

Buffering the Vampire Slayer
Episode 0.07: Welcome to the Mailbag Vol. 5

Jenny: Hey everybody. Before we get started today, we have two reminders and one announcement, a ratio I love.

Kristin: [chuckles]

Jenny: First of all, let's see, this episode's going up on Wednesday. This Friday, June 23rd, will be the first day of my tour on the western side of the United States of America. I will be playing in Denver, in Vegas, baby! In Tempe, Arizona, in San Diego, in Anaheim, in San Francisco, in Portland and in Seattle. You can get all the tour dates and ticket information for those shows, where I'll be opening for Streetlight Manifesto, at my website: jennyowenyoungs.com.

Kristin: Yes, and I will see you if you're coming out to the San Francisco, Seattle or Portland shows, 'cause I will be there with Jenny. So that's fun.

Jenny: Yay!

Kristin: And also this Saturday, June 24th, if you live in New York City or near New York City, you should come on down to Housing Works Bookstore Cafe at two o'clock in the afternoon. We are throwing– I am throwing, in partnership with Autostraddle– it's the Autostraddle and Everyone Is Gay All Ages Pride Party. We will have music from Be Steadwell, Julia Weldon, a performance by the urban word slam team, the youth poet slam team. And I will be hosting it along with Gabby Rivera who is the author of *Juliet Takes a Breath* as well as *Marvel's America*. The event is free and open to the public. It is a beautiful, wonderful event.

You should come on out and if you need more details, you can find them– the pinned tweet on Everyone Is Gay's Twitter has the link. It is on the Housing Works Bookstore Cafe events page as well as on the Everyone Is Gay events page on Facebook, so I hope to see many of your wonderful faces there.

Jenny: And now! For an announcement!

Kristin: Oh my gosh! We're really excited because as of today, we have brand new merchandise in our store. We have not one, not two, but three new T-shirts in the store.

Jenny: Whaaaaat?

Kristin: We have a T-shirt designed by Cameron Glavin that has an adorable werewolf on it playing a guitar? And the caption reads "Even a werewolf is better than misogyny."

Jenny: Hooray!

Kristin: We have a new color of "Just Keep Fighting," like a maroon-rust color with a darker print. It's really, really cool.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: And we have another shirt design by Isabella Rotman that is an "Awoooo" shirt. It is gorgeous.

Jenny: It's the best, I love it so much!

Kristin: It's so great.

Jenny: They're all really good.

Kristin: It's so, so great. All those things are in the store, as well as the physical albums for season one and season two of our songs. So we put both of them up. If you are a patron, you got a little heads up before this episode went up because you're awesome. But for the rest of you, just note they both are limited runs. So if you want a physical copy, order it now. The store- we will be travelling, so the store's shipments will go out on July 7th. So order now if you'd like, they will go out on July 7th. We are so excited. The store can be found on our website: bufferingthevampireslayer.com, just click on Shop.

[Theme song]

Jenny: Hello and welcome to Buffering the Vampire Slayer, a podcast where we are watching and discussing every episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer one at a time, in sweet chronological order. But not today, my friends, today is a very special day. Today is mailbag day. Today we have your emails read aloud, commented upon; your questions, answered. What a sweet, sweet, blessed day this is. I'm Jenny Owen Youngs.

Kristin: And I'm Kristin Russo, looking at Jenny Owen Youngs, who does not have a script in her hands. That was all just off the cuff?

Jenny: Just vibin'.

Kristin: And we're really excited to dig into some mail.

Jenny: So excited!

Kristin: Right? Jenny got to read so much mail today. I had a system, I flagged them, I left home. I said, "When I get back. you have to have read all those emails."

Jenny: Yup, yup, I completed my assignment. I wrote notes about them.

Kristin: When I called you were like, "Hello?!!" And I was like "Hi!"

Jenny: I was in such a good mood, reading all our great mail.

Kristin: I know, all the mail we get is so great. If you are just tuning in and you're like, "How do you send mail?"

Jenny: "What's mail?"

Kristin: You can always email us at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com and if you only want to use stamps and paper, go on over to bufferingthevampireslayer.com. Contact page has our mailing address so you can send us snail mail. Please do.

Jenny: By all means. But not actual snails, please.

Kristin: No, no, no. Nobody wants a snail in the mail. Well...

Jenny: Somebody probably does.

Kristin: I guess probably an eagle... a seagull.

Jenny: [laughs]

Kristin: What kind of a bird eats a snail?

Jenny: I feel like–

Kristin: A crow?

Jenny: Neither a seagull nor an eagle nor a corvid of any stripe–

Kristin: Corvid? What's a corvid?

Jenny: Would turn its beak up at a snail as a meal. Corvids are the– that's the umbrella that includes but is not limited to magpies, ravens, rooks, crows... blackbirds, baby.

Kristin: Unbelievable.

Jenny: All the agents– the various agents of the doom ravens of Stonehenge across the globe, reporting back to their evil, evil bird overlords.

Kristin: Right, great. So with that...

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: I just wanted to make sure I didn't leave any birds out, 'cause they would love a snail in the mail. We would not.

