

Buffering the Vampire Slayer  
Episode 7.01: Lessons

[CHIME]

**Jenny:** [inhales sharply] It brings me so much pleasure to once again say, hey everybody!

**Kristin:** Oh! Hey. Hey, Jenny! We're back.

**Jenny:** Ah-ha! We're back.

**Kristin:** We are back. It is—it's not Season 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. It is Season...[Jenny gasps] 7. And if you know the show, you know there are but seven seasons in it, so here we are. Starting. Starting the end. [sings triumphant tune]

**Jenny:** Wow.

**Kristin:** We have some exciting news. [both laugh at the conclusion of Kristin's song]

**Jenny:** [stiltedly] Do you wanna go to prom?

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yeah, you know what, Jenny? I would love to go to prom, but could you just tell me where—I know we're having a prom. It's in March, I think, the 11th and the 12th. But where do I go if I wanna go to prom? Where's it being held, Jenny?

**Jenny:** We're throwing prom at—and I can't stress this enough [Kristin laughs]—Sunnydale High School!

**Kristin:** Yeah. It's bananas. No one understands it, including your two hosts. But we rented Torrance High School out—not the whole high school, that would be a lot of space. [both laugh] But we rented the theater and the courtyard space—yeah, the one with the fountain.

**Jenny:** That's right.

**Kristin:** The one with the fountain!

**Jenny:** And the stairs that you'll recognize. Cordy—you watched Cordelia walk down those stairs.

**Kristin:** [sim] But will not climb up, because of safety.

**Jenny:** Yes.

**Kristin:** We rented out Torrance High School to have a two-night prom. Torrance High School, AKA Sunnydale High School.

**Jenny:** Eek!

**Kristin:** It is...it's unbelievable. Truly. I mean, we did it and we still don't believe it.

**Jenny:** It's true.

**Kristin:** We sold out—we announced on Halloween, we sold out of the advanced ticket bundles. We, of course, saved some for public sale. So if you want a ticket—and I cannot stress *this* enough—if you want a ticket to attend in person, I highly, highly recommend you show up at [bufferingthevampireslayer.com/prom](http://bufferingthevampireslayer.com/prom) on November 5th, AKA this Friday, at 10 AM Eastern, which is when we're releasing the remaining ticket bundles. Okay? Okay. March 11th, March 12th. March 11th, we're doing a live taping and March 12th we are dancing the night away around the iconic Sunnydale High School fountain. I just—

**Jenny:** Huzzah!

**Kristin:** Wow. Also exciting stuff. Jenny and I are gonna be in the same dang space, the same room, on November 13th. As a matter of fact, the room that I'm sitting in [Jenny gasps] right now. [Jenny gasps] Jenny will be here, inside of this room, [Jenny gasps] with me. And we will be doing a virtual live taping of Season 7, Episode 3, Same Time, Same Place. Get it? 'Cause we're gonna be in the same place at the same—[inhales]

**Jenny:** Wow.

**Kristin:** [exhaling] Time. [Jenny laughs] You can get tickets to that no matter where you live in the universe, with no travel required, at MomentHouse—

**Jenny:** [dramatically] The universe.

**Kristin:** Dot com slash [bufferingthevampireslayer](http://bufferingthevampireslayer.com). Yeah, universe. I bet you could watch it in space. [Jenny laughs] Also, for those of you who can't make it on the 13th of November precisely at 5 PM Eastern, the live recording will be available for

seven days on Video on Demand, for you. We're also doing a little after party. Jenny, are you gonna play some music?

**Jenny:** Oh, yeah! I'm gonna play some music.

**Kristin:** Well, you'll be in the same room with me, so would you like me to, like, play a couple notes on the old glock?

**Jenny:** That would be helpful, actually.

**Kristin:** Cool, cool, cool. You can learn all about this and snag your little tickets—again, [momenthouse.com/bufferingthevampire](http://momenthouse.com/bufferingthevampire) slayer. All details are on our website, as always.

**Jenny:** In the merchandise landscape, I need to tell you some things. We have some new products in the store to celebrate being back with Season 7. We have a beautiful poster designed by the one and only Diana Kresge, featuring Frank, Sam and Gus, in addition to me and Kristin. Really—

**Kristin:** Whatever. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Not the headliners in that lineup.

**Kristin:** Definitely not. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** And we have a beautiful, magical new trio of handmade candles by Solis Illuminatum, with designs by Isabella Rotman. The three new candle designs that we are introducing, each highlight a different aspect of *Willow*! Vampire Willow, Nerd Willow and Dark Willow. You're welcome, in advance.

**Kristin:** Yeah. They're gorgeous. And also, we were so ob—I mean, we're obsessed with all three of the designs. But we were so obsessed with the Vampire Willow design, which says "kinda gay"—

**Jenny:** Mmhmm!

**Kristin:** That we also took that design and put it on a long-sleeve T-shirt—

**Jenny:** Why not?

**Kristin:** Also up in the store. The long-sleeve T-shirt and the poster are also up in the UK store, [bufferingthevampireslayer.com/shop](http://bufferingthevampireslayer.com/shop).

