

Buffering the Vampire Slayer
Episode 7.14: First Date

[CHIME]

Jenny: Oh hey, everybody!

Kristin: Hello! [singsong] Hello, it's really hot in New York! How is it in Maine?

Jenny: It's warm! Wait, no, it's cold. [both laugh]

Kristin: Oh my god. Fucking fake out. Just make me feel solidarity for one second.

Jenny: I forgot. It was hot yesterday, but it's cool today.

Kristin: I don't know what's going on around here, you guys, but it's been in the 90s twice already.

Jenny: Eek!

Kristin: And as of this recording, we are not even out of May. I know when you hear it, we'll be in June, but like—the ads on the radio and shit are like, "Summertime is here!" And I'm like, no, it actually, literally isn't. [laughing] Like, it is not summer.

Jenny: Yeah, not for another, like, 21 days, pal.

Kristin: Yeah, so like, stop trying to fucking make it okay. It's not okay. Anyway. You know what happens before summer is officially here, Jenny?

Jenny: Spring?

Kristin: Spring and also, we go to Philadelphia—

Jenny: Oh, yeah!

Kristin: To do a live recording of Storyteller.

Jenny: Ooh-ooh!

Kristin: [simultaneously] We have costumes, it's not a big deal. I got—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Mine cost about seven dollars and twelve cents and Jenny's cost a lot more than that. So that's your only clue about what our costumes are for Storyteller. We're gonna be at World Cafe Live on June 11th. It is the first live taping that we have done outside of the special prom taping that we did in March since the beginning of the pandemic. It's the first time we've gathered together—

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: For a live episode and it is one of three of our last live recordings ever for Buffering the Vampire Slayer. There are, as of this taping, 15 entire tickets left. So if you want to join us in Philadelphia at World Cafe Live, you should go and get a ticket pretty much right this minute. Hit pause—

Jenny: Now's your time.

Kristin: We'll wait. The power of the pause, we will wait here—

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: Until you grab that ticket. World Cafe Live has always been amazing to us. They make themed drinks and themed snacks and it's just a really wonderful time. And also, just safety-wise, all of our in-person shows are masked. I know, you know, rules and all that are changing constantly around this country. But guess where they don't change? At Buffering the Vampire Slayer. So in case you're worried about that, [Jenny laughs] know that these will be masked events, unless people are eating or drinking. We will be as safe as possible. And head's up, New York City, the finale is of course sold out. Chicago, we have a two-night event in July. The second night of that taping is sold out, but the first night, the music night—it is themed Buffy and Faith. It's gonna be me and Jenny and Jess Abbott, AKA two ex-wives, one ex-wife, one wife—it's a—you can do the math. It's gonna be a good time.

Jenny: Hmm. [laughs]

Kristin: And there's gonna be live Buffy and Faith music, and there's only a handful of tickets left to that one too. So if you're in the midwest and you wanna come see us in Chicago, that's Lincoln Hall. All of these events and the ticketing links are on our calendar, bufferingthevampireslayer.com, just click on Calendar. Scoop that stuff up, because this is—this is it, folks! This is the [singing] final countdown. [sings tune] [Jenny laughs] No? Okay.

Jenny: Yes. This is it.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Jenny, what do you got?

Jenny: And speaking of “it” as in, I-T “it,” it’s time for the results of last episode’s Sexual Tension Awards!

Kristin: Can’t wait.

Jenny: That episode was The Killer in Me, which is like, the title of a poem that Buffy wrote in her journal about any number of her ex-boyfriends.

Kristin: [laughs] Oh my god.

Jenny: In...fourth place, with 4% of the vote, they—

Kristin: Bullshit!

Jenny: Deserved better, I feel like?

Kristin: They did deserve better. I’m mad.

Jenny: It’s—but you know, the race is on with this quartet of noms. It’s Kennedy and Vaughne. They did their best.

Kristin: Fully canoodled in that lecture hall, but—

Jenny: Indeed. [laughs]

Kristin: Only 4% of you considered it tense enough. [laughs]

Jenny: Fan favorites, question mark, in third place [Kristin laughs] with 24% of the vote, it’s Xandrew continued. Do people love Xandrew?

Kristin: I mean—

Jenny: I can’t keep track.

Kristin: They do. Xandrew—I think Xandrew won the last two rounds. I think the only reason they didn’t win this one—

Jenny: [simultaneously] Bless them.

Kristin: Is because people were like, "I mean, maybe we should give it to somebody else." [laughs]

Jenny: Mmm. Mmhmm, mmhmm, mmhmm. And then it gets even more heated in the top two slots. In second place with 35% of the vote, it's Kennedy and Willow.

Kristin: Man. Third place—so much tension that one of them literally turned into the man she murdered last season, and it wasn't enough to win. It was not enough. Why, Jenny? 'Cause who won?

Jenny: Because who won? [Kristin laughs] My beautiful, sweet—listen. Sometimes you take a cigarette and you wrap it in a piece of Wonderbread [both laughing] and that's a tasty snack. In first place, with 37% of the vote, it's Riley and Assface, AKA Spike. You're welcome.

Kristin: That is...disgusting. [Jenny laughs] You really took all the sex right out of that.

Jenny: [simultaneously] Sorry. Sorry, sorry, sorry. You take a bloomin' onion—

Kristin: Uh-huh.

Jenny: And you wrap it in a piece of Wonderbread. Maybe that's a little tastier.

Kristin: I think the Wonderbread is just always gonna lose me, which really is in true to form—

Jenny: Ehhh.

Kristin: As far as I go.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Alright. Listen, you wanna hear us talk about an episode, and we're gonna get there, we're real close, actually. I wanna tell you about—[laughs] I mean. This summer is kind of out of control. And here's your reminder that this June, two things are beginning in the land of Patreon. One is a fucking watch-along journey, re-watching Yellow Jackets with me and Jenny. All ten episodes, we will be podcasting about in the Patreon feed, and we will be doing live watches every other Thursday, beginning June 16th at 8 PM Eastern standard—

Jenny: Woop-woop!

Kristin: Time. Daylight time? Whatever, fucking Eastern time. Just get it together.

Jenny: The time.

Kristin: The time, okay? [laughs] And this just in, breaking news, just hit my desk moments ago—

Jenny: [laughs and starts making telegram beeps]

Kristin: [laughs] Me and LaToya Ferguson are also gonna be doing a little bonus pod in our Buffering Patreon on the new Netflix series, First Kill, about two girls [Jenny gasps] falling in love! One is a vampire [Jenny gasps] and the other is a monster killer. [Jenny gasps] Oh. My. God. Also, the mom of the vampire is played by—what's her face—who's Juliet from Lost, who I fucking love, so.

Jenny: Oh, yeah, Elizabeth Mitchell. Woo!

Kristin: Elizabeth Mitchell, yeah. Elizabeth Mitchell, like, literally gay canon since at least the movie Gia, so I'm here for it.

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: I'm here for it. All of that information on our Patreon. Just go to bufferingthevampireslayer.com and click on Patreon. Ha!

Jenny: An embarrassment of pod! Riches to be had!

Kristin: [simultaneously] I have so many pods. I'm just gonna be talking for the entire summer.

Jenny: Before you talk for the entire summer, can you listen while I read to you and our listenership this incoming email?

Kristin: You can. I gave Jenny the email, so don't worry about it.

Jenny: Ta-da. This email says, "Hi, Kristin and Jenny." Hello. "I just finished your ep for The Killer in Me. Also made it two bars into the song before getting choked up and teary on the street." [whispers] Yes! "So thank you and kudos to Bess and also Jenny, sob emojis." Nice. "I feel like maybe one of the reasons that Willow went to

the campus Wicca group despite it not being the most logical choice—I mean, she must know so many practitioners through her affiliation to the Magic Box, RIP Magic Box. And it seems like the Devon coven is also the phone ally du jour—is that the Wicca group is where she first met Tara.” Oh nooooo!

Kristin: [laughs] Yeah.

Jenny: “Like, with her subconscious just yearning desperately for Tara all episode, I can’t help but think that on some level, she felt that going back to the start of their love affair would heal her in some way, make her whole in some way. If the loss of Tara is the fundamental wound of the episode, then maybe the entry of Tara into her life is subconsciously the only cure she can conceive of.” I love this email. Oh! And then...it is signed, “Agent Finn and Assface forever, Jamie, she/they, from Brooklyn.” [Kristin laughs] Well! Jamie, so much to love about this email.

Kristin: I thought you would like it and I thought it was a nice take on perhaps—

Jenny: Yeah, a great take.

Kristin: [simultaneously] What sent Willow over there. Yeah.

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: Well, Jenny. It’s a long episode, so we should really get into it. It’s long, worth-ily. It’s a good long episode, but we should probably stop talking in the intro and get on over to the meat of the episode, if you will.

Jenny: I love getting to the meat! Let’s do it! [Kristin laughs]

[Buffering theme plays]

Jenny: [inhales] Hello, and welcome to Buffering the Vampire Slayer, a podcast where we are watching and discussing every episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, one by one, spoiler free, in tandem with those gals I’d love to take to a nice French restaurant that’s just down this dark alley, [Kristin laughs] Angel On Top! I’m—

Kristin: That was so ambiguous. Usually it’s, like, really clear if you like them or not, and now I’m not sure. [both laugh]

Jenny: Well! Like them or not, I’m Jenny Owen Youngs.

Kristin: And I am Kristin Russo and hey! This week, we are talking about Buffy, Season 7, Episode 14, First Date. Never Kill a Boy on a...First Date.

Jenny: Yeah. What do we think about this nested title?

Kristin: Yeah, it's funny, right?

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: It's interesting, too. Like, I've seen in the synopses-es—which I'll read one to you shortly, if you know how this intro goes—a lot of the synopsis—synopses? How do you do that? Syno—summaries. A lot of the episodes—

Jenny: [simultaneously] Synopses. Synopses.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Synopses. A lot of the synopses had, like, "Never Kill a Boy," hyphen—

Jenny: Uh-huh?

Kristin: And then the summary? And I'm like, what's—like, was there a—is it intentional?

Jenny: What happened here?

Kristin: Yeah. And I couldn't find more on it, but yeah, anyway. This one is called First Date. And you should still never kill a boy on a first date. [laughs] Stay tuned at the end of this podcast every other week for an original song, written by Jenny, recapping the Buffy episode we are discussing.

Jenny: First Date was written by Jane Espenson—which I was kind of surprised by—

Kristin: Huh.

Jenny: Directed by David Grossman and originally aired on February 11th, 2003.

Kristin: Oh! February 11th, 2003. Just three days before my girlfriend at the time took me to a Valentine's Day overnight at the Chelsea Hotel and gifted me diamond earrings. We had been dating for approximately five weeks. Hell yeah.

Jenny: Wow!

Kristin: [laughs] Anyway. This is the one where “Principal Wood asks Buffy out on a date, arousing her suspicions—” [Jenny gasps] that’s not all he arouses, you know what I mean?

Jenny: [simultaneously] Hm. Oh...my god.

Kristin: “And peaking her curiosity. And a secret—”

Jenny: [simultaneously] Nice.

Kristin: “About the principal’s past is revealed. Xander has a date of his own with a strange woman he met buying rope.” What, summary?!

Jenny: “Strange.” [both laugh]

Kristin: “Anya’s jealous side rears its ugly head at the idea of Xander dating someone else. Meanwhile, the First is back in the game, this time, focusing on Andrew.”

Jenny: I think Anya’s jealousy is cute.

Kristin: I do too. Also, I usually get the—[laughs] a little behind the scenes. I usually get the summary from IMDB, but it was, like, a couple lines longer than would fit on IMDB. And I tried to copy and paste it—I can’t even explain it to you—like, for ten minutes. And I was yelling at my phone by the end, and I gave up, and I grabbed the summary from the Wiki page because I couldn’t be bothered. [laughs]

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: You can tell, it’s a little—

Jenny: [simultaneously] The blood, the sweat, the tears [Kristin laughs] that go into making this podcast.

Kristin: It’s a little wordier, though. Anyway, speaking of wordier. How about these Previously Ons?

Jenny: Yes! Previously on Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Andrew killed Jonathan. Some blood opened the Seal of Danzalthar. Andrew says he’ll be good now—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Danzelthorpe.

Jenny: [laughs] Okay. Sorry, *Danzelthorpe*.

Kristin: Thank you.

Jenny: Wood in the basement with the shovel. Spike's chip going wonky. Giles at Robson's and we finally get the rest of that scene!

Kristin: Oh my god. We do, and it's like, the only note I have—I don't know if you have notes for this scene. The only note I have for this reveal is "hot daddy Giles." And I would like to play Giles' jingle, please? Please?

