying mantis.

Kristin: That's high on my list, actually.

Jenny: That would be number two right after Xander and Riley.

Kristin: So okay, so that's interesting. I was going to ask you from between Xander and Riley and Xander and Angel, where your ranking was and I agree that Xander and Riley outrank Xander and Angel for me. And I also agree that Xander and Natalie French outrank Xander and Angel. I think Xander and Angel would come fourth and —

Jenny: Oh, what would be third?

Kristin: I think I like Xander and Anya.

Jenny: Oh, you know what I forgot? Xander and Faith.

Kristin: Oh yeah. They don't rank high on my list at all.

Jenny: No, they're all the way at the bottom. No, Xander and Anya is pretty great, but I love this new couple that we just came up with.

Kristin: I also — I hope that you all —

Jenny: Xiley.

Kristin: [Shouts Xiley! Yes! Oh my god, wow.

Jenny: Rander.

Kristin: Nope, nope, Xiley, definitely Xiley.

Jenny: Oh my gosh. Rinder, almost Grindr but Rinder.

Kristin: Wow. Okay. I would like to let you all in on giving us feedback of whether or not you appreciate when we talk for an hour and a fucking half about your least favorite episodes of this show. Or not, you know? Let us know.

Jenny: Thumbs up, thumbs down, thumbs in the middle.

Kristin: Right. We can amend things if you'd like us to, but boy, we are having a time with this episode. So anyway, they make it through the first phase of The Initiative without getting caught. Xander wants to make out with Buffy as an undercover tactic. She's like, "dude, that is not what happens in The Initiative." And then what —

Jenny: [Laughs] Great point Buffy.

Kristin: [Laughs] Sweaty Riley is scaring the shit out of Willow through tapestry walls. 'Cause he has awoken —

Jenny: Oh and then he throws her on the ground. Oof. Riley is really fucked up right now.

Kristin: Yeah. They really take — and I think it's important that they took it as far as they did to really let us know how fucked up Riley is, you know? With the medication and all this stuff. But I don't like the fact that we see Willow tossed at all. And I'm sure knowing Riley this seems like a thing that he would — we probably won't ever get to see this scene — but I feel like he and Willow will sit down and really unpack this with each other, you know? How it made each of them feel, how they can work to heal from wounds and things like that. So I'm sure that will happen.

Jenny: Especially considering over the course of their relationship Riley has gone way out of his way to support Willow and take care of Willow when nobody else was doing it, even.

Kristin: I agree. I agree. It's the one time in my life that I wish I had a 'don't go away Riley' jingle. Damn. So a couple of things we learn, of course, that the meds are happening through the food. We've been talking about it all episode, but this is where we learn it. And then we go — before we come back to The Initiative again, we go briefly to Willy's Place where we learn a couple of things. One is that he keeps a very beautifully decanted bottle of blood for the vampires, which is pretty awesome.

Jenny: [Laughs] I missed that, I gotta go back.

Kristin: Oh really? Yeah, he pours a glass of blood for Spike and it's in this beautiful decanter and I was like, yes, that's how I prefer all my blood to be served. Willy's Place is playing this — what I feel is like fairly Italian sound — it's an Italian song. And then Spike gets punched in the nose and that's all we learned thus far.

But if it's okay with you, Jenny, I would love to take this scene to its fruition just to talk about it.

Jenny: By all means.

Kristin: Cool. So we learn in the scene at Willy's that follows this, that Spike is no longer welcome at the demon bar and that's because he now kills and/or beat up demons and that there's a code of conduct for demons that means that they don't do this to other demons. Now we've seen demons who fuck around with — especially in Angel where the full blooded demons were massacring the half blooded demons and things like that.

But it is really interesting and cool that we're learning that like there's sort of an unwritten code. That demons don't fuck around with other demons. Point A and point B, I think it's also really important that the big arc of this episode is Riley and what he's going through and Adam and whatever. But the little thread through this that Spike has is really important because we've seen that Spike is really afraid, that he's really sort of reckoning with the fact that he's being hunted, that he's been chipped and that he's really fucked up. And then he goes, as the last part of his little arc in this episode, to the bar to be with the people he thinks he can be with and they don't accept him either and he's not welcome there. So big plot points for Spike.

Jenny: Wow. Where does he belong? He's not a monster. He's not a man.

Kristin: [Gasps] It's like that song Britney Spears wrote. [Laughs]

Jenny: Oh my god. [Sings] I'm not a man. Not quite a vampire.

Kristin: [Sings] Not yet a monster. [Laughs]

Jenny: Wow. Yes. Well, well, well, great.