**Jenny:** And now, the moment you've all been waiting for. The results of the Season 6 Sexual Tension Awards bracket showdown, created and managed by our beloved Emily McLongstreet. Drumroll, please.

**Kristin:** [makes drumroll sound]

**Jenny:** In third place, your very own Kristin Russo—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** And Anya on rollerskates.

**Kristin:** Thank you.

**Jenny:** Take those noms and stick them in your third slot, please.

**Kristin:** I've been holding onto Anya very tightly, so she doesn't fall off the platform on her roller skates.

**Jenny:** [laughs] Ha! In second place, [guffaws]. The throuple to end and level all throuples, it's Buffy, Spike, and the walls, RIP.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** [singing] "Fuckin' down the house!" And in first place, it had to be you.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** [laughs] It had to be all of us!

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** And Giles! Giles and all of us. Number one slot, for all of Season 6 sexual tension. I—it's just so beautiful—

**Kristin:** It's...

**Jenny:** To see a whole season's worth of work and sweat and electrically charged air between entities, you know, really come to a head.

**Kristin:** A head, you said, like a...like a...Anthony Stewart Head?

**Jenny:** [laughs] Ha!

**Kristin:** Alright, we're outta here so that you can hear us talk about the thing you came to hear us talk about, which is Season 7, Episode 1 of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Lessons. This is the point in the intro where I usually read an email from you, so this is your reminder that you can send us an email at [bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com](mailto:bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com). And perhaps you will hear it up here at the top. Also, speaking of tops, Angel On Top's season premiere [Jenny laughs] is next week, November 10th. And you will see that episode in this feed as your reminder that they are moving into their own feed. So we will have all the details for you, where you go to subscribe to make sure you don't miss a single episode. Next week when they return, you'll hear that premiere here, and then you will be able to listen to Seasons 1 through 3 all in the same place for the first time, and begin your journey with Morgan and LaToya for Season 4.

**Jenny:** Yay!

**Kristin:** Alright, let's get to it.

**Jenny:** Indeed.

[Buffering theme plays]

**Jenny:** Hellooo! 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 my beloveds—

**Kristin:** Oh!

**Jenny:** Over on Angel On Top. I'm Jenny Owen Youngs.

**Kristin:** And I'm Kristin Russo, and this week, we're back. Alongside Sunnydale High School, we're back.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** With Season 7, Episode 1, Lessons. You should stay tuned at the end of this podcast every other week for an original song, written by Jenny, sometimes with my help, recapping the Buffy episode we are discussing.

**Jenny:** Good people of the Bufferingverse, let me tell you that Lessons was written by Joss Whedon, directed by David Solomon, and originally aired on September 24th, 2002.

**Kristin:** How many days before...?

**Jenny:** Mmmm! But—just simply but, uh, a month and...[Kristin laughs] 29 days. [both laugh] I don't know, a little under two months.

**Kristin:** Can someone—listen—

**Jenny:** Just under two months till my birthday. [Jenny laughs]

**Kristin:** Can someone please make a Jenny's birthday calculator for us at this point? There should just be an app.

**Jenny:** Surely somebody out there could—yeah, just program something.

**Kristin:** Where you just type in the date and then it tells you how far away you were from which birthday of Jenny's. I think we all deserve that.

**Jenny:** That would help. Yeah, thank you.

**Kristin:** Hey, this is the one where "Dawn starts school at the newly rebuilt Sunnydale High, while Buffy patrols the new campus on the lookout for anything out of the ordinary, and for good reason. Dead people hunt Dawn and Buffy, Spike reappears, and there's a new principal at school." High pitched whistle that I can't do because I don't know how to whistle.

**Jenny:** [wolf-whistles]

**Kristin:** Thank you. In England, Giles rides a horse! Just kidding, it doesn't say that. [Jenny laughs] "In England, Giles helps Willow to learn to control her power and begin to forgive herself for her actions in Sunnydale." Jenny, I'm, like, ner—I feel nervous. Like, I have nervous energy. It feels like such a big—

**Jenny:** About recording the pod? You're stressed out?

**Kristin:** Yeah, it's like—it just feels like such a big—it just feels like a big deal. I, like—

**Jenny:** We're standing...at the yawning maw! [Kristin laughs] Gazing out into the abyss at that which awaits us.

**Kristin:** [sighs] Just—I don't know, man! I don't know! Like, just—it's—this episode—generally speaking, this episode brings me a lot of feeling. I'm sure that that is wrapped up in the fact that it is also the season premiere of our final season of this journey.

**Jenny:** [strained] Eee! Eeeeg!

**Kristin:** But even apart—it's like, really hit—it really hits the nail on the head of, bring it all back around again, you know? Like, in so many ways, which obviously we'll talk about—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** In detail. But I just—I think it's really brilliantly done, this episode, in that calling back to where we began.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yeah, it's, um, pretty intense!