Jenny: [laughs] Yes. Please, send all your snail– your literal snail mail to birds.

Kristin: Yes, not us. Thank you very much. So Jenny.

Jenny: Kristin.

Kristin: So many emails, we need to jump right in.

Jenny: Let's get right to it.

Kristin: This is great, you all are great. I don't think that there have been greater people than you people. If you're listening to this, it means you're great. Good job.

Jenny: You send great emails. And even if you don't send us emails, you're probably thinking great thoughts.

Kristin: It's true. So let's start with a question, from Devorah. Yeah?

Jenny: Mm-hmm.

Kristin: Devorah wants to know: "How do you come up with an original song each week? I'm amazed—" Gonna keep this sentence in here— "I'm amazed at how prolific you are."

Jenny: [gasps]

Kristin: "They're good songs! Also, who plays the drums and other backup instruments on the recordings?" Who does it, Jenny?

Jenny: Oh my gosh. [laughs] What a delightful question and comment. Well, it's me! I do most of the stuff. But I don't actually play the drums, I just program them. But all the instruments you hear are either played or programmed by me, with the exception of once in a while, Kristin will come in and lay down a shaker—

Kristin: Mm-hm. Sometimes a glock.

Jenny: She'll talk-sing...

Kristin: Although actually the glock that's in— what song is that?

Jenny: Oh, the glock that's in "Halloween"—

Kristin: That's actually not me, but if you come to a livestow sometime, you'll see me play that part live.

Jenny: Yeah, the thing we love about that is that we needed a rhyme for something.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: And we couldn't think of one and Kristin was like, "What about "Kristin, hit that glock?"

Kristin: [laughs]

Jenny: And I was like, "That's hilarious," and then I, like, programmed the glock in. And Kristin was like, "I love how in the universe of our songs, Buffy knows me."

Kristin: Buffy knows me!

Jenny: "Buffy, like, calls me out."

Kristin: Buffy's like, "Hey Kristin" and I'm like, "Yeah, Buff?"

Jenny: [laughs] [sings] ding-ding-ding-ding-ding.

Kristin: Right. Always ready. She's got her stake, I've got my mallett, you know what I'm saying?

Jenny: I know what you're saying.

Kristin: Also, that kind of answers– or partially answers– your earlier question, "how do you come up with an original song each week?" So we really do create the song every week, we don't– we're not really ahead we hope maybe in season three to like, get like a little toe–

Jenny: Just a toe ahead would be amazing.

Kristin: Just a hair– a touch ahead would be great. But we have historically never been ahead.

Jenny: [laughs] We're always racing the clock.

Kristin: Sometimes we're really good, which means we will start on Thursday, conceptualizing a song.

Jenny: Mm-hmm.

Kristin: And then, you know, write it all throughout the week leading up to recording it on Monday or Tuesday for the episode. But sometimes it is Sunday and we have not started yet because we've been busy with other things. So it is always a race to the finish line. We generally– like, our process is usually that Jenny creates sort of the skeleton or a series of skeletons.

Jenny: Yeah. I'll usually write, like, maybe three sort of starts that are like, well, this is a vibe and this is a vibe and this is a vibe. And like, with songs like– for the episode "I Only Have Eyes For You," we wanted to do something that was very much in that Flamingos, doo-wop, super plate reverb'ed out, sort of bap-bap-bap-bap-bap 6/8 kind of thing?

Kristin: Mm-hmm.

Jenny: You know? So we angled– I angled the little starts in that direction, you know. And once I have a few ideas, we'll kind of kick them back and forth. Kristin will say, "I like this, I don't like that, what if you do this instead?" bap-bap-baaa.

Kristin: Right. And once we have the skeleton fleshed out then we sit and we write lyrics together. But it also depends on the week, you know. "Becoming"– the episode's around the bend for you all, those songs– like, the songs that are more serious in nature– "Angel..." I'm trying to think of– "What's my Line"– or not "What's My Line"– um... "Innocence" and "Surprise."

Jenny: "Innocence," "Surprise," "Lie To Me."

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Those songs, I usually go away into a dark corner for a minute.

Kristin: Yeah. I let Jenny take more lyrical control over the songs that are–

Jenny: Emotional?

Kristin: Yeah, that are more emotional because I feel like you just do a really great job at that.

Jenny: Oh gosh, thanks.

Kristin: It's also a harder thing for us to collaborate on. I'm okay at coming in and tweaking those things, but–

Jenny: Mm-hmm. But then with silly songs, sometimes...

Kristin: Like "Halloween"–

Jenny: Yeah, Kristin was like, "What if the chorus was: 'It's the big Halloween switcheroo!'" And I was like...

Kristin: I actually said, what if the chorus is, [sings] "It's the big Halloween switcheroo!"

Jenny: [laughs] That's true.

Kristin: And you were like "Okay, alright."

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: So sometimes I contribute entire melodies.