Kristin: Anyway...

Jenny: Back at The Initiative. Engelman has just given up all the info —

Kristin: Yeah, in like two seconds flat. He doesn't even — he's just like “here, here's everything.”

Jenny: Yeah, yeah. And who cares? He's just trying to get to the good part, which is Adam coming out of nowhere, inserting floppy disk after floppy disk into his chest slot. [Laughs]

Kristin: No, listen hold on. Okay, hold on. Because I can't. Right, first of all, before we get to Adam, I don't need to talk about a lot 'cause I know we've been talking forever, but I do want to talk about the fact that Dr Anglerfish tells Riley to take Buffy to the stockade, which I just —

Jenny: No, is the stockade the thing where traditionally your hands and your head go in?

Kristin: Yes! But like —

Jenny: What the hell?!

Kristin: Maybe in the military the stockade means something else and not that thing, but I just like —

Jenny: I prefer to think of the commandos just swinging by and throwing rotten tomatoes and stuff at Buffy while she — head in hands.

Kristin: [Laughs] Anyway, but then yes, like you said, Adam reveals himself by killing a soldier and dropping him off. And then him being like, "me, I am 314". Then he delivers this whole monologue, "I was thinking about the world, why I feel, what I am" and we're like, "oh my god." And then, Jenny...

Jenny: Yes?

Kristin: You already said how he puts the floppy disk in his mother fucking metal plate chest. But what I didn't realize upon my first view is that not only does he take a floppy disk and insert it into his body, but he pulls it out of the cargo pocket of his pants!

Jenny: Dude, yes! Yes exactly. He has cargo pockets!

Kristin: He has cargo pockets that he has stored multiple floppy disks in with which he would like to learn information by inserting them into his chest cavity. If this is not the most nineties thing that has ever existed. I cannot. I cannot, I could almost explode.

Jenny: Wretched.

Kristin: So he learns from the first floppy disc — and I say the first because he inserts a second one without ejecting the first, to which we all say, what the fuck?! We know how floppy disks work. Maybe those of you who are younger listeners

think that back in the age of floppy disks, you could simply insert multiple at one time. You could not, you could only insert one at a time.

Jenny: Single disc capacity.

Kristin: The first disc lets Adam know that he is a kinematically redundant bio chemical demonoid?

Jenny: I can't believe you wrote this down. I was tuned out. I blacked out when he said that.

Kristin: I just wanted to know what the words were and I don't even know that I got them correct, but kinematically redundant, what does that mean? Why is he redundant? Redundant sounds like a bad thing. So what does that mean?

Jenny: Can someone tell us?

Kristin: Could someone tell us and demonoid, is that — is there a reason for — anyway, you're right, I'm thinking too much into it, but I just noted it and wanted to talk about it.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: One other thing that I want to talk about, because you know how I like to watch the manicures on this show, is I think the fucking Adam needs to go to the fucking salon to get somebody to fix his damn nails up, 'cause they look like shit.

Jenny: His nails are a terror.

Kristin: A terror.

Jenny: Also when you're going to be handling tiny floppy disks and inserting — they're full of delicate information that you need. You don't want to have big black horned claws. They just look very unmanageable and dangerous.

Kristin: It is true, though I will say that I love when I interact with people with really long nails and they use their phone or a cash register, anything with buttons that needs to be — where you need to manipulate your finger around the nail to make it happen is very satisfying to me. It's the clicking — the slight click, I don't know, I'm sorry. I really went off there, but I don't like Adam's nails. I do like when people have long nails and they use small things sometimes. I think it's very satisfying.

Jenny: Cool. Cool. We also find out during Adam's exposition speech that Maggie considered Adam and Riley to be her favorite children. Let's just remember that Adam was never a conscious or animated during the whole time that Maggie was alive and the first thing that he did was kill her.

Kristin: Yeah. But she didn't have time to revise her diary, you know? That's the thing is that like —

Jenny: Right, right, but how was she even like “this one's my favorite”?

Kristin: Yeah. I think because she made him like I think —

Jenny: Yeah, I guess that's very human, isn't it?

Kristin: Yeah. I mean, and the thing that I took away from that, Jenny, was that Maggie kept a diary, which I'm pretty into. That she was like — also sometimes when I picture Maggie writing in her diary, sometimes she's writing in it, but then other times I picture her typing it into that machine that then speaks it back to her, you know? So it's her feelings, but they're said by the machine. So it's like [imitates robot speaking machine] “my favorite children are Adam and Riley.” [Laughs]

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: So, things that we already talked about that happened in this scene I think is basically Riley saying, “I cannot be programmed. I'm a man”, which is what he's grappling with the whole episode. Xander gets a throw in at Adam, which I thought was really cool and nice that Xander went for it. Dr Anglerfish, rest in peace.