**Kristin:** It's pretty intense. I took a lot of notes, so buckle up—

**Jenny:** Yeah, me too.

**Kristin:** Buckle in. Get your helmets on.

**Jenny:** First. Before we can go to Sunnydale—

**Kristin:** Oh god, this fucking—

**Jenny:** Kristin, we have to go to Istanbul. Not Constantinople.

**Kristin:** [laughs] That's exactly—

**Jenny:** But Istanbul.

**Kristin:** Any person who is our age can only think—if you hear the word "Istanbul" and you are—were ever a fan of They Might Be Giants. You hear "Istanbul" and you just think, not Constantinople. I did—I thought the same thing.

**Jenny:** What's wild is that actually, um, I recently learned through my coverage over on Veronica Mars Investigations that Istanbul (Not Constantinople) was originally released in 1953—

**Kristin:** What?!

**Jenny:** By The Four Lads. [Kristin gasps] In a swing style.

**Kristin:** Oh my god, so that was a cover?

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** Holy shit!

**Jenny:** My mind was blown and now yours can be, too.

**Kristin:** Oh my god. Never did I know—especially because, like, the—like, the lyrics in that song are so in line with, like, the lyrical stylings of They Might Be Giants.

**Jenny:** Totally. It was a novelty song, so there you go.

**Kristin:** Yeah, I guess that's it.

**Jenny:** And it was written on the 500th anniversary of the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans.

**Kristin:** Unbelievable. Do you know that I saw They Might Be Giants in concert? [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Wow.

**Kristin:** Well, I tell you not just because I'm excited that I got to see them in concert. This was in the year, mmm, I would say 1994. But because they were co-headlining with the Violent Femmes. And it was probably one of the coolest shows that I've ever gone to. So. There you have it.

**Jenny:** Alright. Alright.

**Kristin:** Anyway, yes, we start in Istanbul. Notes from me, notes from Jenny, notes from Mack, notes from Alba that we enter with this stereotypical Middle Eastern music. Why?



**Jenny:** [laughs] Yeah, they went to the catch-all general Middle East—

**Kristin:** [sighing] Yeah...

**Jenny:** This one will take care of everything music section of what they had available.

**Kristin:** Exactly—well, and it's—Mack's note to us, honestly, like, hit me the hardest. Which is, like, why don't we ever hear contemporary Turkish or Egyptian music? It's like—

**Jenny:** [spooky voice] Oh, because it's an ancient land!

**Kristin:** Right. Exact—I mean, exactly.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** Like, satirically, that is exactly what it all leads back to, is like, if we're [laughing] always imagining that places that are not the United States of America are far away and rooted in the past—

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** Then that is the music we would choose to accompany this Istanbul scene. And hey, it's almost like we're in fucking *Scream*, the movie. Because we've got a bunch of—

**Jenny:** Ha!

**Kristin:** Ghost faces—

**Jenny:** Mmm!

**Kristin:** Running after this girl. And this is a great—and there are several, several cinematography moments. [laughs] Several camera stylings, several—listen.

**Jenny:** Yep, keep going. [laughs]

**Kristin:** There are just several shots in this episode that make it clear that they're pulling out all the punches to let you know that this is—this is serious.

**Jenny:** Pulling out all the stops?

**Kristin:** Shut up, Jenny! [both laugh] Just let me be, okay? Everybody likes me—

**Jenny:** [sim] I'm just trying to help.

**Kristin:** [sim] This way.

**Jenny:** We're here to communicate and I'm just trying to supplement—

**Kristin:** You're right.

**Jenny:** What you're offering.

**Kristin:** And you know what's so great is that no matter how much I learn, I forget it all, so—

**Jenny:** I know.

**Kristin:** It doesn't even—you know, it's not even like I'm progressing in any way that will make me less of myself. So anyway. Up the drainpipe this girl climbs. And the hooded dudes catch her, throw her off the roof. And...

**Jenny:** I hate this.

**Kristin:** We assume, stab her. I mean, listen, as a horror movie person, I don't see the knife go into the body, so I would not—

**Jenny:** Yeah. Traditionally, you can't believe it—

**Kristin:** Exactly.

**Jenny:** Unless you see it, or a body.

**Kristin:** Yeah. But we are led to believe that perhaps this girl has been killed.

**Jenny:** I, myself, having recently just had to replace the roof of my house, was watching this scene like, [Kristin laughs] oh, what's that interesting...pipe?

**Kristin:** The top? [laughs]

**Jenny:** Sticking out of the roof—is that venting? I have one of those. What purpose does it serve? This requires more...research.

**Kristin:** [sim] Oh, this is a harbinger of, like, you—of us slowly losing the interest of our audience [Jenny laughs] as we get more aged and talk about roof tiles.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yep, yep.