Jenny: Sometimes I like– sometimes I get stuck and Kristin, you know, writes almost the entire– you know what I mean? Sometimes you're like "what about this line, this line, this line?" and I'm like, "yes, yes, yes, oh! And I know the fourth line." You know? And we'll go back and forth like that.

Kristin: Right, it's really been cool. I mean, this is what Jenny does all the time. But for me, it's the first time I've ever participated in songwriting and it's been really exciting and fun. I love it!

Jenny: I love it on the regular, but I really love doing it with you because it's so different from the settings I'm normally writing music in. And also–

Kristin: Because normally in settings that you're writing people aren't like, "Kay, go make me a coffee now." [laughs]

Jenny: I'm rarely asked to make somebody else a coffee in a pop songwriting setting, that's true. But I'm really glad that you ask me to make you coffee all the time.

Kristin: Oh, you're very, very nice.

Jenny: Mm-hmm.

Kristin: So, let's jump into– so we have some episode-specific questions from you all. Let's start with "Innocence." Amy has some important information. Jenny, would you like to share that information with the listeners?

Jenny: Uhh... yes, I would. Amy wrote to us and said: "You were not the only ones who were uncomfortable with the 'sex sounds'"– in quotes– "in that dream sequence. Joss was too. In fact, he was too embarrassed to ask the actors to make them. The moaning is actually him and the sound editor, not Sarah and David. Just thought that was a fun fact to share."

Kristin: This is a great fact.

Jenny: Which I think Amy had mentioned in their email that they saw it in one of the DVD special feature commentary tracks.

Kristin: Yes, and we had a few of you write to us with this information.

Jenny: Which is great.

Kristin: It's so great. That's a really fun behind the scenes fact. Something else, we had a *lot* of opinions. Lot... of... opinions from you all on our orgasm clause. So this is the episode that we did with Joanna Robinson.

Jenny: Ha!

Kristin: I miss you, Joanna Robinson.

Jenny: Wish you were here.

Kristin: Wish you were here all the time. Tamlin wrote in– so many people but I'm gonna read Tamlin's email to us about this orgasm clause. "It's not an orgasm clause! It's a moment of true happiness even contentment where the burden of his soul is not pressing down on him. Angel awakens from his sleep after banging Buffy to the stabbing pain–"

Jenny: Whoa!

Kristin: You okay?

Jenny: [laughs] Yeah.

Kristin: "To the stabbing pain of his soul being stripped away from him. It's post-orgasm contentment in the form of a finally peaceful slumber that ends up with the soul removal. I'm sorry but your math is wrong." So... I don't think our math is wrong, is all I'm saying. I understand what you're saying about contentment post-orgasm, but our math specifically stated: love plus orgasm equals negative one soul.

It wasn't orgasm equals negative one soul, it needs the love plus– that's the whole point of the math. So what I feel is confused here is that in a lot of your heads, the love contentment must always be separate from the orgasm. You're saying Angel has probably had orgasms before, still kept his soul. Well, yeah! 'Cause he wasn't in love– it was a different kind of orgasm, don't take the orgasm away from us.

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: That's what I have to say, Jenny.

Jenny: Also, I defend our stance based on the inherent hilarity of the phrase “orgasm clause.”

Kristin: [laughs] Yes, yes. Agree. So we respect you all. We do believe that perhaps you’re right that the moment of contentment post-orgasm was what lost the soul, but maintain that our math can still be defended based on love plus orgasm equals one negative soul. [Jenny laughs] Thank you very much for your consideration.

[Hell Math Jingle: Hell Math!]

Kristin: Okay, so a couple other things before we jump back into the episode-specific emails. Heather wrote to us to say: “This summer, my wife and I will celebrate 10 years of being together. One of the requirements before we got married was that”– and then in parentheses– “(not really, but well kinda) was that she watch every episode of Buffy. She, of course, loved it. We even have a Buffy the Vampire Slayer line engraving in our wedding bands. But most excitingly, I’m pregnant with our first child! We’re having a little boy and figured hey, why not name him Oz, so we did. Baby Oz is expected to arrive around October 21st. Awwooooo!”

Jenny: Oh my god! Oh my god, if that baby is ten days later than the projected date, werewolf baby Oz will be born on Halloween, just saying.

Kristin: [gasps] Wow!

Jenny: [singing] Just saying!

Kristin: Ooh, I wonder how full the moon will be when baby Oz is born, you know? This is great, Heather and Heather’s wife, and baby Oz, congratulations. That’s exciting! Nina... *Nina*.

Jenny: Ni... na.

Kristin: Nina might win MVP for this mailbag, okay?

Jenny: This is pretty amazing stuff.

Kristin: Nina wrote to us to share with us a Buffering bingo game that Nina created. It is 35 different bingo cards that have things like, "Gaby Dunn is mentioned," "Joss Whedon directs"–

Jenny: "Cordelia jingle."

Kristin: "The patriarchy."

Jenny: Yeah!

Kristin: There's 35 different cards that you can play with. They're up on our Patreon page for everyone. You know, it's a free post so you can just go on over to bufferingthevampireslayer.com, click on Patreon and the most recent post, or one of the most recent public posts, will be Buffering Bingo. So if you'd like, you can print out one or all 35 cards and play along, and let us know when you get Buffering Bingo!