Jenny: Oh.

[GILES jingle plays]
Giles! Hot dad!
When you were younger you were real bad
But now you're older, you got glasses
That help you watch over us!
Thank you, Giles!

Kristin: This is hot. This is, like, hot, hot, hot-hot-hot. Like, Giles does not need to be bragging about it in the next scene. Why? Why does he have—he doesn't—we saw it, Giles, okay? We saw.

Jenny: We saw it, but they didn't see it.

Kristin: But they don't need to see it! It's just for us, it's our special, special Giles.
[both laugh]

Jenny: Well, it was just luck, and training! And a wary watchfulness. [laughs]
There's also a new Potential [Kristin groans] in the squad.

Kristin: No...

Jenny: Chao-Ahn is here and—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Undo it. Undo it!

Jenny: I unfortunately can't undo it. What I can tell you is Giles is doing, right out of the gate, that classic thing of overcoming a language barrier by speaking your own language loud—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And annunciating.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Instead of, I don't know, going to the fucking bookstore.

Kristin: Or just like, I'm sorry—

Jenny: [simultaneously] And buying a translation guide. Just making the minimum effort.

Kristin: You're telling me that you went all the way to fucking China to get Chao-Ahn and you couldn't fucking figure out how to get a translator to come back with you? Come on! Come on! Come the fuck on. Like, I can't, with this shit.

Jenny: I just—it feels like there were a lot of options—

Kristin: A lot of options.

Jenny: And none of them are being utilized.

Kristin: None of them are being utilized, and so, like, we are, at first, angry with Giles and his treatment of Chao-Ahn in this episode. And above and beyond angry with Giles, I am furious with the fucking writers' room. Because they have not only made absolutely fucking ridiculous and racist choices in the entrance of Chao-Ahn, but they have just, like, blatant—they blatantly do it through the whole fucking episode. It's not like we get this one moment of Giles being an ass to Chao-Ahn and then, like, Chao-Ahn is at least, like, integrated in some way into the group. Chao-Ahn is the punchline of this episode, from start to finish. And it is bullshit. And clearly, we're not telling anyone listening to this podcast anything they do not know. I mean, this is not, like, nuanced or hidden or buried in any way. It's totally unacceptable and fucked up.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: And we'll talk about it more than just that, but yeah, fuck that.

Jenny: Indeed.

Kristin: I didn't notice this, Jenny, but I read it. There's a very noticeable shot of a gravestone that says "Snyder" on it, a reference to [Jenny laughs] Principal Snyder. So take a look. If you watch the episode after you listen to us talk, take a look and see if you can spot the—[laughs] where Snyder was buried. What was buried?

Jenny: Nice.

Kristin: Just an empty coffin? [laughs]

Jenny: Maybe.

Kristin: Maybe his, like, feet were left or something, you know? The mayor chomped all but his little—

Jenny: Loafers.

Kristin: His little loafers, yeah. [laughs]

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: So yeah, Giles is bragging about his wonderful reflexes. Which—

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: I don't think Giles would do, but does set us up for—this is Jane Espenson. Like, this moment feels like a Jane Espenson moment a little bit to me, where he's talking about his reflexes—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: And then Spike just pounce—Spike, who has not yet been told that Giles is corporeal—[laughs]

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Pounces from off-screen, tackles him, and they have this great, "Hey, you're not—" "In pain—" "The First" overlapping line. [Jenny laughs] Which is great.

Jenny: Yeah. A great point is raised: if Spike thought Giles was the First, why try to tackle him?

Kristin: I mean, I guess if he went right through him, then he would know too, you know?

Jenny: Yeah. Spike also has finely honed reflexes that can't be tamed.

Kristin: [laughs] Yeah, it's just two—just two dudes with great reflexes here.

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: So Giles calls Spike a "berk." Do you know what—where this comes from?

Jenny: No. Please illuminate.

Kristin: [simultaneously] So I didn't either, but we were lucky enough that—so a lot of times, people will email us after the episode. But it's always a delight to me when people email us before the episode, 'cause then I'm like, oh, hey, that email came through. I can talk about that. [both laugh] Diana, our listener, emailed me a couple of days ago to say—by the way, warning for some language. "Oh my god, Giles called Spike a cunt. In the graveyard, Spike tackles Giles and Giles calls him a berk. According to the internet, berk is short for 'Berkshire hunt,' which is rhyming slang for cunt." So—

Jenny: [gasps] Oh my god...

Kristin: Yeah, "a lot of people use the word "berk" to just mean an idiot or whatever, possibly without knowing that it is rooted in this rhyming slang meaning." So thank you, Diana, for allowing me to say "cunt" several times on a podcast that I make. But that's—now you know. Now you know. You know? The little rainbow—the star with the little rainbow, the more you know? There you go. [laughs]

Jenny: Yep. [hums tune]

Kristin: So they removed fucking Spike's chip and they didn't tell anyone, a theme in this season.

Jenny: [laughing] That's true. That's true. Well, Giles was just off.

Kristin: Yeah, but they just, like—it just feels like if we're trying to defeat the fucking oldest evil, the very, very basic thing that you could just decide to do as a group is say everything. Say everything.

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah.

Kristin: You got cell phones now. Pick 'em up. I mean—

Jenny: Yeah, these people need a Slack.

Kristin: [laughs] They do. They need a Discord—

Jenny: They need a work Slack. [both laugh]

Kristin: They need some way of communicating. But it's—

Jenny: I mean, some people didn't even know that Spike had a chip to begin with. Amanda's like, "What's a chip?"

Kristin: Seriously. Like, that's what I'm saying. Like, you didn't, in your Spike 101, explain the chip? Like, Amanda's been training with Spike, I'm sure, right? Like, she didn't know—everyone just needs—they need more meetings, I think. They need a couple more meetings to—

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Explain the facts. But yeah. So the real reason, I think, that we're supposed to believe is that Buffy has complicated feelings about the choice that she made. Like, she knows it's the right choice, but she also doesn't wanna deal with everyone's bullshit, of like—which she gets. Which she gets, is like—everyone is like, "well, you have feelings and that's why you make these choices." And to which I say—I know I'm jumping ahead. I'm jumping ahead, but I'm angry about it. Because like, who doesn't make decisions based on feelings? Like, what kind of fucking bullshit is it to say, like, there are feelings involved here and they are influencing you.

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: Like, she's not a robot.

Jenny: Mmmm.

Kristin: We met that—we met the Buffybot. This is not her.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Anyway. A little bit more racism before we fucking get out of this scene.

Jenny: Yeah. Chao-Ahn doesn't understand what anyone is saying, and that is the punchline that we go to the credits on—

Kristin: To the *credits*.

Jenny: [simultaneously] They felt it was strong enough to lead us to the credits.

Kristin: To the credits, and like—and just—you know—a note. And we've talked about this as, like, a team, clearly, over here. But like, it's such an offensive punchline. And it's also absolutely absurd, because if you've ever been in a situation where you don't speak the language that the rest of the people around you speak, you definitely aren't gonna keep speaking the language that you speak that you know they don't speak. Credits.

Jenny: Credits. And then to the Summers house, where, you know, Giles is talking to Buffy about how this is dangerous. And she says, "What? These hoop earrings? Yes."

Kristin: I mean. Yes.

Jenny: And I'm like, yeah!

Kristin: [laughing] Yeah.

Jenny: Hoop earrings are scary, actually.

Kristin: Especially if you're the Slayer and you're constantly in battle. It does seem like a really risky choice.

Jenny: Right?

Kristin: Yeah, I would get—I would at least—

Jenny: Who would do such a thing?

Kristin: If you need to wear the hoops, do the clip-ons. You know. Then they'll just pull right off.

Jenny: Mmm. Yes.

Kristin: No earlobe harm in the making of this series. But yeah, Giles is talking about how this is a dangerous decision to have de-chipped Spike. And I just am really having a hard time with Giles this episode. I've really—I just really am not here for the way he's showing up to this battle. And, like, having my foot both in the Angel universe and in the Buffy universe, I feel some overlap in the issues I'm having with Giles and the issues I'm having with Wesley.

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: Because neither one of them are making decisions that feel super in keeping with their characters. And both of them have characters that I, like, genuinely love and adore deeply. And I just—like, we've seen Giles face many apocalypses, okay? Giles doesn't know it's the final season of Buffy the Vampire Slayer. [laughs] It's just another day on the Hellmouth, and I just don't buy—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: A lot of the shit that he's pulling. And this is not just about, like, his concerns about Spike. This is much more about his, like, general heartbeat in this episode of being like, "You cannot have fun. We need to do work." Like—

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: It just feels like a lot. And these are grown adult people at this point, and I think—remember how I told you that Giles was wearing all those fancy coats, I think he was dating somebody? I think he—

Jenny: Yeah, you think they broke up?

Kristin: [simultaneously] I think he got dumped. I think he got dumped. [Jenny laughs] I think he's being a bitter bitch 'cause he got dumped, that's what I think. [laughs]

Jenny: I do think there is something about what's going on—it's hard to reconcile. Because on the one hand, the plot to end the Slayer line feels bigger than anything they've faced before—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: In terms of, like, what the consequences would be. However. Having the First First-ing around all like, [Kristin laughs] "I'm evil and I *love* evil and I'm gonna do some evil. And when the good guys are gone, all that will be left is evil, and you'll want to be by my evil, evil side." [both laughing] It's like, a little hard to buy into.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: So I'm conflicted. [laughs]

Kristin: Yeah. Yeah. And maybe that's the problem. Season 7 is, um—it's a messy season in a lot of ways. But I just—

Jenny: Mmhmm!

Kristin: Let's start here. Giles has concern. And like, part of what Giles is saying here is like, he wants Buffy to have better. And I don't think that he means that as, like, a—necessarily, like, just a judgment on Spike. But that, like, he wants Buffy to be in a partnership that really can lift her fully and that is—

Jenny: Yeah, Giles is like, "I miss...Riley. Remember...Riley?"

Kristin: [simultaneously] Giles is like, "Have you ever gone on a date with Principal Wood? [Jenny laughs] Because let me tell you about a fucking match. That's a *match* right there."

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: So he's not necessarily wrong in, like, wanting more for Buffy. But like, she's the Slayer and life is complicated. And also, what she says about Spike, I think, is really valid, that like, she believes in him and she thinks that he needs people to believe in him if he's gonna continue to be able to walk towards the side of good. So.

Jenny: And there is—like, I think the argument that they're having about whether it would be a chip or a soul that is the thing to prevent Spike—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: From doing evil, that's—you know—a conversation worth having, I think.

Kristin: Totally. Totally. And also, I think—this is where he talks about, like, feelings coloring her choices and he's like, "You rely on each other." Like, that's his point—

Jenny: [sarcastically] Ohh, no!

Kristin: I know. I'm like—I literally wrote, "You rely on each other. And?!" I got so mad at Giles. [both laugh] Because, like, they do rely on each other. They've been through a lot together, and some of it has been really fucked up and unhealthy. But they are, like—

Jenny: Sure.

Kristin: Really working at being partners to each other in a way that is not based in a sexual space at all. That is, like, really based in a, like, mutual love and reliance space. And it isn't healthy a hundred percent, but it's way healthier than it's been, and I just...I'm not sure about Giles' take. And I'm very sure about the way that Buffy ends this scene, which is she says, "You can't beat—" like, she basically says, like, having a chip in Spike was like having a muzzle on him. And you can't beat evil by doing evil. Which I think is a really important core Scooby principle, and I think she's right. And I think it—I do think it resonates with Giles at the end of this scene.

Jenny: It also seems important to just mention that in this conversation, while Giles is listing all the threats that currently face them, Buffy opts to add Principal Wood to the list. And then she's like, well, I don't know...if he is a threat, but he was in the basement. With a shovel. While I was also in the basement with a shovel—

Kristin: [simultaneously] [laughing] I was gonna say, yeah—

Jenny: And *I* was up to no good, so perhaps he was as well. [both laugh] Unclear. Yes, okay, so that's that. Now—

Kristin: Oh my god.

Jenny: Let me take you to a magical land that I like to call Tool Central.

Kristin: Oh, wait, wait. Can we play a theme song for the hardware store?

Jenny: Oh, yes?

[The beginning of "Foolish" by Ashanti plays]

Kristin: Ah, yes—

Jenny: Kristin! [both laugh]

Kristin: Go ahead, go ahead.

Jenny: You know that feeling when all you wanna do is just, like, watch a circular saw demonstration in the back lot of your local tool central. But you're distracted by a beautiful, enchanting woman who is trying to select rope.