**Kristin:** So we cut—it's a really nice, quick cut. It's sort of like, you see the knife slam down and like I said, you don't see it go in anywhere. But you do see a vampire pop up, [laughs] at the moment—

**Jenny:** Nice.

**Kristin:** That you would have seen the knife hit her body. And we are in this beautiful—I fucking love this. We didn't talk about the Previously Ons, because nobody wants to remember most of the things that were—

**Jenny:** Oh my god. Li—

**Kristin:** In the Previously Ons. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah, previously on Buffy the Vampire Slayer, you hated this. [both laughing] It was terrible.

**Kristin:** It's gone now. [both laugh] But no—but—

**Jenny:** It's in the past, but we're gonna remind you.

**Kristin:** But the scene that I—or the moment, the clip in the Previously On that's connected to this is that we get a little snippet from the finale, where Buffy is sort of seeing Dawn and saying, "You know what. You can be a grown-up, essentially. Like, I've missed it. I haven't been, like, really seeing you clearly." And so, it's really nice that we essentially begin our moment in Sunnydale with Buffy training Dawn, who is kicking ass all ov—this entire episode, I'm just gonna keep talking about how much ass Dawn Summers kicks. And it starts here.

**Jenny:** She's doing great. It starts here. Important to note that Buffy begins her little motivational speech—

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** By inquiring who's got the power.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm. Power of the babe, the babe with the power, you know what I mean?

**Jenny:** Yeah. I do. And Dawn [laughs] makes a reference we can all appreciate, as viewers of the show, about how all vampires seem to inevitably pick up martial arts skills.

**Kristin:** [laughing] Yeah.

**Jenny:** There's a delightful little bit about Buffy calling Dawn a little girl, Dawn saying I'm a woman, Buffy calling her a little woman. [laughs]

**Kristin:** [sim] Little woman.

**Jenny:** It's cute.

**Kristin:** It is cute. I gave it an LOL.

**Jenny:** And class is in session, but class is delayed because this vampire's foot is caught on a root, and he was just wondering if he could get some help. I love that you can kind of see—Buffy allegedly picks him up by the collar and lifts him out of the grave. But you can very much see—

**Kristin:** The pole—

**Jenny:** Like, the bar mechanism—

**Kristin:** [laughing] Yeah.

**Jenny:** Behind his shoulders that, you know, a harness and a chain are attached to.

**Kristin:** [sim] He, like, momentarily looks like he's a quarterback, you know?

**Jenny:** Yeah, exactly. [both laugh] But it's good.

**Kristin:** Yeah. And you know, Buffy is trying to explain to Dawn that—like, the answer to this, "who has the power?" It's about power and who has it. He has the power. The vampire has the power, don't ever forget that. The stake is not your power. You have to remember that he has the power in order for you to kick his ass.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** Just an important thing for you to write in your Shanshu prophecies. It might be confusing, in the Shanshu prophecies, since those are mostly about the show Angel. But you know, just put it there.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm, mmhmm.

**Kristin:** So Dawn, like I said, she fucking throws this—she sort of ducks and as she says later, uses the vampire’s own body weight to, like, fucking careen him into the headstone. And she’s doing great, but then, you know, the vamp gets her because she misses his heart. And has her in a—has her in a chokehold sorta situation, and she screams, “Buffy.” And Buffy really—really waits till the last fucking second here, and gets him off. And they have this amazing fight, incredible fight choreography. Jenny, were you, like, super WWE buckled in for this shit?

**Jenny:** I really, really liked—in this fight sequence, I really love the ground level face-kick cam. That...

**Kristin:** Me too.

**Jenny:** Made my heart sing.

**Kristin:** Yeah. It’s—I mean, like I said, it’s a fucking season premiere. Final season. Let’s do this shit, said everyone on the production team.

**Jenny:** Let us, please.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Speaking of my heart and the vampire’s heart and all that stuff, have we—in the long run of our podcast—ever talked about slash put a call out to, I’m sure, what must be our vast cardiologist listenership. Uh, where’s the human heart? I’m looking at pictures on the internet right now. You know.

**Kristin:** Mmm.

**Jenny:** And some of them are like, it’s plumb in the middle, Jenny.

**Kristin:** No.

**Jenny:** And some of them are like, it’s a little to the left.

**Kristin:** It's definitely a little to the left.

**Jenny:** [sim] And then some of them are like, it's a little more to the left than you thought, friend. So where is...the heart? Please tell us.

**Kristin:** [singing] "To the left, to the left. That's where your heart is, in the chest, in your left chest. To the left."

**Jenny:** It's like, a lot of the imagery—it looks like the heart is sort of attached in the center, but shaped in such a way that it, like—

**Kristin:** Leans left?

**Jenny:** Leans left. [both laugh] Has a little point out to the left side.

**Kristin:** Here. What is your podcast—well, we're a medical podcast.

**Jenny:** [sim] Welcome to our podcast. [laughs]

**Kristin:** We talk about anatomy. Well, I just assumed that it was to the left because if you're having a heart attack, it's your left arm that, like, you feel the stuff in. I know this because I am acutely aware of all of the signals that I should be aware of to signal my imminent demise. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Mmm-kay.