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: Nina, thank you. What a gem. Oh my gosh.

Jenny: Alright, next we've got an email from Rachel about Phases. Rachel writes: "Just listening to Phases and it made me grin because you were all 'whenever Willow and Cordelia are together they win the sexual tension award'"–

Kristin: Truth.

Jenny: They do. "And that was right after we learned that the werewolf is drawn to"– in quotes– "'sexual heat.' Now remind me, who did the werewolf jump out of nowhere right next to? That's right, Willow and Cordelia."

Kristin: Amazing, Rachel, thank you for pointing–

Jenny: Brilliant observation, Rachel!

Kristin: Yes, absolutely brilliant observation. So Aria wrote in on the episode "Bewitched." We *loved* this insight. Aria writes: "I heard y'all mention some potential reasons why the love spell in Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered

had a few unintended consequences. But you didn't mention my favorite theory. During the casting, we don't hear Amy mention Cordelia's name. She directs the spell to quote 'the heart of Xander's beloved.' While she does also use a personal item of Cordelia's, the necklace was a relatively recent gift from Xander, so it might not have been 100% perfect in directing the spell.

The magic may have needed to guess who Xander's beloved is and realistically, Xander wants every girl he can't have, except Cordelia who he just wants to punish. So I posit that the spell did not backfire at all, it worked precisely as Amy requested. Going straight to the heart of Xander's beloved: all non-Cordelia women."

Jenny: [laughs]

Kristin: "This also explains why we don't see a lovestruck Larry. The spell isn't making a heteronormative statement so much as it is reflecting Xander's sexuality, which happens to be straight. Also, I feel like Xander loses any moral high ground over Buffy in this episode. He often gives her a hard time for liking Angel, but apparently Xander is also vampsexual because Drusilla was affected by the spell."

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: Aria, nailin' it.

Jenny: Out of the park.

Kristin: Absolutely, I love this theory and it- yeah, that sums up Xander, doesn't it.

Jenny: Yeah, that is-

Kristin: Wants any lady who won't have him. Okay, let's jump back into some questions. So, Kristi wrote in to say: "Looking back, I've been thinking about all these old shows that I loved and watched religiously: Battlestar Galactica, Facts of Life, Star Trek Next Generation, Little House, Mash, I could go on.

I was a latchkey kid. I grew up watching a lot of TV and it filled this need that a lot of people feel to find community outside of their small town and small-minded families. Can you speak about other TV shows that you loved, especially shows not currently on the air? I would love to hear about characters that you latched onto, crushed on, admired and maybe a little bit about the themes in those shows that kept you coming back.”

This is such an exciting question. Jenny, do you have a show that immediately pops into your mind?

Jenny: Immediately I think of The X Files. You know? Which I just loved so much growing up and still watch now and it totally holds up for me. And I just love... *love*, love so much the two leads, David Duchovny playing Fox Mulder and Gillian Anderson playing Dana Scully. They’re so great.

And there’s this really fantastic thing about the show where there are these two very attractive, smart, compatible, amazing characters that are really fun to watch interact with each other. And they have– for a good, good chunk of the series, they have this really great relationship that, like, there might be, like, flirting and winking but they never– you know, they don’t cross that line for a really long time, you know, the shipping line.

And watching that relationship develop for so many seasons, platonically, but also sort of– it almost feels like they’re each other’s family, you know? I just love watching their relationship develop for a number of seasons.

Kristin: I’ve never seen the– I’ve seen the new episodes of The X Files and a handful–

Jenny: Which... no, no, no.

Kristin: Right. Right, right, right. That’s what I’m saying, like, I was never an X Files watcher, though I’m sure that you and I will watch it together someday.

Jenny: Yes, indeed!

Kristin: My... gosh when I think about my favorite television shows, especially you know in high school, moving into highschool, My So Called Life was everything to me. Everything.

Jenny: Oh yeah.

Kristin: I petitioned–

Jenny: Oh, was there anybody on that show you had a crush on?

Kristin: I mean, yeah. Just, you know, Jordan Catalano.

Jenny: Uh-huh!

Kristin: One of the top most beautiful girls in the land.

Jenny: Yep, yep.

Kristin: And I loved that show. I mean, really, I walked around the halls of my highschool with petition to send in to the network to keep the show on. It was so incredibly moving to me. Definitely loved Jordan Catalano, but I also like– Roseanne was fucking huge for me.

Jenny: Oh man, yeah.

Kristin: This now is like rife with controversy, but the Cosby show was something that I watched religiously as a kid and then rewatched in my early 20s. Shows like those– I mean, you know, Roseanne broke so much ground in so many ways. Even just reading Roseanne’s journey on that show as somebody who was created– the creator of the idea, the creator of the concept is battling every step of the way to have her name shown in the proper places. That was stuff I didn’t even know as a kid watching but you know...

Jenny: Also Roseanne, I think, gave Joss Whedon his first writing gig.