Kristin: I mean. Like, could not think of a way that I would like to spend an afternoon more than, like, going to learn about a fucking—circular saws and then meeting Ashanti. You know what I mean? Like, truly can't get better.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Cannot.

Jenny: There's something about this scene and then, like, where we end up that I just wanna try to, like...[Kristin laughs] pull apart right now. There's something that I personally really don't like about people trying to—ugh. This is so complicated. [both laugh] 'Cause parts of me are in disagreement. Part of me hates when a person comes up to me and is like, "Oh, let me explain the thing that you're looking at to you."

Kristin: [simultaneously] Right.

Jenny: But a different part of me really appreciates other people's willingness to share their expertise. I don't know if it's, like, when it's unasked for that, like, makes it feel worse—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: You know when you're parallel parking and somebody just walks up and starts swirling their finger around, telling you when to cut the wheel?

Kristin: Yeah, I do.

Jenny: And it's like, my dude. [laughs] My dude.

Kristin: [simultaneously] I feel rage just hearing you describe that. But—

Jenny: But what's important—what's most important, I think, is that Xander decides to go for it, and—

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: Is it rope-splaining or is it just helpfulness? Whatever it is, it ends up being the reason that he is successfully suspended over the Seal of Danzalthar and bled. And I feel like there's something there.

Kristin: It's the seal of Danzelthorpe.

Jenny: Okay. [laughs]

Kristin: I...I agree. I think the only thing that is, like, uhhh, Xander—is that very first moment, to me. And I agree. I think, like, as a woman, my—I'm more upset if this happens if I am actively engaged in doing something. Like, I clear—Ashanti—"Ashanti." Her name is Lissa, okay, but she's Ashanti! Okay? It's cool that Ashanti is here.

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: Lissa is just looking at rope. She's not, like—when I go—if I go to a hardware store or, like, any store and I can't find what I'm looking for, I generally will actively look confused, because I want somebody to help me.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: If I am, like, standing by a bunch of things and looking at them, I don't like if a dude, specifically, comes up to me—in a context like a hardware store or a fucking car parts store or anything that is traditionally a man's world. You know? [both laugh] [sings] "This is a man's world."

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: And is like, "Can I help you?" Ashanti does not seem bothered by this, but I was bothered by the entrance. However. I think that Xander really turns it around. Like, he's real—it's really cute. I think it's really cute the way that he asks her on a date. I think it's—like, we know his history, we know he's, like, trying to get to this place where he can consider being—dating other people, but he's been through a lot. So I think he does a good—a good job.

Jenny: This does not work for me as a meet cute.

Kristin: [disappointed] Ah!

Jenny: But I do like imagining Ashanti hoisting her kayak, using a winch to suspend it in her garage. That is...my favorite thing about this scene.

Kristin: You don't like how Xander just really quickly is like, "Do you wanna get a coffee with me?" [laughs] Doesn't work for you?

Jenny: There's just something—there's just something that's not connecting between these two, for me, personally.

Kristin: Well, no, I don't necessarily—I'm not here to say that there's a connection here. I'm just here to say that, like, except for the first moment, I'm supporting Xander's approach.

Jenny: Okay, okay.

Kristin: You know. Also—

Jenny: I do really salute his—no pun intended—tying it up with a "in conclusion. Rope has many uses." [both laugh]

Kristin: I want you to know that when I did a little bit of research on Ashanti, I found out that she was also, like me, born on Long Island and also, like me, born in 1980.

Jenny: Aw.

Kristin: A mere, like, five weeks before me, so like, picture baby Kristin and baby Ashanti, like, so close to each other.

Jenny: Yep.

Kristin: Hospital beds only a few towns apart. You know, only a few—

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: There we were, just two Long Island babies. [laughs]

Jenny: Incredible.

Kristin: Ready to take on the world.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: [simultaneously] One of us would be talking about the other one on a podcast someday. [both laugh] Okay. So fucking Snoop McSnooperston over at the fucking—

Jenny: If I were a sign of being evil, where would I be? This is definitely the most effective method.

Kristin: No. I mean, turns out—

Jenny: [simultaneously] She's so close, Kristin. She almost does it.

Kristin: Well, that's what's ridiculous, is that this should not be the most effective method. And yet literally all of the knives were just right there. Literally just right there.

Jenny: I mean—

Kristin: No lock, nothing.

Jenny: It is really—okay, my main—my number one question, I think, is: Robin, why so many knives?

Kristin: Right?

Jenny: Why so many knives, Robin? Especially if your primary targets are vampires.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Where are your wooden stakes?

Kristin: Like, and why not keep—'cause it's a very beautiful collection. I respect it. It just doesn't seem like—

Jenny: But at school...?

Kristin: Right. It seems like—

Jenny: Well, he is on the Hellmouth.

Kristin: Well, yeah, but it seems like this is a collection for display more than it is for use. And he's just one man.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: And so it feels like this should be in his home.

Jenny: Do you think he uses the same custom carpenter as the mayor?

Kristin: [laughs] I thought about the mayor's cabinet in this scene, deeply.

Jenny: 'Cause you know Xander didn't build that when he was building the school.

Kristin: Yeah. It just—

Jenny: Robin Wood in there, doing his own carpentry, after-hours.

Kristin: Like, stapling some red velvet to the wall, to like—[laughs]

Jenny: Hell yeah.

Kristin: Mount his knives. I just—I think the only thing that really bothered me is that there was no, like, trick to open it. Like, that—[laughing] that just felt like an important detail, that like, if you're gonna have your knife collection displayed beautifully, hidden by a whiteboard, at least—you know, if we were at, like, Wolfram & Hart, there would be, like, some tarantula that needed to, like, tip-tap its little tarantula paws across some keys [Jenny laughs] to open the thing. You know, just give me something.

Jenny: Tippity-tap.

Kristin: Just...[laughs]

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah, an additional security measure would not go amiss here.

Kristin: He just slides it up like he's gonna write on a chalkboard. But nope, it's a bunch of knives. [sighs]

Jenny: Yeah. One of my favorite things about this episode is that—especially because we eventually learn what we learn in this episode—Buffy’s counseling skills and methods are finally—

Kristin: [laughing] [simultaneously] Finally.

Jenny: Taken to task. [laughs] First here.

Kristin: Like, we knew the whole time, but like, we were waiting. Yeah.

Jenny: Yeah. But yeah, we haven’t been able to say explicitly, [both laughing] “This is why Buffy has a counseling job.” He asks her what she’s doing tonight, and she says, “Preparing for tomorrow’s counseling sessions, question mark?” and he’s like, “No, really.” [both laugh] He asks her to dinner. And then he very quickly is like, “Not that, uhh, you know, your job depends on you going to dinner with me or anything. And also, I’m gonna need you to sign a piece of paper that says I didn’t just say that.” [laughs] Ahh!

Kristin: I, like, was sweating for Principal Wood in this moment. Like—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Stop—try not to make the jokes about you being her boss. You made them, oh no, you can’t get out of this now.

Jenny: [simultaneously] Yeah. Yeah. Oh god.

Kristin: Oh god.

Jenny: But Buffy’s like, hell yeah. Let’s go to dinner.

Kristin: Principal Wood, also wearing hoop earrings. Both of them taking similar lobe risks, you know?

Jenny: Well, I think his hoop earrings pose a much smaller risk to his lobes than Buffy’s might.

Kristin: Yes. You’d need, like, a Gnarl fingernail to get in the—

Jenny: Okay. I don’t understand why we have to go back to that cave.

Kristin: [laughs] You didn’t want a tasty gift?

Jenny: I am all set on tasty gifties, thank you.

Kristin: Okay, great. What about frisky vixens? You all set on those? 'Cause that's what's coming next, Willow calling Buffy a "frisky...vixen."

Jenny: Umm...I like this, I do like this. [Kristin laughs] I like the close rhyme of "frisky vixen."

Kristin: Yeah, it's nice to say. You know, they're having the standard gal pal—but like, really actually gal pal—conversation here, of "do you think that he wants to date me or do you think that he wants to kill me? Who could say? I'll try to dress for both." [both laugh]

Jenny: Buffy says, "Maybe I'm getting promoted for doing such a good job." And Willow *laughs* in her face. [both laugh]

Kristin: Okay, one of my favorite parts of this whole episode is them coming to the conclusion that of course the Hellmouth can't be a shower of evil, 'cause it's coming from below. So it is a bidet of evil. Beautiful. Absolutely beautiful. From beneath you, it devours, FBYID. A bidet of evil. [Jenny laughs] You can click that bidet to, like, a warm setting.

Jenny: Wait. From beneath you, it be-showers? [Kristin laughs] Is that it?

Kristin: She had such a serious fucking look on her face and I couldn't figure out what the hell was happening. [Jenny laughs] And now I know.

Jenny: Willow's like, "So...this is a...investigatory date. But also, what if it's, like, a date-date date?" And Buffy's like, "Hmm, I don't know. Do I like him? He is hot. And smart. And solid. And...normal. I guess I do like him!" Good Buffy.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Oh, boy.

Jenny: Right. Answer.

Kristin: Ugh.

Jenny: They agree that it would be good for her to date someone hot, smart, solid and normal.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And Willow's like, "Yeah, so you can move on." And Buffy's like, [angrily] "Why does everyone in this house think I'm still in love with Spike?" Buffy was in love with Spike?

Kristin: Yeah, good point.

Jenny: And she said it out loud?

Kristin: [laughs] Willow's like, "I actually didn't mean that. I meant your self-imposed self-reliance."

Jenny: Mmmm.

Kristin: And Buffy's like, "Oh, yeah, yeah, fair-fair-fair-fair-fair." [laughs] Then in—Xander does, like, a full Kramer entrance right here. Just, like, busting through the door.

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: And he's like, "Guess what!" and Willow's like, "Buffy got a date!" and he's like, "No, I did, what the fuck? Goddamnit." [both laugh] So—

Jenny: They discuss the fact that Principal Wood is, like, ten years older than Buffy, which is like, 100 years younger than her type. [both laugh] She's like, yay, someone who doesn't remember the Industrial Revolution.

Kristin: Ten years is nothing! We got this, this shit is great.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: And I think it's actually less than—I think it's a little less than ten years, to be honest with you, if you do the math. Because he's—I don't even think he's turned 30 yet. But if he's—he's 30 at most, 'cause he was four in 1977. Okay? So I did some hell math for you all. And Buffy is—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: We missed her birthday, 'cause she learned finally not to celebrate it. But she's, like, gotta be 21 or 22 by now, right?

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: Anyway. [laughs] Willow is sort of, like, you know, poking Buffy. And Buffy quiets her immediately by saying, "Stop before I make you talk about your new girlfriend, who you hold hands with under the table and think that we don't notice." Ha-ha! [both laugh] Willow—

Jenny: To which Willow immediately deflects, "How about yours, Xander? Is she evil?"

Kristin: Xander's very, like, fucking que sara sara about the whole thing. "Probably, I don't know, she's got a kayak, we're gonna get coffee."

Jenny: There's actually—I read upon the Buffy Wikia that there is a deleted moment in which Xander asks Lissa if she happens to be a giant praying mantis.

Kristin: Yes! [laughs] Yes. I mean, Xander does have a point. He literally has only ever attracted...demons of some kind. Right? Like...I don't know—apart from the girl who—

Jenny: Cordelia.

Kristin: Well, she's technically half-demon by now, and like, also—

Jenny: Well, now, but not when they were in love.

Kristin: That's true.

Jenny: Or whatever.

Kristin: Okay, but after Cordelia, it was almost all demons all the time, except for that girl who...whose boyfriend was turned into a snake by Anya? Or whatever?

Jenny: Oh yeah, which—maybe a demon by proxy.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: And then there was that one girl who was like, "Hey there, sailor," and he was like, "I'm a fish with a hook in it!" [both laugh]

Kristin: And she was like, "I love fish. Are you a halibut? Yum."

Jenny: [laughing] Yeah.

Kristin: "Can't wait to fry you on both sides with some olive oil." [both laugh] And we were like, lady! [laughs]

Jenny: [simultaneously] So yeah, I think his demon ladies are actually...better?

Kristin: Preferable, yeah. [laughs] Oh no, here fucking comes Giles to be racist with Chao-Ahn for almost the rest of this fucking scene. Xander, having a great moment of, like, maybe someone in the writers' room had a moment to think about actually the experience that all of these Potentials are having.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: But especially ones that might not speak the language of all of the other people in the house. He says—

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: "It has to be tough, being pulled out of your home, not being able to bring anything with you." Like, I want him to keep talking. Because maybe if he keeps talking—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: They will reason through to the fact that, like, this is not okay. We learn later that Chao-Ahn didn't even have a Watcher. She didn't even have a Watcher. Who has explained anything to her? She's just here, going shopping at the mall with Giles, who just screams English in her face? Whew. Not good, guys.