Jenny: He is harpooned.

Kristin: He gets harpooned and Riley gets sort of partially harpooned.

Jenny: Parsh-pooned, if you will. Please don't actually, I'm sorry I said that.

Kristin: Wow, wow, wow. Adam skulks out through the vent.

Jenny: Skulks!

Kristin: [Laughs] And the army shoots through the doorway to find out what the fuck is going on. And this is a standoff between, you know, The Initiative and Buffy where she's like, “he needs a hospital” and Forrest in particular is like, “we've got this, this is what we do, we take care of our own here.” And I kind of liked the way they played this because Buffy is like, “no, fuck you” in her initial response and

Xander is like, "listen, let let them have this." They have a thing happening here that sort of goes beyond just them being The Initiative. There is a brotherly bond, there is a bond that they have from working together and they need to be able to kind of see this through.

Jenny: Yeah, totally.

Kristin: So I'm a little bit here for that.

Jenny: Sure, sure. But Buffy is so worried about Riley and she's like, "he has nothing to hold on" and I'm like, except a tiny triangular scarf, ma'am!

Kristin: [Laughs] Yeah, he does. My notes from the last scene of Riley in the hospital bed are "oops" because hello Riley's pecs. They were — the character of Angel always accidentally unbuttoned his shirt. But Riley always buttons his shirt. How are we going to get him naked? Harpoon him!

Jenny: [Laughs] Oh my god.

Kristin: And then tiny bandana 'cause he's holding on to it.

Jenny: Well, what an episode...

Kristin: [Laughs] Hey listen, you know what? Everybody was thrilled with the fact that they didn't like the I In Team, but they loved our podcast episode. So maybe we're just helping it out, you know? We're helping these episodes out.

Jenny: Yeah, hopefully.

Kristin: I hope, I hope.

Jenny: Let it be so.

Kristin: Jenny, we have one thing left to do.

Jenny: One remaining piece of business and then we'll be done with this episode forever. It's time for...

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Jenny: Well for this episode's Sexual Tension Award nominees, we have, wow, just four really, really great hot, hot, hot options. Something for everyone, I think. So if

you are inclined towards women, but three of them, we've got Buffy, Anya and Willow on the pullout couch in the basement.

Kristin: Hot, hot hot.

Jenny: Hell yeah. If you like gentleman, hunky gentlemen, butterscotchien gentlemen, gentlemen who look great in a Speedo, we've got Xander and Riley. [Laughs] You didn't sound very enthused, Kristin.

Kristin: Sorry. No, I think I was so enthused and I was like, should I tell them all later that I'm voting for Xander and Riley or will they be mad at me because there's so many other great pairings.

Jenny: Well, Kristin, I don't know, you haven't heard all the pairings yet. There might be something more appealing to you even than Xander and Riley.

Kristin: Okay. I'll let you know.

Jenny: Okay, okay. Our third set of nominees, fan favorites and people who are actually probably having sex, Tara and Willow!

Kristin: [Imitates audience cheering] Did that sound like an audience cheering? [Laughs]

Jenny: [Laughs] Yeah, that sounded great. Or like a weird ocean. And then our fourth pairing, who for whom I personally will be voting, not to sway anyone. That I think is, you know, it's edgy, it's hot, it's different. It's like nothing we've seen before. It's Adam and floppy disks. You're welcome. Oh hell yeah!

Kristin: [Laughs] No, no, no, no.

Jenny: He's clearly — they have something really special going on, Kristin. Accept it.

Kristin: They do have something really special, but my vote, despite all of the other contenders here, my vote stays with Xander and Riley. I'm really here for it. So you take that and unpack it on your own time. But I'm —

Jenny: I love it, that's what's beautiful about democracy. Your vote is your own, and it's just important for you to make your voice heard.

Kristin: Yeah. So you can head on over to our Twitter @bufferingcast and cast your vote for who turns you on the most.

Jenny: [Laughs] Who you ship the most.

Kristin: I mean, whatever, follow your heart.

Jenny: It's actually kind of become unclear, what is the point of the Sexual Tension Awards? [Laughs] Amusing ourselves, I think is the number 1 point.

Kristin: Well Jenny —

Jenny: Somehow that incredibly long us talking to each other about this episode is now complete.