Kristin: Yes! It all comes full circle. That show pushed the boundaries of what we were seeing on television at that time and I still– I think it still holds a place– a very unique place of showing a working class family and

grappling with issues that many shows were not and you know what else did that?

Jenny: [gasps] The Golden Girls?

Kristin: The fucking Golden Girls.

Jenny: Yeah!

Kristin: Nailed it, Jenny. Golden Girls was unpacking important shit way back before most people were. And The Golden Girls is a show that I love, love, love. I could watch episodes of it anytime, anywhere, any day.

Jenny: Why do you think it is that– based on this loose conversation that we’re having, it feels like a conclusion somebody could draw is in the 80s and 90s maybe sitcoms were really the place where– you know, late 80s, early 90s, sitcoms were really the place where progressive ideas could be explored more easily. And what is that? Is it that maybe sitcoms are a lower budget– I’m not even really sure what exactly was on TV, what contemporary shows were competing with The Golden Girls or Roseanne.

Kristin: Right, yeah, I don’t know. And I don’t really know, I mean, I certainly am not equipped with the information to properly dissect that. But I do think that there are shows now that are doing that same thing. I think that there are different formats and what have you, but we loved One Day at a Time.

Jenny: Oh, yeah!

Kristin: And are so excited for One Day at a Time to come back. And I think that that is another example of a sitcom, a current day, you know, present-day sitcom that is cracking apart really important issues while also keeping us laughing.

Jenny: Yeah, I mean, maybe that’s the thing. It’s just easier to get into people’s heads if you’re making them laugh at the same time.

Kristin: I think there are some people in this world who know that you can be funny and make positive change. And there are some people in this world who think the only way to be funny is to be offensive or, you know...

Jenny: Shocking.

Kristin: Shocking, or dumbing things down or whatever.

Jenny: Or be mean.

Kristin: And I think the big difference between the shows that we're listing as shows that we love and shows that we did not love is that the shows that we love were made by people who trusted us to be an audience who would understand, who would follow and would want to unpack some of these things and who would want to engage in some of these things.

Those are the shows that move me the most. The ones that trust me to be able to go on the journey and the ones that tell the truth. And I do think that those shows— some of my favorites, I love them so much because they were such a close mirror to things that were happening in our day to day lives and to things that were not talked about, you know? We're talking about the Golden Girls, we're talking about Roseanne, we're talking about The Cosby Show. A lot of these shows really put things on our plates that we knew were happening, but that no one would talk about. And I think that is really, really moving to me. And in the world of crushes, I will just— Jordan Catalano but also Rayanne Graff, come one!

Jenny: Come on!

Kristin: Loved— I idolized Rayanne Graff maybe more than a crush, I just wanted to be Rayanne Graff from My So Called Life. I also loved— when I was a kid I had a huge— didn't know it was a crush, but definitely looking back, know it was a crush, on Samantha Micelli from Who's the Boss. Alyssa Milano. Still have a crush on her, I just followed her throughout the years.

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: You know, when I was eight and she was eight? Crushes. When I was fourteen and she was fourteen? Crushes.

Jenny: Oh, you know what I loved in high school? First, I loved the legendary journeys of Hercules. And then I *loved* its spinoff, Xena Warrior Princess.

Kristin: Ahh, the classic.

Jenny: I recently went out to Joshua Tree with a couple of my friends. And we happened upon some Xena Warrior Princess postcards at the Joshua Tree gift shop. And it got us talking about Xena and I– me and my friend’s boyfriend, Jack, were just like going ham– like, oh my god, remember this from Xena, remember that from Xena! And Molly, my friend and his then-girlfriend, now-wife, could not care le– was just like, okay, you guys have fun talking about Xena forever and ever. We got so amped driving all the way back from Joshua Tree to Los Angeles. I could not wait to crank up Netflix and or Hulu, or wherever it’s streaming, and watch an episode of Xena Warrior Princess. And I started an episode and was just like, hmmm.

Kristin: Didn’t hold up for you?

Jenny: This is not what I remember. But, what I’ll say is that was just like a random episode in the middle of the series. I want to go back to the beginning and watch. Because when I was a kid, I was a super nerd for Greek and Roman mythology. I *loved* reading it. So when Hercules became a show I was like, yeah! And then when there was this spin-off called Xena Warrior Princess, I was like, oh my god!

Kristin: Were you psyched that it was this girl who had a lot of power? Did you identify with that or did you just more wanna be Hercules?

Jenny: I don’t know. But I do recall very specifically, there is an episode where there is a kiss between two ladies. And somehow I saw it when it actually aired at my house, and then the next night, there was an encore showing at my friend’s house. And I remember getting really tense and being like, oh my god, it’s gonna happen, what’s everybody gonna say. Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god.

Kristin: And how old were you?

Jenny: Having all these secret queer thoughts. I think I was a sophomore in high school.

Kristin: So you were, like, aware that you were gay when you were watching this?

Jenny: Yeah, but not– but it wasn't something I was really talking about with anybody else.

Kristin: Right. Right, right, right.