**Kristin:** [laughing] Because I'm anxious—as an anxious person.

**Jenny:** Well, if you're listening to this podcast and you know more about the precise location of the human heart than we do, which is—

**Kristin:** [laughs] Literally everyone.

**Jenny:** Fairly likely.

**Kristin:** Every single listener.

**Jenny:** [laughing] Do write in at [bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com](mailto:bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com) and let us know. Thanks so much.

**Kristin:** And it doesn't matter where this guy's heart is, because Buffy decides—she's like, you know what? It's fucking season premiere.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** It's my last fucking season. Fuck a stake. I'm gonna behead this motherfucker!

**Jenny:** Mmhmm!

**Kristin:** Hot shit! We don't see that. We've gotten, what? Three beheadings of vamps—I mean, I don't know. You probably know. If you know how many vamps have been beheaded, please write in at [bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com](mailto:bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com).

**Jenny:** Yes. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** But not a lot.

**Jenny:** Yeah, this is exciting. It's satisfying. Is this an okay time to mention that the mix of this episode is very weird? There are...the music in this scene seems quite low, to me.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** The dialogue, when we go to England, is like, all over the place. I realize it's harder when you're outside—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** To obviously manage sound capturing, but like, it just seems like things are kind of all over the place. I was wondering if anybody else noticed that, 'cause...

**Kristin:** I have—I have—I mean, this is technically probably our job to have done this research. [Jenny laughs] But you're all so good at it, so—I have questions generally about this season. 'Cause I'm, you know, almost done watching through the whole season in prep for starting here. And, like, audio-wise and also in later episodes, visually. Like, it almost seems like this season was, like, not redone completely for digital streaming, or something? I don't know. It just—it feels a bit off. So if you know more about that, let us know. Dawn has two little—two little pokes in her neck, where the vampire just got just a tiny little taste of Dawn blood. And she—this is what I'm saying! This girl, she's got quips, she got kicks, she's got it all. She said, [laughing] "I had a plan, Buffy. I was gonna get bit, come back as a vampire, and then bite you." [Jenny laughs] Like, not at all scarred by the experience—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Ready to joke, ready to tumble. This is a Summers girl.

**Jenny:** [sim] Yeah. Hey, she's a Summers. Yeah.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** And they're like, oh yes, well, vampires. That's a walk in the park compared to [spooky] ominous thing in your immediate future! [Kristin laughs] It's so scary. Cut to...a huge pair of scissors—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Poised to cut a very shiny ribbon.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Held by...

**Kristin:** [gasps and sighs]

**Jenny:** The most beautiful man that has ever appeared—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** In Sunnydale.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Are Angel and Spike hot guys—

**Kristin:** Sure.

**Jenny:** With personalities and character development that we have already experienced that have made them—

**Kristin:** Sure.



**Jenny:** Perhaps even more attractive? Yes, totally. But is Principal Robin Wood objectively, hands down, the most beautiful man that has ever walked onto this set?

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** A thousand times, yes.

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** I'm so happy to see him.

**Kristin:** I am so happy to see him as well. We've got our third principal. Principal Wood, played by D.B. Woodside.

**Jenny:** [high-pitched] Mmhmm!

**Kristin:** Cannot wait to talk about him in this episode and if we're lucky, several more.

**Jenny:** Perhaps more, yeah. And what's that ribbon in front of, that he's cutting? Why, it's the brand new, freshly rebuilt in the exact same place for some reason, [Kristin laughs] Sunnydale High School!

**Kristin:** The new Sunnydale High School, in case you're curious, is of course not Torrance High School. Not—we know it's not the original, and it's actually filmed at California State University, which is in Northridge, California.

**Jenny:** Alright.

**Kristin:** So that's where we are. And we go to our credits. Some new stuff in the credits. You got any faves? Got any favorite new credit snips, Jenny?

**Jenny:** I can't remember if Anya on rollerskates was already in the credits—

**Kristin:** I know.

**Jenny:** Or if it was already just playing in my mind on repeat.

**Kristin:** I know. That's my favorite new thing, and I also—I panicked about that and the mummy hand. I was like, ooh, the mummy hand, ooh, Anya on skates.

[laughing] Wait, were those in the—the season? [Jenny laughs] Kristin, you could go back and look, but why bother? Those—

**Jenny:** Basically just the thing I'm happiest to see in the credits, whether it's old or new.

**Kristin:** Yeah. I know that there's a fucking demon in the credits that we haven't met yet, and I know I don't like his addition—

**Jenny:** Mmm.

**Kristin:** To the credits whatsoever.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm, mmhmm.

**Kristin:** We get Dawn and the sword from the finale—

**Jenny:** Nice.

**Kristin:** Of the last episode. Some new Spike, some different Buffy shit. And something that I found very fascinating that we can talk about, 'cause it is in this episode, is that the hero shot—so last season, we talked about the hero shot. And a lot of you wrote in and said, that actually isn't Buffy, it's the Buffybot. In season—

**Jenny:** Hell yeah.

**Kristin:** In Season 6, the hero shot we get from the season is the Buffybot. And this is not Buffy either. It's Buffy—we see this—we'll talk about it when we get there. But we see this transformation at the end of, like, all the villains and this—whatever this is transforms into Buffy.