Kristin: Is now complete! I think we did a really good job. I hope we did. I hope we brought some new ideas and fun to an episode that you may or may not dislike.

Jenny: I hope we gave you all something to think about.

Kristin: Yes. So why don't we tell you who we are just in case you forgot.

Jenny: Yes. Well yes, since the beginning of this episode you've got a long grey beard and a field mouse lives in it and you could barely remember your own name, let alone ours. Well I am Jenny Owen Youngs and when I'm not watching Buffy and making this podcast, I am usually writing and recording songs. You can learn more about me and hear some of those songs at jennyowenyoungs.com/buffering and you can give me a shout on Twitter @jennyowenyoungs.

Kristin: Yes and I am Kristin Russo. You can find more about me and the work that I do with LGBTQIA communities as well as for parents, family members and educators of LGBTQIA young people over kristinnoeline.com that's K-R-I-S-T-I-N-N-O-E-L-I-N-E you can use that spelling to also find me on Twitter, on Instagram, where I talk about all sorts of things and also post pictures of cats and kittens and Christmas trees and other things. I'm trying to think of what I've posted recently on my Instagram account.

Jenny: A lot of hot cat content.

Kristin: A lot of cat content, yeah. Yeah and, of course, if you want to go right to those resources that I talked about, you can go on over to mykidisgay.com or everyoneisgay.com and find some stuff.

Jenny: Buffering The Vampire Slayer is on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @bufferingcast. And you could always email us at bufferingandthevampireslayer@gmail.com.

Kristin: Yes and speaking of emailing us, Jenny, if you are a Patron at the \$10 or higher level, you get mailbag episodes as a bonus. And this is our last episode, December 19th, until we come back in the new year on January 9th. So that's a little bit of a gap, but if you are a Patron of ours, you will be getting a mailbag episode. So you'll get some more of us in your little earbuds. You can become a Patron of ours by going to bufferingthevampireslayer.com and clicking on Patreon. There's a ton of fun stuff over there and it also supports us and the work that we do.

Other ways that you can support us. Of course you can go on over to iTunes and rate and review us. You can also rate and review Angel On Top, our sister podcast that we go in tandem with. They are in Season 1 of Angel right now. And you can also go on over to our merch store. It is December 19th, so if you've waited this long, you, I think, might be able to do some express shipping in the US for some gifts. But you know, maybe you have waited this long because you're not going to see people that you need to give gifts to until the end of the year, or maybe even January. But we have tons.

Jenny: Maybe the most important recipient on your gifting list is you and it's less time sensitive.

Kristin: Ooh, yeah. Maybe you're going to get some sweet cash money for the holidays and you can spend it in our store. [Laughs] But we have tons of really fun 'smash the demon lizard patriarchy' and 'support your local alewife' and 'girl gang' and socks, we have socks!

Jenny: Oh, hot socks.

Kristin: Hot socks. We have some fun stuff so you can go on —

Jenny: We've got the new wow, wow, wow, wow hat.

Kristin: The wow, wow, wow beanie. From Jenny's mouth to your head. [Laughs]

Jenny: Hmm, interesting...

Kristin: You can find our store at bufferingthevampireslayer.com as well. You just click on 'shop'. And I think that's most of what I've got. How about you, Jenny?

Jenny: I think that's just about everything. Hope you all have wonderful holidays.

Kristin: Yes. Same happy holidays. Happy new year.

Jenny: And until next year...

Both: Awoooooo!

Jenny: Hell yeah.

Kristin: Last howl of the year.

Both: [Laughs]

[Jenny performing "Goodbye Iowa" off the album "Songs from Season Four" by Buffering the Vampire Slayer]

There isn't any easy way out of this

You know, and I know

Something got a hold of you but what is it

You don't know, you said so

I'm feeling your, feeling your grip

Starting to starting to slip

How can I help you hold onto this

You were the one thing that I knew I could count on

but you're all shook up, all shook up

You know I was ready for someone holdin steady

but you're all shook up, all shook up

I don't really know how to reach you now

It's scary, what could be

I don't really know how to calm you down

Heart racing, hands shaking

I'm feeling your, feeling your grip

Starting to starting to slip

I just want to help you hold onto this

You were the one thing that I knew I could count on

but you're all shook up, all shook up

You know I was ready for someone holdin steady

but you're all shook up, all shook up

I know you don't know who you are anymore

I know you don't know but I won't let you go

You were the one thing that I knew I could count on

but you're all shook up, all shook up

Come home yeah I'm ready to just hold, hold you steady

cause you're all shook up, all shook up