Jenny: But I definitely remember first having that moment alone and being like, oh my god, did that just happen on TV? Oh my god. And then preparing for it, knowing it was about to come. I have no idea if anybody else who was watching even noticed that it happened.

Kristin: Most of the shows that we– I'm sure they did. I mean, that wasn't a common thing to happen on television at that point. And what's funny is that most of the shows that we talked about are shows where there was at least an arc of a gay character or queer character in the television show. You know, Roseanne certainly dealt with sexuality. What were the other shows? My So Called Life, obviously Ricky...

Jenny: Of course.

Kristin: Had to be– I mean, Ricky had to be the first bisexual male character– like, recurring character on television. I will look that up, but I am pretty sure.

Jenny: Yeah, that seems right.

Kristin: I cannot imagine that there was a character before Ricky who was an out *bisexual* male. You know, perhaps of course an out gay male but Ricky was notably bisexual.

Jenny: Big deal. Yeah.

Kristin: And that is a *huge* deal. We don't even see that now you know and this was, like, '94.

Jenny: Because, do you know why? Bisexual erasure.

Kristin: Oh, I thought you were gonna say because of the patriarchy which is...

Jenny: Well, bisexual erasure is direct side effect–

Kristin: Direct results of...

Jenny: Of the patriarchy.

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: Alright, let's check out this email from Heather about "Passion." Kristin and I notably in our episode about "Passion" were like, why is Jenny Calendar's– why does Jenny Calendar's tombstone say Jenny Calendar? Her birth name was Janna, the Kalderash people, you know, what's happening there? And this is what Heather wrote to us, which I think is so insightful and great.

"First, as far as we know, the Scoobies don't know that she was named Janna. That reveal was only between her and her uncle who is dead and thus can't correct them." Great point. "Secondly, someone's name is not necessarily who they are. She was born into the Kalderash and named Janna. However, after coming to Sunnydale and getting to know Buffy and her friends and coming to love Giles, she wasn't Janna anymore. She was Jenny.

I feel that Janna would have listened to her uncle and done everything to stop Angel and Buffy before he lost his soul, without a second thought. But Jenny got to know them and cared for them and felt for them, and as such, found it harder to detach herself from the group and cause that pain to her friends." Which I think– that really packed a punch for me when I got to this email I was like, yeah!

Kristin: Right, like what is in in a name? And how we use our names and I think in our initial watch we were like– I found it, like, well, that's offensive that her history isn't being honored on her tombstone. But also, this is a

solid counterpoint that perhaps– well, A, they didn't know her name. But B, and I think the bigger thing that we're discussing here is the choice– what happens to us and our name and what isn't a name and did Jenny become Jenny during her time in Sunnydale? And how would she have wanted her name on her tombstone? After everything she had gone through, would she have wanted Janna, would she have wanted Jenny? We can't know but that there's more to it than just, they didn't put her quote "real" name.

Jenny: Right, thank you so much, Heather.

Kristin: Thank you so much, Heather, and thank you so much, Brittany, who wrote in on "Killed by Death" with a couple of things. "I had a thought," Brittany says, "while I was listening about Cordy and Xander, how they sort of exemplify the hedgehog's dilemma."

Jenny: The hedgehog's dilemma?!

Kristin: "They wanna have a closed reciprocal relationship but they're both too prickly for it to work."

Jenny: This is the saddest tale nature has ever told.

Kristin: Right? There's a real thing called the hedgehog's dilemma, sometimes also called the porcupine dilemma. We looked it up, and it is exactly as Brittany says. Hedgehogs or porcupines will wanna get together for warmth, but they can't get close enough to each other because of their prickles!

Jenny: It's so sad!

Kristin: And what a great metaphor or symbol for Cordelia and Xander, I love this. Brittany delighted us with that but then just took our delight to right through the roof by the postscript included: "Did you know Hufflepuff in French is Poufsouffle?"

Jenny: [laughs]

Kristin: No, we didn't. And now we do, and when people ask me what my house is, I will say...

Jenny: Poufsouffle!

Kristin: Poufsouffle, and just in case you didn't see on social media, I am a Hufflepuff. And everyone asked what Jenny is. Jenny, what are you?

Jenny: I am a Ravenclaw.

Kristin: A Ravenclaw.

Jenny: We also got this email from Diane in Germany. Diane wrote: "Krueger is a typical German name"– we're talking about Freddy Krueger here, right? "So is it a coincidence that the Freddy-type episode features a German monster, Der Kindestod? I don't think so," says Diane.

Kristin: Thank you, Diane. Thank you for proving my point.

Jenny: Hard agree.

Kristin: Hard agree. Rebecca writes in on "Only Have Eyes for You." This is a great– this is a detailed and wonderful email. "Hi, I love your podcast." Thank you, Rebecca. "I would like to share my thoughts on why the poltergeist only now popped up–" 'cause we had raised the question, like, well, if this poltergeist comes–

Jenny: What's this poltergeist been doing with its afterlife?