**Jenny:** Ohhh...

**Kristin:** That's the Buffy that the hero shot is from.

**Jenny:** My god! [laughs]

**Kristin:** So, like—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Just saying.

**Jenny:** Hmm!

**Kristin:** It's interesting to me that—you know, I don't think it's a spoiler to suggest that this morphing evil that morphs into Buffy is not actually Buffy. And that means that there's only five seasons' worth of Buffy Summers hero shots. And the final two are Buffy-adjacent.

**Jenny:** It's very interesting. Sharp eye.

**Kristin:** Thank you. Thank you. [yells] Oh my god! I'm so—

**Jenny:** [sim] Let me take you away to a magical land, populated solely with horse daddies. Listen.

**Kristin:** I scream. I scream. I cannot stop screaming.

**Jenny:** Kristin. Okay.

**Kristin:** All caps.

**Jenny:** Okay. You think you're screaming now.

**Kristin:** Can I just—

**Jenny:** I gotta tell you something.

**Kristin:** Fine. But can we just say the words: Giles is on a horse—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** In a field—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Wearing a long coat?

**Jenny:** A long horse-riding coat, I assume.

**Kristin:** Oh my god!

[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!

**Jenny:** Okay, Kristin, would it sweeten the pot for you [Kristin exhales] if I told you that horse belongs to Anthony Stewart Head—

**Kristin:** Ohh, my—

**Jenny:** And his name is Otto!

**Kristin:** Oh, no! Get out of here.

**Jenny:** And then—and then!

**Kristin:** Oh, god.

**Jenny:** What if I also told you...

**Kristin:** Oh, no.

**Jenny:** That that house they're shooting?

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** In and around? That's Tony Head's house. In England.

**Kristin:** Oh my god.

**Jenny:** He was like, I'll do another episode of your little show.

**Kristin:** [laughing] You come here.

**Jenny:** But bring literally everything to me. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Wow! I had—somewhere in the corners of my brain, I did know that that was Tony Head's house or something that [laughs] was near to or related to Tony Head. But I did *not* know that that horse's name was Otto, nor did I know that it was his horse. I can't stand it. I can't even *stand* to see this man, just fucking casually riding a fucking horse.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** We're in Westbury, England?

**Jenny:** Clip-clop, clip-clop, clip-clop. Just unbelievable.

**Kristin:** Ugh. Just soft padding of—okay. [takes deep breath]

**Jenny:** Whew!

**Kristin:** Willow is by a tree. She's sitting here. We learn that she is with Giles and the coven, essentially being rehabilitated from all the events that transpired in Season 6. I have more to say about that, but you know, we should talk about the minutia, which is that Willow pulls a flower up out of the earth. And we kind of, through this, learn about what she's been—what she's been learning in her lessons. Mmm. Title of the episode, mmm.

**Jenny:** [laughs] Yeah, that plant doesn't belong there. That plant is not native to English soil. She has enticed it all the way from Paraguay.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** 'Cause everything's all connected.

**Kristin:** Right.

**Jenny:** And that's just one of the many things she's been learning here.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Everything's all connected. The molecules, et cetera. And we also learn a very important fact, which is the one subject that Giles is not knowledgeable in is synchronized swimming. Makes no sense to him, can't figure it out.

**Jenny:** I'm with you, Giles.

**Kristin:** [laughs] So...Giles is talking to Willow about all the things that have happened. And she basically says, like, "you know, I wish—rather than, like, teaching me how to use this power, I wish you'd just take it away from me." And Giles is like, "Well, we can't." Interestingly saying, "This isn't a hobby or an addiction—"

**Jenny:** Oh my god. [laughs]

**Kristin:** What—[makes brake squealing sound] [stammers]

**Jenny:** The magic is inside you now, further confusing the metaphor. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Just help, help! But—

**Jenny:** Magic is [sings] whatever we need it to be!

**Kristin:** [laughs] They're like, boy, that metaphor got messy. Let's just, um—let's just undo it.

**Jenny:** Start over. Reset.

**Kristin:** [laughs] And then let's hear this sound clip of Willow talking to Giles at the end of this scene.

[Clip from episode plays]

**Willow:** I killed people, Giles.

**Giles:** I've not forgotten.

**Willow:** When you brought me here, I thought it was to kill me. Or to lock me in some mystical dungeon for all eternity, or with the torture. Instead, you go all Dumbledore on me. I'm learning about magic, all about energy and Gaia and root systems.