Jenny: It's not good.

Kristin: We learn that she speaks Cantonese, not Mandarin, so the little that Giles thought that he might be able to communicate is even less. And she is—

Jenny: Still no sign—they went to the mall, no sign of a bag from a bookstore where a translation guide could have been purchased.

Kristin: Yeah. Yeah, but he did buy her ice cream. We hear her speak again in her own language, saying that she's lactose intolerant, so she's actually incredibly uncomfortable right now. Which is, like...it's just so fucked up, because the thing about this fucked-up joke is that it hinges on the idea that this person, Chao-Ahn, is extremely uncomfortable. Because no one there can speak the language that she

speaks, nor is trying to communicate with her responsibly in any way. That's the joke. Like, the only reason that this is a joke is 'cause it's funny that she ate ice cream, and she's lactose intolerant, but she couldn't explain that to anyone so she just ate the ice cream. It's like, almost like the reason I'm angry is, like, inside of the joke. You know? [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: The reason *I'm* angry. The reason that I'm sure all of us are angry, it's not just me. Giles, like, offhandedly—you know, when she explains that she's, like, uncomfortable because she just ate ice cream and she's lactose intolerant, Giles is like, "She said that she's grateful to be in the land of plenty." He says it really, like, tongue in cheek, as like a—whatever. I'm not sure that Giles believes the United States to actually be the land of plenty. But I think the thing that it really brings up is just, like, do you think that any—do you think that any of these girls are actually grateful to have been taken from their homes? And how fucked up is it to say that anyone would be grateful for being taken from their home country, regardless of where the fuck it is in the world. Like, just—

Jenny: Dude, right?

Kristin: [sighs] And then he just shouts at her again. Shouts—

Jenny: [sarcastically] How helpful.

Kristin: In a kind way. [laughs] Because being loud is how you bridge language barriers. We all know it.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Alright.

Jenny: So! Somebody is doing some reading, and it's Andrew, of the new microwave manual. Thank goodness there's a new microwave at Summers Central.

Kristin: Dawn axed the other one, in case you forgot.

Jenny: When lo and behold, who should roll up but Jonathan the First, saying, "I've got an assignment for you." Andrew says, "I follow Buffy's orders now." And Jonathan the First is like, "What, you think she's gonna let you in her little club? You're a murderer." [Kristin laughs] And Andrew [laughing] raises a great point,

which is that a lot of Buffy's people are murderers. Anya. Willow. Spike. Should I go on?

Kristin: Confident—the way he starts it is really what gets me. “Confidentially, a lot of her people are murderers.” [laughs]

Jenny: [simultaneously] Yeah, yeah, yeah. Just between us.

Kristin: Between—yeah, just between the two of us. Yeah, um, this is, like, kind of underlining some of the point that you were making about the First being silly. Like, the fact that the First is here to essentially tell Andrew that what he should do is find the gun in the house and kill all of the Potentials. That's serious. But he starts it by making a joke about how the microwave is intuitive and Andrew shouldn't need to read the manual. Just explain to me this side of the personality of the First, that he's like—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: [laughs] Let me just—let me just make funny a little bit—

Jenny: Well, maybe it's like, this is something Jonathan would really say, so the First benefits from, like—

Kristin: [simultaneously] It's like manipulation? Yeah.

Jenny: You know, more psychological—ehhh. I really love Andrew Vanna-White'ing the microwave. [both laughing] When the First is like, “Willow brought something here that you can use.” And he's like, “The new microwave?”

Kristin: “The microwave?” [laughs] Yeah, so the evil—the First Evil is like, “If you do what I say, you can stay by my side.” And I think, as a first-time viewer, you probably believe that Andrew's gonna fucking do this shit. I mean, it's what he's done every other time before. Like, at the merest suggestion—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Like, he could be at the right hand of evil, he's like, alright! Okay, cool!

Jenny: Yes, let me see to that.

Kristin: [simultaneously] So I think we leave this scene very much thinking that Andrew's gonna fuck shit up. I just wanna say that in the last scene, one thing that

we didn't talk about—'cause we were busy being mad about the treatment of Chao-Ahn—is that Buffy asks Willow to do research on Wood, on the computer. Like, asks—

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: Asks her to just see what can be found on Wood. Always bad news when you google somebody and there's simply nothing, even in the year 2003. [both laughing] Certainly in the year 2022, it's bad news. Okay, so. In the bathroom, Anya—who is wearing a pink sweater that I believe has three crocheted kittens wearing leashes on it? I tried so hard to, like, see closer to this pink sweater, but it gave me pleasure.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: She is trying to get some blood and/or pizza sauce out of Buffy's shirt so that she can wear it to her date. She's unsuccessful.

Jenny: Yeah. Anya, you know you've gotta take that down to the Sunnydale Motor Inn and get a toothbrush. [Kristin laughs] That's the most effective method of blood removal in Sunnydale.

Kristin: Actually, Faith is busy kicking ass all over Los Angeles. You could probably give her a call, she could tell you how to get that stain out.

Jenny: Ohh, isn't that interesting?

Kristin: [laughs] But this blood/pizza thing, it's little but it's fun. It's sort of a callback to when Dawn got pizza on Buffy's shirt and was like, "She'll just think it's blood." [both laugh]

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: So Anya is jealous and Emma Caulfield, giving us just all the things.

Jenny: Oh! And I think Jane Espenson wrote that segment of Conversations with Dead People.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Of...that episode? There you go. There's a little bit of Jane for ya.

Jenny: [simultaneously] Yeah. So just keeping the pizza sauce/blood thread alive.

Kristin: [laughs] Anya is feeling jealous about Xander having a date. Let's listen to—[laughs] let's listen to her for a second.

[Clip from episode plays]

Anya: Are you nuts? Of course it's working. Observe my bitter ranting. Hear the shrill edge of hysteria in my voice.

Kristin: Oh, Emma Caulfield. Just love you. [Jenny laughs] Love you forever.

Jenny: Then she bids Buffy leave her to stew in her impotent rage. And also, to leave because she has to pee. [Kristin laughs] Buffy bumps into Spike.

Kristin: This is—

Jenny: Who wants Buffy to know that he knows that Buffy has a date, and it's okay.

Kristin: I put a lot of hearts around this scene. I really loved this scene. I mean, I always love a James and Sarah scene. I think they just are very good, individually and together.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: But it's just nice. It's—you know, Spike is like, "Listen, I'm okay. Like, I—do you think that I still, like, dream of a crypt for two with a white picket fence, right? My eyes are—"

Jenny: Oh my god, just like my little song! Just like my little song!

Kristin: [laughs] It is. Your little song. [Jenny laughs] But like, it's just nice, you know? He's—I think he's, like, establishing to Buffy that while he loves her and he will always love her, he is aware that this is—that he's not on any kind of quest right now. Like, we've seen Spike on the quest to, like, win Buffy's love. And you know, deeply—only be able to see one thing and it being, like, the two of them together. And that isn't where he is now, at all, and it doesn't mean that he doesn't love her. And what I love about this scene is that it allows those things to coexist in Spike—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Honestly, which is really nice. And not something that we see often, you know. Usually stories are told that, like, either someone is still in love with somebody else and so it's all they can think about and all they want, or they're not in love with them at all. And I think that this nuance is, you know, just a piece of the bigger pie of why so many of us love this show. It's like, this kind of nuance is really cool and great.

Jenny: Yeah, and Buffy—you know—suggests that Spike do some dating of his own and he's like, "Oh yeah, some girls like the...bad boy look." But the only look we see him doing, after Buffy exits the scene, is that he is, like, sadly staring into the middle distance.

Kristin: Ugh, 'cause like, 100-something years of, like, getting girls to wanna make out with you because you ride a motorcycle and wear a leather jacket. Like, it's probably—he's probably like, okay. [laughs] I think he might be after a little more than that, which I think is fair. Anyway. At the Espresso Pump, not riding a motorcycle in a leather jacket, but instead, drinking a hot cocoa is Xander, lying about his hot cocoa to—

Jenny: Dude.

Kristin: [laughs] Lissa.

Jenny: This is, uh—this is really something, to me.

Kristin: Yeah. I mean—well, first of all, Xander loves a dominant woman. Okay? Like, he just does. He has made that very, very clear, that, like—

Jenny: Mmm. Yes.

Kristin: Anya was the top. Clearly. So Lissa is, like, checking that box right from the jump, right? Calls out Xander for his hot cocoa, then herself orders the red eye that he just described. So it's going well for Xander.

Jenny: Nice. Yeah, yeah, this is a great sign. [Kristin laughs] Full speed ahead. I—[laughing] I do like that he's drinking cocoa.

Kristin: Me too. Me too.

Jenny: And I like that she wants a red eye.

Kristin: Well, I think—you know what's interesting? Not to, like, whatever, we have a lot of things to talk about. But as I'm talking about Spike, who like, for 100-plus years has won girls—like, gotten girls in bed, basically, by like, being the bad boy. I think that Xander, while not effective at his attempts, for a long time, was really trying to pretend to be somebody he wasn't, because he thought that that's what girls would be into. And I think that, like, what I'm unlocking for myself is why I enjoyed what I saw from Xander, for the most part, in this, is because it did feel like he was putting down that, that need to, like, pretend he was something else. And he was, like, allowing himself to be—like, yeah, he made the red eye joke. But like, later, he's talking about his vulnerabilities with Anya. And he laughs off the hot cocoa thing, he doesn't try to, you know, pretend something. Like, it feels like he might be ready to enter into a relationship where he's being himself.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Which I am—I'm here for. That's all I wanna say.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Okay. Oh, no!

Jenny: Terrible news.

Kristin: Oh, no! [both laugh]

Jenny: Back at the Summers house. Giles' art skills or lack thereof strike again.

Kristin: Oh my god. I was saying "oh, no" because they couldn't find Wood on the internet.

Jenny: Oh. [laughs]

Kristin: My "oh nos" would have had a very different tenor if we were talking about the flashcards. [laughing] That's a bigger "oh no."

Jenny: Sorry. Peddling back half a moment. Robin Wood is not on the internet.

Kristin: Records not found, yes. And then, yeah, Giles. Oh, buddy.

Jenny: Oh, Giles, no! Why would you do this? How much time do you think he invested in making these, loose quotes, flashcards? And how much of that time could he have used to go to the bookstore, Kristin, and buy a book?

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Actually, I wanna see something. [typing noises] Babelfish, the Yahoo web-based multilingual translation application, opened its web doors on December 9th, 1997.

Kristin: So they could be using the computer to help them with some kind of translation—

Jenny: Exactly.

Kristin: To speak to Chao-Ahn. Cool.

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: I mean, here on this podcast, I think that we really support getting an actual translator, if you're going to bring somebody from fucking China to your house to fight evil. But in lack of—

Jenny: [simultaneously] Oh. Sure, but in apocalyptic times—like—[laughs]

Kristin: Yes, if you lack that—

Jenny: The bare minimum. The bare minimum.

Kristin: I'm sorry. Wesley is, like, fucking two hours away, speaking every goddamn language under the sun. Give him a fucking call. Put him on the fucking phone—

Jenny: [simultaneously] That's so true!

Kristin: Just figure it out, you guys. And these flashcards—

Jenny: [simultaneously] You would think they could figure it out.

Kristin: These flashcards are funny if taken out of the context in which they're used. Because we love to see it—we love to see when Giles draws what he believes to be an accurate portrayal of what vampires do, with his markers. Giles only owning two markers, a black and a red.

Jenny: That's it, that's all you need!

Kristin: That's all you need. But everyone in the room is horrified on Chao-Ahn's behalf. Like, you did *not*, Giles, show—

Jenny: Sure.

Kristin: What the fuck? Like, what the actual fuck?

Jenny: Yeah, it's not good.

Kristin: It's not good, and Chao-Ahn is extremely upset upstairs. No one goes upstairs to fucking check on her or see how she's doing, because instead they're gonna talk about [Jenny exhales] what everyone else is doing. First of all, before we get into the dates of it all, I just wanna say that Kennedy looks great. Kennedy is—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Kennedy is looking great. I think Willow and Kennedy are, you know, just helping each other look great. That's—I just feel like it's—

Jenny: Mmm! Mmhmm.

Kristin: I just feel like they have a certain glow about them.

Jenny: Oh.