Kristin: Right? Since 1956, what's been going on? So Rebecca says, "Do ghosties get more powerful the older they are, the longer they've been angsting around? If so, that could play a part. But I think it's also a perfect storm timing thing. In the previous few months, there were two really tragic and violent events, both involving a lot of emotional turmoil and both related to a romance.

Angel didn't die, except perhaps semantically, but Buffy is walking around school grieving him like he did. James' ghost really seems to identify with her feelings of guilt and anger at herself that she followed through with a passionate encounter because she loved someone so much it made her a little bit blind. James is showing Buffy his memories, trying to get to a

catharsis through her, because Buffy is identifying with his role in what happened. She feels like she killed Angel.”

Jenny: Deep! Sorry, keep going.

Kristin: Yes, yes. “The poltergeist isn’t Jenny Calendar, but both she and Giles were about to finally reconnect romantically the night she died. She died violently in the very halls James has been haunting, and Giles has been carrying his grief through them too every day since. So Buffy and Giles have both been carrying these huge amounts of grief and regret and love and other complicated emotions through the school every day after the sudden end to their romantic relationships and deaths in the school. And that just seems like not only a nice juicy dinner for a poltergeist, but also a way for James to end his own suffering for good.”

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: This is brilliant. Rebecca, we read your email, two other people wrote emails to us that we read, Debra and Travis, that had similar theories that tragic deaths, violent deaths and the context–

Jenny: James’ relation to Buffy.

Kristin: Yes, were what activated, in a sense, this poltergeist. So it wasn’t that the poltergeist has been haunting it the whole time. The poltergeist has kind of been charging up, wondering what’s up and then these events sort of ignited him to full fledged poltergeisty power.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: I love that!

Jenny: Me too.

Kristin: I think Rebecca’s theory stands.

Jenny: A+.

Kristin: I submit it to the canon of Buffy the Vampire Slayer for review. Thank you very much.

Jenny: Next we've got a great Willow related theory from Heather. Heather writes: "After a full day spent alternately watching Buffy and listening to your podcast, I've seen Willow in a parade of adorable sweaters and eccentric felted hats and I have a theory that explains everything. Willow's mother knits. Because Willow's such a sweet person, she would wear everything her mother knits for her, which would just encourage her mother to knit more and thus, Willow has a closet that's just full of sweaters and hats.

I'll bet she has scarves and mittens too, and we simply don't see them often because Willow lives in southern California. I don't wanna be gender normative. The knitter might be Willow's father or her cool gay uncle but I'm increasingly convinced that someone who loves Willow is knitting for her." Great point!

Kristin: Great point.

Jenny: Mystery solved!

Kristin: [laughs] Thank you, Heather. Laura wrote in with a few questions that I think- I think we can most of these questions just bing bang boom! What do you thing?

Jenny: Yeah, let's go for it.

Kristin: "Do you usually listen to Fashion Watch before you play it on air?" Yes.

Jenny: Yeah, we do 'cause we don't wanna talk about the same stuff that Kate talks about.

Kristin: Yeah, so we do our best to get the Fashion Watch from Kate, listen to it and then record the episode so we usually know what's gonna be in it. But in the first few episodes, that is not how it was done and so you'll see that we repeat each other.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Kristin: And then we learned how to not do that. "Two, when you play the jingles, do you play them in real time? I picture you both with a panel of flashy buttons for sound cues like those old radio shows."

Jenny: I wish we had a flashy panel of buttons.

Kristin: Me too. I have always wanted a flashy panel of buttons to play sound cues from. I just think it would be so great. And we do not have that though. We record and we sort of hit pause where the jingles go and then later in post production, we put the jingles in.

Jenny: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

Kristin: And sometimes we have guests so we play the jingles for them so they know what the jingles sound like. "Number three, how is Patrol Cat?"

Jenny: We'll be talking about Patrol Cat and the new animal addition to our daily rounds in episode four "Becoming Part One." But I will tell you that variant Patrol Cat, who is a tabby, not regular Patrol Cat- I have seen variant Patrol Cat around. That's not a spoiler for next week.

Kristin: [laughs] But Patrol Cat is alive and well.

Jenny: Yes, yes.

Kristin: Alive and very well. But we will get into the details of Patrol Cat's rerouted patrol next week. And then Laura asks, "Do you guys have- have you played the Buffy board game that was just released? It is fantastic!" We have not played it yet, however...

Jenny: But do you know who has a copy of it?

Kristin: Brittany Ashley.

Jenny: Uh-huh!

Kristin: Who else would have...

Jenny: Who, but Brittany Ashley?

Kristin: Yes, and Brittany has invited us over when we get back from our travels in July to play the board game with her. So we will be doing that. We will be sure to let you know how it goes.

Jenny: I can't wait!

Kristin: I can't wait either. I want to– I would like to– Jenny, I would like to end with an email from Toby. Toby says: "I wanted to give a quick thank you for the wonderful work you do with the podcast. It's been a long time since I've seen Buffy but because of y'all, I'm going to rewatch this summer I've decided. But more than that I wanted to thank you from the bottom of my heart for being so wonderfully queer. As a mid-America, small town, trans gay, trademark, it's rare in my everyday life to see other queer people at all. Nevermind other queer people that are seemingly so happily married such as yourselves, especially nowadays.