**Giles:** Do you want to be punished?

**Willow:** I wanna be Willow.

**Giles:** You are. In the end, we all are who we are. No matter how much we may appear to have changed.

**Kristin:** Okay. So let's talk about Faith LeHane for a fucking second here.

**Jenny:** I'm always ready to talk about Faith LeHane for any number of seconds.

**Kristin:** Well, without getting too deep into it, because this is a big episode. But let's just fucking talk about the fact that Willow has killed a person—some people, probably—more than one person.

**Jenny:** Mmm.

**Kristin:** What is Rack? No one ever knows, but—

**Jenny:** We don't know if Rack qualifies as a person, [Kristin laughs] by the universe's rules, but—

**Kristin:** Willow has done—

**Jenny:** [sim] Willow got dark and she almost destroyed the *entire* world—

**Kristin:** Whole world.

**Jenny:** Actually!

**Kristin:** Whole. World. She says—

**Jenny:** So—

**Kristin:** "I thought you were gonna bring me here to, essentially, put me in prison."

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Oh, that's interesting, 'cause I think that there is—

**Jenny:** [sim] They're like, no, no, no, no, we just do that to Faith. That's the—

**Kristin:** We just—so—

**Jenny:** She's the only one.

**Kristin:** Okay. So let's just put a pin in that shit, that Faith Lehane, having accidentally—literally *accidentally*—killed Allan, and then—

**Jenny:** You know, and then she went to work for the evil mayor, but you know...!

**Kristin:** Sure, but she was struggling—

**Jenny:** [sim] She was having a hard time!

**Kristin:** [sim] With the darkness inside of her.

**Jenny:** She was living in the Sunnydale [Kristin groans] roach motel while the Summers' house had a sprawling guest room.

**Kristin:** Given no space. Given very little encouragement. Attacked by her own girlfriend.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm!

**Kristin:** You know what I mean? And then she fucking put herself in jail, because there was—that's what she—fuck that. Fuck everything. And I just wanna say that, like, it is nice that Willow has gotten this time in the fields with some horses and flowers to rehabilitate herself and learn how to reintegrate herself into the world in a healthy way. And I think that that should have been also given...to Faith. Okay? Okay.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** We'll talk about that more, at some other point, mysteriously.

**Jenny:** A developing topic.

**Kristin:** Summers...house.

**Jenny:** Xander's wearing a suit, and I'm like, it's so weird how Sunnydale has, like, demon bars and The Espresso Pump and a movie house, but no tailor. Not a single tailor [Kristin laughs] within the city limits of Sunnydale—

**Kristin:** Aww.

**Jenny:** Available to tailor this suit.

**Kristin:** Even though I, like—you know how I just left Season 6 screaming about Xander? [Jenny laughs] I just—I, like—you can still hear the echoes of it. When he gets out of this car in his suit with his blueprints, I have to say, I feel very nostalgic and I feel a lot of love for him in this moment. It's very sweet, he's all grown up.

**Jenny:** Me too! That's why I want him to have a tailor—

**Kristin:** Yeah.



**Jenny:** So that, um, his suit looks better. [both laugh] Just a thought. As luck would have it, his crew is doing a lot of work on Sunnydale High. How convenient.

**Kristin:** Smart. This is smart integration, you know?

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Like, I think it's pretty smart. It doesn't feel, like, overly stretched. And it's a nice way to get Xander at the school and—you know, it's good.

**Jenny:** Yep. Yep.

**Kristin:** Buffy made some cereal.

**Jenny:** How do you make cereal?

**Kristin:** [laughing] You put the box next to the milk.

**Jenny:** It's good.

**Kristin:** [laughing] It's great!

**Jenny:** I saw it on the food channel. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Sarah Michelle Gellar, as always, is phenomenal. Her line delivery in many of these scenes—I mean, it's—it's like, you know, she's been in training basically for six seasons of delivering lines very quickly and quippily. And she's just, like, aced the fucking exam—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** With Season 7, because she's like, in the kitchen. I don't even know. She says, like, 80 thousand things in two seconds and it's hilarious. The core of which is, "It's so good that my sister's about to go to the same high school that tried to kill me for three years." [both laugh]

**Jenny:** So Xander's got the old blueprint and the new blueprint—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Of Sunnydale High. And he does a thing that makes me very happy, where he holds them—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** On top of each other against the light and we can see that the epicenter of the Hellmouth, which was formerly beneath the library, is now under the principal's office. Isn't that interesting.