Kristin: You know? So. Giles learns that Buffy has a date. Anya says, "Everyone has dates. It's Datefest 2003." [both laugh] Slayerfest '98, Datefest '03.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: "We are about to fight the original primal evil, going on dates is not correct. We should not be going on dates." I disagree. I disagree when Kennedy skipped the desert and I disagree now. I think that going on dates goes hand in hand with apocalyptic fighting. You know what I mean? It just feels like they go together.

Jenny: Yeah, you gotta keep morale up, you know?

Kristin: Yes. Yes.

Jenny: Life doesn't stop just because life might be about to end.

Kristin: No, as Faith said, you never go in for a little after-hours "unh?" [laughs]

Jenny: Oh my goodness.

Kristin: Come on!

Jenny: I'm scandalized.

Kristin: So. Andrew's peeking around the corner like a little sneaky. And then we cut to the alleyway, where Wood is like, this is the best-kept secret in town. And I'm like, there's no secrets—there's no secret restaurants in Sunnydale. Like, fully not believing that there's ever—I could not even believe when there was actually a restaurant that was secret and hidden in an alley.

Jenny: Oh yeah, I was thinking about this. [laughs] I was thinking about what the Sunnydale version of Yelp would be. [Kristin laughs] It would be like, Yowl.com or, like, Death-rattle.com or something—

Kristin: [laughing] "Death rattle."

Jenny: And then I was thinking [snaps] about—I was brainstorming about an app for Slayers seeking vampires, and vice versa. And my pitch for the name of the app is Dustr, with no E. What do you think? D-U-S-T-R.

Kristin: D-U-S-T-R? Yeah, Dustr.

Jenny: The thrill of going on a date with your mortal enemy.

Kristin: [simultaneously] But there's only one—there's only one Slayer. [laughs]

Jenny: Well—

Kristin: Well, I'm sorry, there's two. There's two. [laughs]

Jenny: Don't you think—[laughs] I mean, I think we could get the Potentials on there. Maybe it's like a Raya thing, where if you know someone, you can get on the app too.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Oh, they can get you in? Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jenny: Watchers, you know—

Kristin: Monster fighters.

Jenny: Witches. Yeah.

Kristin: Right. Like, monster—people who—anyone who has the potential to defeat a vampire can be on it as the, like, Slayer piece of this data website. App, whatever.

Jenny: Exactly.

Kristin: Okay, great, love that.

Jenny: Do we love it?

Kristin: I love it. Dustr, yeah. Sign me up. I could probably kill a vampire and I would love to date one, so.

Jenny: Wow, you think you could kill a vampire?

Kristin: You think I *couldn't*?!

Jenny: I mean, I'm not saying you couldn't. I'm just saying—well, yeah, of course you think you could—okay.

Kristin: Wow!

Jenny: You're a very confident person.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Wow! Wow! Wow! Wow.

Jenny: [simultaneously] No, you're a very confident, self-possessed—

Kristin: Wow. [laughs]

Jenny: Empowered—

Kristin: Wow.

Jenny: And you know the ways to kill them, so that's—you already have a head start. [laughs]

Kristin: [simultaneously] Wow. Wow! She said, “you think you could kill a vampire?” and then immediately said, “of course you think you could kill a vamp—” [Jenny laughs] you know what, if it’s you, me, and a vampire, good luck getting my help. I’ll tell you what.

Jenny: All I gotta do is run faster than you.

Kristin: Well, fucking reference our bear story, and if you don’t know it, I’m sorry but I’m not telling it right now.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: That’s exactly what she would do. Wow, I can’t wait to fucking slay a vampire in your face! Stupid.

Jenny: [laughing] Okay, noted.

Kristin: Stupid jerk. Okay, so—

Jenny: Oh my goodness.

Kristin: So in the alleyway, my notes are, all capital—they take up, like, six lines, “hot, hot, hot.” That’s for when Wood starts slaying vampires. A couple of—

Jenny: It’s very hot.

Kristin: It’s so—it’s so hot. It might be the hottest anyone has ever looked slaying vampires, [laughs] and that is saying a lot!

Jenny: [exhales] Yeah. It’s very...good. It’s also great, because they get jumped and all we see is Buffy, with her three assigned vampires. And then when she finally dusts the third one, she pivots to be like, “You set me up!” But oh no, Robin can’t hear her ‘cause he’s too busy hotly fighting the other vampire.

Kristin: Just kicking ass. Just kicking ass.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Also—

Jenny: Doing great.

Kristin: Buffy has made the choice to wear a leather trench. That was her choice for ambiguous—like, maybe I’m going on a date and maybe I might get killed, and I think it’s a pretty good—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: [laughing] I think it’s a pretty good choice.

Jenny: Yeah, fair pick, Buffy.

Kristin: And a little nugget—is that what you were gonna talk about? In this scene, there’s a little nugget of television trivia here.

Jenny: Tell me everything.

Kristin: Which is that the very first—when we go into the alley and we see the first vampire come around the corner, that’s actually reused footage from the promo for The Gift. Way back in Season 5, they reused that footage in this ep—

Jenny: What?!

Kristin: It’s just one clip. And you’ll notice it, it really is different than, like, the rest. ‘Cause all the other clips are, like, groupings in alleys, but for whatever reason—maybe if LaToya and Morgan were here, they would tell us what the reasons might be. But—

Jenny: How funny.

Kristin: They reused this one clip, yeah.

Jenny: I was gonna say that at the end, when the dust has settled—no pun intended—Wood looks at Buffy and, echoing who I now consider the second-most appropriate person she’s ever gone on a date with—

Kristin: Oh my god.

Jenny: In Hush, he says, “I guess we should talk.”

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Oh wait, does Riley say that or does Buffy say that?

Kristin: I don't know.

Jenny: Well! The important thing is that it's said between Buffy and the second-most appropriate person Buffy's ever gone on a date with, Riley Finn.

Kristin: I think Buffy says it. And stop trying to make Riley a thing. I said that as... [Jenny laughs] the line from Mean Girls.

Jenny: And hey—[laughs] the restaurant's right there and it looks cute as hell.

Kristin: So cute! This is—

Jenny: Take me to this restaurant.

Kristin: Take *me* to this restaurant. This is, like, if you're—if you've been in New York and gone to or heard of a little restaurant called Freeman's Alley—

Jenny: Mmm, yeah.

Kristin: This has very Freeman's Alley vibes. Freeman's Alley is, like—

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Tucked all the way down this—like, this alley, called Freeman's Alley. I can't believe Sunnydale has their very own Freeman's Alley. Absolutely incredible.

Jenny: Yeah. Principal Wood, we are just two girls, standing in front of one hot vampire-fighting principal, asking you to take us to dinner. [laughs] Here.

Kristin: Please. Also—

Jenny: Thank you.

Kristin: I think a little vampire crossover is that—I don't remember if you were with me, but the first time I ever went to Freeman's Alley for dinner, I was eating dinner and it was revealed that on the other side of the wall, eating dinner in the same restaurant, was fucking Kristen Stewart and fucking—what's his name? Robert Pattinson. It was, like, in the—

Jenny: There you go.

Kristin: In the highs of the Twilight era, when like—

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: Way before Kristen Stewart had come out and when they were, like, dating, in hard quotes. So—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: You know. Not only—

Jenny: I wasn't there.

Kristin: You weren't there?

Jenny: No.

Kristin: No. Well, you shoulda been, 'cause it was a vampire night that went down in the books. Okay. So at the Espresso Pump, we're talking about exes. It's quick. You know, I'm here—

Jenny: I'll say it's quick, they've known each other for a matter of minutes and Xander is spilling his guts about leaving his ex at the altar!

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Or did you mean the scene is quick? [both laugh]

Kristin: No, no, I meant it's quick for them to be talking about exes. And like...you know how sometimes when you're trying to, like, change your behavior, you go, like, real far in the opposite direction? Like, maybe that's what's happened here for Xander, is he's like, okay, I'm gonna try to be vulnerable. But instead of, like—

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: Taking a baby step, he just took a flying leap off the edge of this cliff?

Jenny: Into the deep end? [both laugh]

Kristin: Yeah. [both laugh]

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Lissa, handling it well, because as we know, Lissa doesn't give a fuck about any of this and is just planning on using that rope to tie Xander over the Seal of Danzelthorpe. [Jenny laughs] But she does say, "It sounds like you're both better off." And Xander says, "I should have taken you on a nicer date than this," which is cute. And you know—

Jenny: Aww. And she's like, hey, I know something fun we could do!

Kristin: Like, Xander, at this point, you should know that a praying mantis is gonna be locking you in a cage, real soon, buddy. Okay?

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah, buddy...

Kristin: No sex on the first date if all of your other dates have been with demons, most of whom wanted to murder you. That's just the rule, pal. [Jenny laughs] Okay?

Jenny: Yeah, he's gotta—he's gotta mend his ways. He's gotta learn some things. [laughing] And use them in the future.

Kristin: So. Here we are, at Sunnydale Alley, the French restaurant hidden away. And—

Jenny: Ooh, I like calling it Sunnydale Alley, that's nice.

Kristin: [laughs] And this is great. It's great before it all crumbles, just like the show loves to do to us in every way. Buffy is like, "So you're freelance?" and Wood is like, "Yeah, you know, I guess I am." And she's like, "You know who I am?" and he says, "You're the Slayer." This is really good Sarah Michelle Gellar shit right here. Like, her facial expressions of just, like, excitement. And just like, she can't even believe it. She can't even believe—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: That she's, like, on a date with this beautiful man. [laughs] Who, like, understands who she is and knew before he even asked her on a date, and can fight. Like, he is—sorry, Jenny, but he's, like, everything that Riley was, plus everything Riley wasn't.

Jenny: Yeah. [both laugh] True! I'm not gonna argue! [Kristin laughs] Riley has already been bumped down the ladder for me, as I have stated. [both laugh] So she's like, "So it's not an accident that you—you know—"

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: "That you basically sit atop the—"

Kristin: [laughs] The bidet?

Jenny: [laughing] The Sunnydale evil bidet, from beneath you, it be-showers. And he says, "Yeah, I maneuvered myself into that school and that office, just like I maneuvered you there. 'Cause something big is coming and I wanna be here to help." And Buffy's like, "So you didn't hire me for my counseling skills?" And Wood laughs in her face and then immediately straightens it out, and is like, "They're...valuable, too." Good. Yes, good.

Kristin: She asks a good question, which is, like, "But why now? Like, why are you only telling me now?" And I think he gives a really good answer back, was that, like, he came here 'cause he knew he wanted to do this thing, but he wasn't sure he was ready to do the thing. And like, you know, revealing everything before you know if you're ready to jump in is not the way. And then, he tells us—well, he tells Buffy, but we all hear—[Jenny laughs] that his mom was a Slayer. And that is how he knows about Slayers and demons and all the things that he knows. His mom was killed when he was four, by a vampire. Oh, no. [laughs] Oh, no. Ohh, no. [Jenny groans] We know by the end—if we don't know by—if you don't make the connection—which I think anyone watching the show with any sort of, like, attention has already been like, oh, god. Oh, god, oh, god. 'Cause Spike is involved. We know Spike has killed two Slayers. And we know that one of those Slayers was killed in the 70s in New York City, and was Black. And here is a Black man, born in the 70s, who says his mom was a Slayer and this is a show that likes drama. So clearly, we're putting the pieces together.

Jenny: [laughs] Yeah.

Kristin: Oh, fuck.

Jenny: I think—because I am an optimist—

Kristin: [laughing] You were really hoping—?

Jenny: Well, I can tell you for sure that the first time I watched this, I did not put it together. I was just like, oh, I wonder—

Kristin: [laughing] [simultaneously] Who—? Yeah.

Jenny: Who she was. [laughs]

Kristin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jenny: 'Cause I'm a fool and I was like, everything's gonna be great now! [both laugh] There's not gonna be any conflict. I'm always like, and then—and then something good will happen and everyone will be happy. [laughs]

Kristin: I know. I mean, that's really how I watched television up until just a couple of years ago. I finally had it, like, kicked out of me from talking about TV—

Jenny: Yeah, you can't have nice things if you watch TV.

Kristin: You can't. [both laugh] You cannot have nice things, ever. So I don't know, maybe you knew, maybe you didn't. But by the end of this episode, you sure as hell know that this is Robin Wood, son of Nikki Wood, the vampire Slayer who was killed in the epic, epic scene that we already saw, between Spike and Nikki. So, anyway. He's like, "I went through this phase in my 20s." I, like, fully was—in my mind, like, when Wood talks about his 20s being, like, seeking out the person who killed his mother—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: I immediately am thinking about Sawyer from Lost, seeking out—[laughs] you know? It's like, a similar quest. These—how many men are there, just on a quest to avenge their killed mom? You know? [Jenny laughs] And they're so hot. They're—are they all hot? Is that the common denominator?