That y'all and your podcast have become something incredibly special and important in my day to day life. Your guest episodes have been my absolute favorite, if only because it's reassuring and heartwarming to think that maybe one day I can find my own group of queer people or queer-supportive people to geek out over things with and just have a happy normal life much like y'all have."

So I just wanted to read this because it just warmed my heart so much. And it made me want to say to you, Toby, that yes, you will have a group of queer and/or queer-supportive people that you will be able to geek out over things with. And I know that because of the sheer volume of queer people and people who support queer people who are listening to this podcast right now that we–

Jenny: It's just a number's game.

Kristin: It is a number's game– that we're literally everywhere. Everywhere, everywhere. And sometimes it takes a little bit longer to find those people but they are closer than you think. And it means so much to both of us to be able to talk about something that we love, but also to be able to be visible

with our lives in a way that helps uplift a lot of other people who go through some of the same things that we do.

So thank you so much for your note. And I did say your trademark, so just repeating, "mid-America small town trans gay." That is trademarked to Toby. So please contact Toby with any questions or concerns regarding that trademark. But Toby, sending a lot of love to you.

Jenny: Aww. Yeah. It's pretty powerful when we get emails and notes like this one. It really, really means a lot. It's kind of like when I went to a movie recently...

Kristin: Oh, a movie?

Jenny: And saw... an island! Full of Amazons! Training?!

Kristin: You felt finally seen?

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Yeah, so did I. Jenny is talking about the movie Beauty and the Beast. [Jenny laughs] No, she's talking about Wonder Woman, which is a great example of people feeling very seen.

Jenny: Peak seen.

Kristin: We love that movie. My sister left the movie and she texted me and she was like, "I feel like I could run ten miles right now!" You know, it just—yeah. Actually, Jenny, I'm glad that you bring up Wonder Woman because—

Jenny: Because it's the best thing— it's the only thing worth talking about besides Buffy?

Kristin: It is the only thing— yes, only thing worth talking about besides Buffy. But no, because I said I was gonna end with Toby, but since you brought up Wonder Woman, Jennifer did write in to us saying: "I missed Getting in Bed with Kristin." In case you don't know, that's a live series I do on Facebook. It wasn't an invitation— a public, open invitation to get in bed with me. I mean, it was but—

Jenny: No! It wasn't.

Kristin: But virtually, virtually.

Jenny: Ah.

Kristin: Getting in Bed with Kristin is a series I do with Autostraddle. It's most Thursdays, live on their Facebook page where I answer advice and things are themed. And Jenny got in bed with me for Getting in Bed with Kristin a couple of weeks ago.

Jenny: For the first time ever.

Kristin: Yes, of course.

Jenny: That was the only time we ever shared a bed. Go on.

Kristin: Jennifer missed the episode and only saw the clip of Jenny talking about Wonder Woman. And Jennifer says, "I've seen the movie twice and I just wanna keep talking about it all the time and I would love to hear you guys talk about it too." Well, Jennifer, perhaps a great place for us to end this Mailbag episode is to let you know that in a couple of weeks, we will be talking about Wonder Woman here at Buffering the Vampire Slayer. We're going to do a very special episode about our thoughts and feelings on Wonder Woman.

Jenny: Wooooooooo!

Kristin: And we're very excited about it. And you should stay tuned for it. It will be happening in July.

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: And we might even have maybe like a special guest or something that we will talk to about Wonder Woman.

Jenny: Could happen. It could happen.

Kristin: It could, maybe it will, who knows? We don't know. Do you know? No. Nobody knows. So stay tuned for that. Thank you all for writing in these incredible emails. We did not get to read all of the emails that we wanted to. There are just so many. But we really appreciate all that you write in to us and please keep sending them, whether they be comments, clarifications or questions about us or the series or anything like that. We will try to tackle them in a future mailbag.

Jenny: Most definitely. Keep 'em coming. Well, that's it for us today, thanks so much for listening. I'm Jenny Owen Youngs and you can find me on Ytwitter, Instagram, wherever, @jennyowenyongs.

Kristin: Yes, and I'm Kristin Russo and you can find me on Twitter, Instagram or wherever @kristinnoeline k-r-i-s-t-i-n-n-o-e-l-i-n-e.

Jenny: Buffering the Vampire Slayer is on Twitter and Facebook at Bufferingcast. And you can always drop us an email at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com.

Kristin: You can! And if you'd like to support us, we would love it if you did. You can go on over to our Patreon page, you can find that on our website bufferingthevampireslayer.com just click on Patreon, you can support us over there. You can leave us a good review on itunes, we always love those. Or you can go and get some new merchandise from our store!

Jenny: New merch!

Kristin: Support yourself and us at the same time. You can find that link also on our website, just click on Shop from bufferingthevampireslayer.com.

Jenny: Till... part one of the finale.

Kristin: Whoo!

Kristin and Jenny: Awoooooooooooooo!

Kristin: [whispers] Mailbag.