Jenny: Yeah. Correct.

Kristin: [laughs] Anyway. Buffy is like—Buffy reminds me of, like, queer women that I know who meet other queer women who are parents, that they—and they wanna become parents. And they're just like, "Can I ask you this question? Can I ask you that question? I have this other question!" [Jenny laughs] Like, Buffy's like, I've never had the opportunity to ever ask any questions about anything like this in my life. She can't contain herself.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: And her first question is, I think, pretty valid. "Do you have powers?" And he says he doesn't.

Jenny: Yep, yep, yep. He just has skills, because his mother's Watcher took him in and raised him, in—I'll remind you from what we know—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: From something Wood has said previously, and also from a line that was cut from this episode, in Beverly Hills.

Kristin: Mmhmm. Where is this guy? Where is he?

Jenny: Where's the Watcher? Uh, perhaps he's passed on. Perhaps he's ascended.

Kristin: I guess that's true. If he was Nikki's Watcher, and she was in her 20s in the 70s, and we're to assume that, like, Watchers are predominately, like, Giles-age. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: But like...okay. I hope we learn. I don't think we do, but. I just wanna learn—I wanna know more. Okay, so back at the Summers house. Andrew has located the gun [Jenny laughs] in Buffy's underwear drawer, which—really, everyone?

Jenny: Andrew's like, "She has nice things." And the First is like, "Show me," and Andrew's like, "Well, I didn't take them, but there were thongs. [Kristin laughs] And regular underpants." [laughs] But the First wants to see the gun, you fool.

Kristin: Oh my god, okay, so this—

Jenny: And oh my god, this voiceover, looking down into the gun bag and Andrew is like, [robotically] "Willow tried killing Kennedy with that" so that we can all remember why there's a gun in the house. [both laugh]

Kristin: Yeah. Also, just like, this whole plotline of wiring Andrew to record the First, which they can't even—

Jenny: Where did Willow get this wire monitoring surveillance FBI kit?

Kristin: [simultaneously] It's just such a bizarre—and she, like, explains it to Giles later by being like, "We just wanted to learn more about the First. We thought this

was a good idea.” And I’m like, come on, guys. Like, it just—at every level, this is silly. And I’m not really sure why we needed it to happen this way?

Jenny: Here’s a thing. If the First can only appear as people who have died—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: What’s to stop the First from—and its, like, all-powerful evil—what’s to stop the First from not appearing and just surveilling, like, around the clock?

Kristin: Well, because he needs—like, the First Evil needs corporeality so that he can kill people. So he has to, like—

Jenny: No, I’m just saying, like, in terms of—like, why does he—why is it a surprise to the First that Andrew’s wearing a wire?

Kristin: [simultaneously] Oh, that Andrew’s—right, yeah. It should not be. Because, like, the First was too busy making jokes about something in the other room, you know, like, not paying attention.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: [sighs] I just don’t like this. I think it’s really silly. And you know, Andrew of course, doing not a good job. Although I do like his question, [laughing] “Are you made out of the evil impulses of humans, so if everyone was unconscious at the same time, you’d fade?” [laughs]

Jenny: I love that. I don’t know if that’s a reference to—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: An existing story or if it’s just Andrew, like, coming up with stuff, but I love that as a concept. [laughs]

Kristin: Me too, and I was—if you know—if it is—’cause I thought maybe it was, like, a deep nerd reference that people would know. So tell us if it is, but I love it as well.

Jenny: And I like to see Tom Lenk doing, you know, bad acting—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Like, [stilted] "Say, do you have any weaknesses?" [both laugh] I do like getting to see that and it's fun and funny.

Kristin: One thing that I need to ask is if you noticed, behind Andrew on the desk, there's a picture of a woman and a man kissing the woman? Like, it almost looks like a wedding photo, and I just wanna know: who's that? [both laugh] Who is that?

Jenny: I did not see that, I did not see that.

Kristin: 'Cause it shouldn't be Joyce and her husband, that piece of shit. And we know that Anya and Xander don't want any wedding photos up in the house, so who the fuck are these people?

Jenny: It's—maybe they came in the frame.

Kristin: [laughing] That's what I think.

Jenny: [laughs] And they forgot.

Kristin: Two of my friends, they let their photographer submit their wedding photography to, like, you know, public domain or whatever. And so now, their wedding photos are in, like, all of the frames in HomeGoods. [laughs]

Jenny: What?!

Kristin: I know! I'm like, you could just go to HomeGoods and buy a frame and then put it in your house, 'cause that's you. Anyway. Andrew's wearing a wiring. The First fucking of course knows, because Andrew is bad at lying. And are we kidding about trying to trick the oldest evil with a wire? Get outta here.

Jenny: Oh god, yeah. It's a little misguided. [laughs]

Kristin: They're hearing—they hear the First in the basement, but it's not because the microphone is picking him up. It's because he is fucking talking loud enough for the whole house to hear.

Jenny: [spooky] Wahhh!

Kristin: He's manipulating Andrew by showing up now as dead Jonathan, with bloody hands. And then he's in the basement with, like, one white eyeball popping out of his fucking head, being like, "I'm gonna kill all the girls!" Over at the Seal of

Danzelthorpe, Ashanti is like, "You know the Slayer? Cool. Had absolutely nothing to do with you being strung up above this seal and bled out."

Jenny: Xander, roped onto the bleeding wheel, with the very ropes he helped Ashanti—

Kristin: [simultaneously] He picked them out! [laughs]

Jenny: Lissa—pick out. Oh, no.

Kristin: Oh, no. In the living room, Giles asking, "Why a wire?" Just like me. And they're just sort of, like, talking about this. Andrew's like, "Redemption is hard." Spike is like, "Why is the First appearing—" [laughing] which, also great question. Of all the people you could choose, why the fuck did you choose Andrew? I guess maybe because he's easily manipulated.

Jenny: Yeah, and 'cause he has, like, the most on Andrew. He has, like, two people—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: That he can appear as—you know.

Kristin: That's true.

Jenny: Andrew is, as Buffy mentioned, like tofu. When he gets around evil, he picks up its flavor. [both laugh]

Kristin: Giles wants to end everyone's dates right this very moment. Again, because someone dumped Giles in the missing episode that we don't have. [Jenny laughs] I'm telling you. He's fucking trying to ruin everyone's fun. And—

Jenny: I love that Dawn's like, "Andrew, what did the First want you to do?" And Andrew was like, "Oh, wanted me to, like, shoot girls." And Dawn's, like, stressed out, and Andrew's like, "No, but not you, just—you know—the Potentials." [laughing] And Dawn's like, nice. [both laugh]

Kristin: Dawn!

Jenny: She's gotta pick up those victories where she can get them.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Dawn's like, "I just need some peace and quiet around here. I want my own bathroom back." [both laugh]

Jenny: Yeah. "I want my bathroom!" Yeah.

Kristin: Alright, so Willow gets a text from Xander. It's a code—what do you think the code is? Do you think it's "boobs"? It's just 8-0-0-8-5? [both laugh]

Jenny: No. No, no, I think it's like, "the eagle is in the nest" or something.

Kristin: [laughs] It's before emojis, so like, you know, it's gotta be some kind of word code. But she doesn't know if the code means "I'm getting lucky, leave me alone" or "my date is a demon trying to kill me." And they're all like, it's Xander. We better get the fuck over there, immediately.

Jenny: Yeah, let's—looking at the statistics, we should go check on him. [both laugh]

Kristin: Yeah. Xander is very rarely getting lucky and very often getting killed by demons.

Jenny: Spike is like, I'll go get Buffy, 'cause Buffy has left her phone. He exits and he has a big wound on his shoulder. Did he get that in this episode?

Kristin: Oh, I don't know. But also, let's rewind the tape a second. Buffy has gone on a date in which she thinks perhaps, she might get lucky or might get killed. And she leaves her phone?

Jenny: Kristin. It was a different time. People had different relationships with their phones. In 2003.

Kristin: I lived through it. I'm gonna try to take a deep breath, but I'm—she's the Slayer, okay? She should know better. I mean, remember back in Season 1, she told us that if the apocalypse came to beep her.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Was she leaving her fucking beeper at home all the time? What if we needed her?

Jenny: She had a beeper, Seasons 1 through 6. She just got a cell phone this season, Kristin, she's still getting used to it.

Kristin: [simultaneously] I guess the cell phone—cell phone doesn't have a belt clip. That's probably why she keeps leaving it behind. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah, yeah. Simpler times.

Kristin: Okay. So, yes. Spike leaves because "she'll be worried about...the boy."
[both laugh]

Jenny: The boy. Cut to Wood and Buffy, enjoying some kind of poached pear dessert, and he's like, "You need a bite with the sauce" and feeds it to her. And then Spike is between them.

Kristin: Not before Buffy says, "It's the best thing I've ever had in my mouth."
[laughs]

Jenny: Ahh! Ahhhh!

Kristin: Spike very respectfully is like, "Um. It's Xander." [laughs] He doesn't pull any shit. He is literally just there, and then they get in the most awkward fucking car ride of all living time, the three of them. But before—

Jenny: Yeah, that is...a rough car ride. [laughs]

Kristin: It's pretty rough. But before we get the three of them in a car—

Jenny: At the Seal of Danzelthorpe—

Kristin: Thank you.

Jenny: Xander's like, "Lissa, Lissa, you don't wanna do this. You don't know what's down there." And she's like, "What? A very feral proto-vampire? That shall wreak havoc upon Sunnydale?" And he's like, "Huh. Well, I guess you do know what's down there."

Kristin: Yes, yeah.

Jenny: And then she also has scary demon eyes all of a sudden.

Kristin: Yeah. Very cool.

Jenny: And she stabs Xander and the bleeding commences!

Kristin: Oof, it's rough, the way they shoot that, too. Like, the blood running down the knife, you know? It's—eugh!

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: It looks painful. Lissa explains that everyone is hearing the same drumbeat, and we are all making our choices. Do we wanna align with good or do we wanna align with evil? Clearly, Lissa is choosing the cool fucking yellow eyes that come with evil. And—[both laugh] then, after the awkward car ride, where Buffy explains that Spike is a—he's a colleague. He works with me [both laughing] in the struggle against evil.

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Kristin: They all roll up to the seal. Wood, learning by seeing Spike vamp out, that he is a vampire.

Jenny: Yeah...we know that he knows it because he says, "He's a vampire."

Kristin: [laughs] I feel like—I feel like I would have really failed Xander in this situation, because my instinct was to, like, take my shirt off and just hold it to his stomach. Like, I would never have thought to cut him down. [Jenny laughs] Like, my logic would be, like, stop the bleeding. And so I would have just been—

Jenny: Oh my god, oh my god.

Kristin: Awkwardly standing atop the Seal of Danzelthorpe, like, pushing my shirt into Xander's stomach. [both laugh]

Jenny: Oh my god! You know what my favorite part of this scene is.

Kristin: When Wood—

Jenny: This—

Kristin: Carries Xander across the room?

Jenny: No, that's pretty good. That's pretty good, but it's no the seal starts to open, [Kristin laughs] one Turok-Han arm slithers out and then the seal closes and it gets lopped off!

Kristin: The Turok-Han hand is just, like, snapping to a little jazz beat, [laughs] as it comes out.

Jenny: [makes snare drum beat]

Kristin: Showtime! [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah, uh, it's contemplating the perfect Ashanti song to enter the Summers house to. [both laugh]

[“Foolish” by Ashanti plays]
See, my days are cold without you
But I'm hurting while I'm with you...

Kristin: Somebody make us a cut of the hand coming up, holding a top hat. I know you can do it. [both laugh] So Lissa—I don't know what kind of demon Lissa is, but she is a great fighter. She is, like, kicking Spike's ass.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: She is giving Buffy a run for her fucking money. This is good fighting—

Jenny: Yep.

Kristin: That we are seeing here. And Buffy wins. Wood has cut Xander down, and Buffy grabs a sword? I don't even know where the weapons came from, but somebody had a bag of them, maybe? I have no idea.

Jenny: Oh, they were probably just down there with all the shovels. Shovels and swords.

Kristin: Oh, yes. Okay, shovels and swords. [laughing] Also the name of a hidden restaurant in the Sunnydale alley.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: So Buffy beheads Lissa, and unfortunately, when she does, Lissa turns into a not-good-looking demon of any kind. I'm upset about that.

Jenny: We've never seen a demon quite like this one.

Kristin: It's weird. It's like—it's almost like—it looks like there's some black stitching make up its, like, features? I don't know. It's weird. Anyway. Buffy wins.

Jenny: Buffy wins and her immediate reflex is to run to Spike to see if he's okay. And Wood hates it.

Kristin: Yeah. Yeah. And Xander. Xander looks at Buffy and says, "So. How's your date going?" Ohh. Ohh, no. [laughs] [Jenny groans] Alright, so—

Jenny: Giles tried to warn you all! No good could come of this.

Kristin: [sighs] God. Don't give Giles any fucking credit. He's just being a piss-baby over there.

Jenny: [laughs] Okay.

Kristin: Okay, so we have a—we have a little segment from Alba. Because we had a lot of conversation before we recorded this episode, and there was a lot that Alba wanted to talk about, to sort of, like, bring to light about—the fact that, really, like, we're seeing two characters of color, two Black characters, Lissa and Wood, go on dates with prime Scoobies. And both end up, at the end of this episode, being suspicious. And that is a point worth discussing, and Alba wanted to come on in here and say some things. So come on in, Alba! Let's hear what you got to say.

[ALBA jingle plays]
Producer Alba!

Alba: Okay, so let's talk about the audience's relationship to Principal Wood in this episode. He has already been set up as suspicious in previous episodes, so we are already wary of him. Because of course, why would it be acceptable to just have a gorgeous, likable Black man on Buffy, right? At the beginning of the episode, Giles is talking to Buffy about his concerns regarding removing Spike's chip. And Buffy throws Principal Wood into the pile of other extremely dangerous things that they are dealing with, without any confirmation of whether Wood is actually dangerous or not. When Buffy and Willow are discussing the potential date with Principal Wood, Buffy says, and I quote, "It's not even that he's acting that suspicious." Let me finish that sentence. It's just that he's Black.

After being baited into believing that Wood is in fact evil, we—the audience—then move onto learning that he's actually good. Very good. Wood and Buffy even have some very cute back and forth flirting and chemistry. And let's be honest, I think Wood is actually the best guy Buffy goes on a date with or has chemistry with on

the show. He's gorgeous, he's funny, he's smart, he's great at his job. He knows about Slayers, he was raised by a Watcher. It's like he was tailor made for her. But we're only allowed to like Wood for a brief ten-minute period, because then, oops, what do we realize? Spike killed Wood's mother.

So now we come full circle. And as the audience, we can't trust Wood again. This whole episode perpetuates the idea that Black people are not trustworthy, and also enforces that our beloved characters can't date Black people for seemingly good reason. I call bullshit.

Now, Ashanti. While it's absolutely incredible to see Ashanti in all her perfection in an episode of Buffy, the writers do her dirty. First of all, she has to get harassed by Xander at the hardware store—ew. Secondly, once they go on the coffee date, he uses her as emotional support. Gross. But the fact that she ends up being evil is honestly just unfortunate. I think they were trying to do an Aaliyah Queen of the Damned reference, but why do we have to turn against basically every single Black woman that appears on the show? Not only does she turn out to be evil, but her death is again another example of dehumanizing Black women and brutalizing her body. The writers remove every aspect of her humanity, turning her into one of—in my opinion—the ugliest demons we've seen on the show.

This is not so different from what happened to Forrest in Season 4, although what was done to him was far more extreme. In fact, now that I think about it, his dehumanization wasn't even his choice. It was Adam's. Whereas the mayor, a white character, had the choice and autonomy over his body to become a giant demon snake. It's also interesting to note that when Britney Spears, the only other famous musician slated to have a speaking role in the series to date, was supposed to guest on I Was Made to Love You, her character was a cute little robot. Her character was not dehumanized in the slightest, and she died peacefully. She literally just shut down. How's that for a comparison?

Don't get me wrong, this is one of my favorite episodes in the season. I just truly believe that there is a version of the episode that could have been written that didn't cause so much explicit harm to the audience by forcing racialized people to experience the episode, but also influencing people's perceptions of each other that take so much more work to unlearn than to learn.

[ALBA jingle plays]
Producer Alba!

Kristin: Thank you, Alba. As always.

Jenny: Yeah, thanks, Alba. I was thinking about this before we started taping. And I think it's really interesting that, like, Lissa begins her appearance in the episode as someone who just feels, like, you know, normal and nice and good.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: And like, a nice, pretty gal that is going on a date with Xander.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And then by the end, is revealed to be very much at odds with the good guys.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: And what we have with Wood is—we've just seen him in interesting situations, burying Jonathan, showing up in the basement with a shovel, and not explaining—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Not having a convincing explanation, whatever. So we've kinda come into this episode not knowing where we stand with him. And then we get this, like, "hell yeah" moment of him being like, "I'm doing the good fight. My mom was a Slayer." All of this stuff, and then that is ripped away [laughs] from us before the episode is even over.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: In its final moments, we're back to a place of, like, oh no. Robin is going to be at odds with the Scoobies.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: As well, one way or another, we don't know exactly how it's gonna play out. But this can't be good.

Kristin: Right, and Mack pointed out, in our conversation too, how fucked up it is that that's, like—that's where your mind is meant to go. But when you really think about what's happened here, it's like, there's a vampire who has orphaned this man. And finding out that Robin has been orphaned by Spike makes us think, oh

no, Robin might be bad. What? [laughs] Right? Like, when you think about—'cause I know, like, clearly, it's more complicated than that. But it's just, like—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: [sighs] Thinking that Robin might be, like, burying bodies underneath the school is, like, one particular track of like, "oh no." This is different. This is like, oh no, because if—'cause if you're really, like, holding both things, it's like, Robin has great cause to wanna destroy Spike. And we don't want Spike to be destroyed, 'cause we've been around for many seasons and we've seen a lot of the layers that Spike carries. But like, on paper—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: On paper, Robin would be on the side of good, even if that is what he does.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Even if that's what he does, like, he's doing it to kill a vampire who killed his mother when he was four.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Anyway, it's complicated. And [Jenny laughs] to underline Alba's point, really, it's just—it always goes back to, like, what is the show doing with its characters of color? Because it's not that we can't, like, love to see Ashanti be an evil demon who strings Xander up. That's delicious and fun and great. It's just that if the only things that your Black characters do are bad, evil, suspicious, et cetera, you are filling in people's minds with these things that they carry into their lives. And that's really the—like, that's really the reason to point it out, is because the show has not done much with characters of color, apart from either kill them or make them evil characters or suspicious characters, in some way. So.

Jenny: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Kristin: Alright. Oh my god, oh my god, I'm so sorry. I'm so upset about what is about to happen.

Jenny: [laughs] Go on.

Kristin: Giles is not only drinking milk, he's drinking *warm milk*. Make it. Make sense.

Jenny: Yeah, I'm starting to rethink who's on the side of good and who's on the side of evil here.

Kristin: [laughs] Right? I was—my first note was, "Milk, Giles?" And then "warm?!" [laughs] 'Cause you don't find out it's warm [Jenny makes a buzzer noise] until later. Oh, god. Anyway, we're back in the living room. And Anya...[laughs] Anya is worried that, quote—she has some real zingers of lines. I think Jane Espenson loves nothing more than writing for Anya. Right?

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Like, that's kind of the—she says, "His slut ate him up." [laughs] Okay, Anya.

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: [laughing] And then she says—and this—I'm gonna get this tattooed on my body. "My feelings are changeable, but intense." [laughs]

Jenny: The Kristin Russo story, for sure.

Kristin: My motto. My actual motto. [both laugh] Oh, god. Alright. Let's take this episode through to its end here. We get another fucking Chao-Ahn stupid moment where she's saying everyone is trying to kill her, because Giles offers her his warm milk. Taking us back to the only fact that we've learned about Chao-Ahn since her arrival, which is that she's lactose intolerant. Fuck off, everybody. [Jenny sighs] But then we get Xander coming in here to deliver a bit of a monologue that I personally enjoy. So why don't we—why don't we listen.

[Clip from episode plays]

Xander: I'm going gay. I've decided I'm turning gay. Willow, gay me up. Come on, let's gay.

Willow: What?

Xander: You heard me. Just tell me what to do. I'm mentally undressing Scott Bakula right now. That's a start, isn't it?

Andrew: [sighs wistfully] Captain Archer...

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: [laughs] So... "Gay me up, Willow" is a great line, that I love. And Andrew's not out, on this show, to any of the characters. Yet Xander specifically looks at him and is like, "You know what I'm talking about, right, man?" [laughs]

Jenny: Yes. Correct.

Kristin: Okay. Cool. So "joystick hands." Great.

Jenny: Exactly. You know who doesn't have any time for this?

Kristin: Fucking—

Jenny: Your favorite person in the episode. Giles.

Kristin: Fucking Giles. Fucking Giles.

Jenny: He's like, girls are gonna die, we may die, it's time to get serious. No more dates, no more jokes, no more breaking up with me for whatever your reasons might be, Alicia!

Kristin: [laughs] Alicia?

Jenny: I don't know.

Kristin: Yeah, no fun. No fun! Everybody's gonna die, so be serious. Whatever.

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: Then, later, in the living room, Spike and Buffy are sitting on the couch.

Jenny: Spike calls Andrew "the little boy."

Kristin: "The little boy." There's the boy and the little boy. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: So—

Jenny: Spike's like, I gotta move out and leave town, before it is time—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: For whatever the First has planned for me. And...are you ready for this?

Kristin: I am.

Jenny: Buffy says, "You can't leave, because I'm not ready for you to not be here."

Kristin: Ohh, no! Ohh no. [Jenny sighs] They love each other, okay? They love each other, and I love that they love each other. I support their love. I don't think it's unhealthy. Okay? I don't. I think that they've moved—

Jenny: I mean, I'd argue that it's healthier now than it's ever been.

Kristin: Well, that's what I mean. Like, I think that—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: I think they've been doing some serious work, and I support it.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: And Spike says, "And the principal? How would he fit in?" I, of course, had the mind of a fucking 12-year-old and was like, ha-ha. I have an idea of how he could fit in! I have an idea! Call on me! Call on me!

Jenny: [simultaneously] Okay, okay, okay. [both laugh] Well. Over at Robin's place. Who should appear but Robin's mother, but played by a new actress.

Kristin: Yeah. So the new actress is K.D. Aubert. Is that—I don't know if that's how we say her last name. And the original actress was April Weeden. So April Weeden, the actress who originally played Nikki in the episodes that we've seen so far, did audition for the role that she had initially played. But she said, "I got a phone call from casting stating that there was, quote, 'a certain maturity' about me now and that I didn't get the part." So I don't know—like, they must have felt like they needed a younger-looking Nikki than—

Jenny: Hmm.

Kristin: Than the original actress looked at the time. But there's only been a few years between ep—I just—it's, like, very bizarre to me, this choice. But that said, first of all, that actress, April Weeden—not spelled in the Joss way, spelled

W-E-E-D-E-N—was a stunt—she was a stunt woman, primarily. She did a lot of stunts for this show. She did stunts for Alonna Gunn in Angel, in the episode Warzone.

Jenny: Ohh.

Kristin: Yeah, she was a stunt person for Kendra in What's My Line Part 1. The new Nikki Wood, okay, played by K.D. Aubert—I'm so sorry if I'm pronouncing her last name right [sic]—has done a lot of things as well. She—first of all, she was discovered working behind a makeup counter at Macy's, which is, like, truly how I believe that anyone could be discovered. Like, I love hearing that this actually happens.

Jenny: Ahhh.

Kristin: She was a model for Victoria's Secret, Noxzema, Frederick's of Hollywood. She's been on a bunch of things. The thing that I was most excited about, Jenny?

Jenny: Mmhmm?

Kristin: Is that she was one of the four original Fantanas, which was the group of women who were the spokesmodels appearing in TV commercials for Fanta. [singing] "Wanna Fanta? Wanna Fanta—"

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: Yeah, she was Strawberry Fanta! [both laugh]

Jenny: Okay. Casting news and choices to the side—

Kristin: Mmhmm. I think that Wood handles the First better than anyone else has handled the First so far.

Jenny: I have a question.

Kristin: Oh, yeah?

Jenny: He just revealed to Buffy—he just revealed to her that he, like, fights vampires. They haven't had time to compare notes. How does he know that this is the First Evil and that the First Evil appears incorporeally as people who are dead? How? How does he know?

Kristin: Honestly, it sounds like he's just better at doing research. It sounds like he—

Jenny: Maybe.

Kristin: I mean, 'cause we know he knows about the seal. And we know—like, if he knows about all the things that we've seen him know about, before we understood, like, if he was coming at that knowledge from an evil place or a good place. Then, like, we are led to believe that he would have some intel on the First. How he got it, I don't know. I mean, how did they—I don't even remember how they got information on the First. From the coven?

Jenny: They got information on the First because, like, Buffy was like—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Oh, Giles stole the books.

Jenny: Oh, Giles stole the books from the Council, and Buffy also, like, identified the First, because of what happened with Angel in Amends, back in Season 3.

Kristin: Ohh, right. Right, right, right, right, right.

Jenny: So like, all the intel they have came from a book that Giles stole from the Watchers' Council. [laughs] So...

Kristin: I don't know. Maybe they did—maybe they talked more. Maybe they had time.

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: Maybe they found time—you know, when you need the time, you make the time.

Jenny: I don't think—based on how Robin looked at Buffy and Spike together, I don't think that they had a bunch of data sharing...time together.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Don't forget about the car ride. Before—

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: Before he knew.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: You know?

Jenny: Mm, okay. [laughs]

Kristin: Maybe that's when they told him. But no, 'cause he—I mean, he really does approach this, like, vision of his mom in a way where it does not seem like he just learned about the First.

Jenny: No.

Kristin: Like, it seems like he's had this knowledge for a long time. Good question, but I would just like to repeat my take-away, which is I wish everyone treated the First the way that Wood does. I mean. She gets him. She gets him with the reveal of "Don't you wanna know who killed me?" Like, but it—but like, she has to dig deep into her bag to find the thing that will, like, sway Wood. And he walked right through her, and is like, fuck off. You know?

Jenny: Yeah. Yep.

Kristin: It's just—I just feel like this man has a fighting power that I wish would, you know, appear a little bit more in the Scoob—really in the Potential gang, but in the Scooby gang.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: So yeah. Here is Nikki, played by a new actress. And she's basically like, "You met the person who killed me. So like, whether or not I am just appearing—"

Jenny: "You fought at his side."

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Ahhhh!

Kristin: You met him, you know him, you fought by his side. And he says thank you. Oh no.

Jenny: That he does.

Kristin: Oh no!

Jenny: [laughing] Oh no.

Kristin: Oh nooo!

Jenny: Oh noo, what's gonna happen!

Kristin: What is gonna happen? As if we didn't have enough to deal with already, for goodness' sake.

Jenny: I know.

Kristin: Yeah, this is quite a reveal. And it's—I would guess it's gonna put Buffy in some sticky situations.

Jenny: In a real pickle!

Kristin: A real pickle. [laughs] Oh, no.

Jenny: Yeah. It's not great.

Kristin: Well. Speaking of pickles. [both laugh]

Jenny: Wow!

Kristin: You're welcome.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Jenny: Well! Welcome back to the most important part of the show, the Sexual Tension Awards! [Kristin laughs] Worry not, those of you who may be concerned that we might not have slots for the noms this episode. We have—

Kristin: I mean, the name of the episode is First Date. So.

Jenny: [simultaneously] Noms aplenty.

Kristin: If we didn't have enough noms—

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Kristin: We would be fired.

Jenny: Well. I've been waiting for their first date since the beginning of the season. He's hot, normal and smart. She's a petite blond heroine.

Kristin: Don't forget about solid!

Jenny: It's Buffy and Wood. Oh yeah, he is solid. Solid...Wood.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Solid Wood. [laughs]

Jenny: Buffy and Wood, Buffy and Principal Robin Wood.

Kristin: Hot, hot, hot!

Jenny: In slot number one.

Kristin: Hot. Hot.

Jenny: Yeah. Yes.

Kristin: Need no other submissions, but go ahead.

Jenny: [laughs] In slot number two, giving them a run for their money, it is an evolving love that will not die, Buffy and Spike.

Kristin: Aw, tender. Tender. I don't even know if they belong in the Sexual Tension Awards anymore. They've become very tender.

Jenny: I know.

Kristin: But they're here, but they're here.

Jenny: Here they are. In slot number three, a very special guest, getting up to very special activities. It's Lissa and tying Xander up. The act of tying Xander to a big wheel—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And possibly bleeding him dry onto a seal so that it may open, releasing a super vampire into the world.

Kristin: How much—does a kayak weigh the same amount as a human man? Like, is that—? [laughs]

Jenny: I'm so glad you asked, Kristin.

Kristin: [simultaneously] I just wanna know if Lissa was like, "What weighs the amount of a human man?"

Jenny: Well. The average recreational kayak weighs 35 pounds.

Kristin: Oh! What—?

Jenny: For a single kayak, 65 pounds for a tandem kayak, and fishing kayaks can get up to over 120 pounds. Most kayaks weigh—in conclusion, basically, [both laughing] most kayaks weigh anywhere from 20 to 100 pounds.

Kristin: Okay, that is—so she really should have said she was hanging a few kayaks from her—if she wanted to make sure that she was getting the right rope.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Okay. Alright.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Well, Lissa, better luck next time.

Jenny: Mmhmm. And in slot number four, hope there's plenty of room 'cause there's three of them. It's Xandrew and Scott Bakula. Nice.

Kristin: Hell yeah. We should get them a three-person kayak. [laughs]

Jenny: Yes. We should. Have you ever seen an episode of Quantum Leap?

Kristin: No. But also, yes. Like, I can picture what it looks like when the quantum leap happens. Like—

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: I can visualize that. So I must have absorbed some of the show just by being alive. This was the 80s, I assume?

Jenny: Uhh...

Kristin: I feel like Quantum Leap—

Jenny: 1989 to 1993.

Kristin: Quantum Leap and Nightrider—like, they all blend together in my mind. Just in terms of, like, I was probably, like, nine, ten, eleven years old. And maybe my parents had things on TV and it was, like, a talking car and a man that can jump through time? Weird. [both laugh] So does that answer your question?

Jenny: Yeah, that's great. That's great. [laughs]

Kristin: Have you seen Quantum Leap?

Jenny: Oh, hell yeah. I've watched a lot of episodes, as a child. And Scott Bakula seemed pretty cool.

Kristin: Is that who he plays in that show? Captain whatever?

Jenny: Scott Bakula plays the character of Captain Archer on—I think it's Star Trek Enterprise?

Kristin: Oh, okay, okay. So—I get it. Alright, Scott Bakula.

Jenny: But I've never seen Star Trek Enterprise, I don't think. I've only seen Quantum Leap. That's my Bakula—my Bakula story. [both laugh] My backstory?

Kristin: I get it, I get it.

Jenny: Okay. It's bad. Well! So here's hoping Xandrew can get him flat on his Bakula.

Kristin: Wow.

Jenny: [laughing] Please edit that out.

Kristin: Wow. Do not. Do not edit that out. Leave that in, John Mark.

Jenny: I'm...full of regret.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Wow, he's a really handsome man. I'm looking at his picture.

Jenny: I know!

Kristin: Wow, what a stud. Oh my god, here's a picture of him just hanging out in a sauna. Okay.

Jenny: Nice.

Kristin: Wow, he looks good.

Jenny: Well! If you wish to cast your vote, make your voice heard, please find our Sexual Tension Award poll on Twitter, @BufferingCast, where you can select your favorite noms and their...related slots. Thank you.

Kristin: Congratulations to those of you just catching up, getting into real time, Episode 14, Season 7, and voting for the first time. It always pleases me to no end—

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: When you tweet at me to say, "I finally made it! [laughs] I finally caught up and I can vote in real time!"

Jenny: [simultaneously] "I caught up and now I can vote!" Maybe after we finish the series, we should just cycle the Sexual Tension Award Twitter polls, once a week.

Kristin: Just re-populate them? Yeah, and just see how—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: It could be like a scientific—a socio—a—a—a sociology, anthropological study.

Jenny: Yeah. That's what it could be. For sure.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Okay! That's your Sexual Tension Awards. Bye! [laughs]

Jenny: Ta-da!

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Kristin: Well, Jenny, we did it.

Jenny: [simultaneously] Well!

Kristin: We did another episode.

Jenny: It seems to be true!

Kristin: If we don't cut this shit out, we're gonna get to the end. So we better stop soon.

Jenny: I know. Yeah.

Kristin: [laughs] We gotta stop making 'em. If we stop making 'em, we never have to be done.

Jenny: I know. Well.

[pause]

Kristin: She's Jenny Owen Youngs, and when she's not [Jenny laughs] podcasting about Buffy the Vampire Slayer, she is making new music for you to listen to and dance around your house to.

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: Have your kids sing along to the lyrics of appropriately chosen songs. [Jenny laughs] She has a new song out right now, about Pacman ghosts—

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: Being chased around by the fated couple that will never kiss, Pacman and Ms. Pacman. It's called Ghosts and it goes [sings syncopated tune]—

Jenny: Does—mmm?

Kristin: No? That's how—

Jenny: Close.

Kristin: I just pictured Ms. Pacman and Pacman and I sang a song for them.

Jenny: Yeah, that's...great. [laughs]

Kristin: You can read all about her work on jennyowenyoungs.com.

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: And follow her on Twitter and Instagram, @JennyOwenYoungs. 'Kay, what did I leave out?

Jenny: Uh, you can find Ghosts wherever you stream music now. You can preorder the EP It's Dangerous to Go Alone on my Bandcamp. And you can also pre-save it on Spotify, if you like. And you can join me on Twitch for live streams every Wednesday this month, plus at least one bonus Monday stream. This month is gonna be an exciting variety business in which I will begin streaming games for the first time, and not just music.

Kristin: Wow. For gay pride? [laughs]

Jenny: [simultaneously] Yes, I'm sc-scared. Uh...no?

Kristin: Game pride. Game pride! June is the month for game pride.

Jenny: Game pride.

Kristin: Game pride. Okay, now you have to do me.

Jenny: Okay. Kristin Noeline Russo [Kristin laughs] is a Sagittarius. [Kristin laughs] An author. [Kristin laughs louder] A speaker—

Kristin: Sagittarius first, author second. [both laugh]

Jenny: Yeah, that's right. And an all-around cool dude. [both laughing] She has two cats.

Kristin: [laughing] Oh my god.

Jenny: [laughs] And you can find out about all of the incredible works that she gets into, including but not limited to working with LGBTQ young people and their

families and their larger worlds over on her website, at kristinnoeline.com. That's K-R-I-S-T-I-N N-O-E-L-I-N-E.

Kristin: Hell yeah!

Jenny: Dot com.

Kristin: You did it.

Jenny: And...she's cool.

Kristin: [laughs] Kristin Noeline, cool dude Sagittarius, does some stuff. Check me out. [laughs]

Jenny: That's right. [laughs]

Kristin: Alright, how about us? Where can they find us?

Jenny: Buffering—this one I know.

Kristin: [laughing] Yeah.

Jenny: Buffering the Vampire Slayer is on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram @BufferingCast. You can drop us an email at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com. Or you can listen to this podcast to hear us become more and more unraveled in real time—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: As we rapidly progress towards the end of the series. [both laugh]

Kristin: The last episode is just gonna be like the crinkling of potato chip bags. [both laugh] You can support us, if you'd like—if it sounds like we might need your support. You could be correct, and you can do that by going over to our Patreon. There's a lot of cool shit happening on our Patreon this summer. First and foremost, Jenny and I are about to do a rewatch of Yellow Jackets. We're watching—

Jenny: [singsong] What!

Kristin: Yeah! We're watching episodes live with you all in our Discord. We're podcasting about it, for patrons only. It's gonna be a fun time. And also, listen. It's not a big deal, but LaToya and I are also doing a little Patreon-only podcast.

Jenny: Ohh. Well, isn't that nice. You and LaToya have your own little thing without me.

Kristin: [laughs] We're gonna be talking about all eight episodes of the new series launching on Netflix on June 10th called First Kill. It's about a vampire and a vampire slayer—technically a monster hunter. They're both girls and they fall in love and kiss and kiss and kiss. So.

Jenny: [laughs] Spoilers!

Kristin: That's all in the trailer. [laughs]

Jenny: Okay.

Kristin: So stay tuned for all of that. Support us on Patreon. You can also go to our store, scoop up some merch. We're gonna have some real cool stuff. If it's not already there, it's coming your way soon. Because it's summertime, baby! And the living is easy, and even easier when you're wearing a crop top that features—

Jenny: Wow. [both laugh] This pitch.

Kristin: Willow Rosenberg as a gay vampire. So you know, just deal with it, okay?

Jenny: Indeed.

Kristin: Bufferingthevampireslayer.com, you can learn all about us in a format that is far more succinct than us two dingdongs trying to wrap up the end of this pod.

Jenny: This episode was produced by Kristin Russo, Jenny Owen Youngs, and Alba Daza, with support from our consultant, Mackenzie MacDade. It was edited by John Mark Nelson. And till next time...

Both: Awwoooooooooooo!

[“First Date” p—lays]