**Kristin:** [makes siren noise] I don't know why I gave a siren noise. I meant to be like, [spooky] woooooooo!

**Jenny:** There you go.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Xander says—

**Jenny:** Ghosts and sirens. Distant cousins, but you know. [Kristin laughs] They have separate functions.

**Kristin:** Xander says, "The last two principals were eaten. Who'd even apply for this job as the principal?" Which I, like—it's like, I knew that Flutie had been eaten by hyenas and that Snyder had been eaten by the snake mayor, but it—

**Jenny:** But you never connected the dots before?

**Kristin:** I never connected that they were literally—they both died by...being eaten.

**Jenny:** Oh yeah.

**Kristin:** They give Dawn—this is a really sweet moment, even though we don't learn what the gift is in this moment. Because Buffy has waited for Xander to get there so they can give her her back to school gift together.

**Jenny:** [sim] Oh, yeah, that's cute. It's cute!

**Kristin:** Really sw—

**Jenny:** And it's a weapon.

**Kristin:** It's a weapon. [laughs]

**Jenny:** We don't see it.

**Kristin:** Here we are. Sunnydale High School 2.0, baby!

**Jenny:** I know where Buffy's coming from, but if I was Dawn in this episode, I would be so mortified. But then also later, ultimately thankful. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Yeah. Dawn is definitely wearing a sweater that she bought at Express. [both laugh] It is so cute, with little pink and white and green checks. And Buffy is—and I—you know, if anyone out there is a fan who has, like, a spreadsheet of all of the references to previous episodes that happen throughout this season, send it to us. 'Cause I'm happy to point them all out, but we'll never catch them all. [Jenny laughs] Just like Pokemon [pronounced: poke-ee-mon]. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Poke-ee-mon.

**Kristin:** [laughs] How do you say it? Pokemon.

**Jenny:** [sim] Pokemon. Pokemon.

**Kristin:** Stay away from hyena people. Ding! Lizardy-type athletes. Ding! Anyone invisible. Ding-ding-ding! [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** Nice.

**Jenny:** We recognize all of those.

**Kristin:** Yeah. And Dawn accurately says, "Buffy, I don't think I'm gonna see anyone invisible." [both laugh]

**Jenny:** And then as though from thin air. Principal Wood appears and introduces himself. And there is a hilarious two-way street that occurs [Kristin laughs] in which Buffy says she expected him to be more...aged. And he says that she seems pretty young to have such a grown-up daughter.

**Kristin:** At first, I, like, got upset—

**Jenny:** [laughs] Everyone.

**Kristin:** At first, I got upset with him for saying that, 'cause I was like, how dare you. Like, she could—you know, don't call out, like, the age that somebody was when they had a kid. But then I realized that Dawn and Buffy are, like...

**Jenny:** Three years apart.

**Kristin:** [sim] Four years apart, yeah. [laughs] So, fair. And yeah, they have this exchange. And...Dawn leaves. She heads into school. She's like, "Leave me alone, Mom."

**Jenny:** [laughs] Then Buffy just starts wandering the halls. Why not? I just wanna make a note that after 2001, the high school that I had gone to—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Started having, like, an intercom that you had to, like, get buzzed in at. Like, the doors were locked during the day—

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Jenny:** It was, like, a closed—

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Campus. So it is funny that [laughing] an adult woman can just be wandering around the halls of this high school.

**Kristin:** Yeah. She took advantage of that, like, first day chaos. Just—

**Jenny:** A little chaotic, yeah.

**Kristin:** Just sorta snuck in. But she sees...[laughing] she sees a really suspicious basketball.

**Jenny:** [spooky] Wooo! Scary basketball!

**Kristin:** It's just such a funny choice. It's like, they could have—I don't—and I'm sure they made it intentionally and I'm just not getting it. But like, literally, it's just a basketball. And she's like, the fuck was that?

**Jenny:** She looks at it and she's like, [gasps] [whispers] "balls."

**Kristin:** [laughs] Is it Riley?!

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, she's like, "Follow that ball! There could be a sweater at the end of it!" [both laugh]

**Kristin:** She walks past a very ominous sign that says “basement.” And then we go to this, like—

**Jenny:** [laughs] Basement. No student access. I feel like it either says “basement” or it says nothing, because the best way to keep kids out of stuff is making it unmarked. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Basement, no students should ever go down here. Students who go down here will be very, very, very in trouble. Do not, if you are a student—

**Jenny:** [sim] Definitely don’t go down these stairs to smoke a cigarette between classes or you’ll be in trouble. I said don’t do that, hey, what are you doing? [Kristin laughs] Close the door. It’s a very long sign.

**Kristin:** That reminds me of Angela Chase and Jordan Catalano—

**Jenny:** [snorts] I know it does. [laughs]

**Kristin:** [sim] In the boiler room, baby. So, okay. There’s a lot of, like, cutting around in Sunnydale High School in this episode. So we’re in class with this teacher who seems just lovely. Doesn’t this guy seem great?

**Jenny:** He seems very nice.

**Kristin:** Very nice. He’s like, “We’re all gonna introduce ourselves.” Everyone’s worst fucking nightmare, first of all. [Jenny laughs] No one likes this! [laughs] And then we go to the bathroom, where Buffy is. She’s looking in the mirror. Very relatable content. She’s saying, “This isn’t mom hair.” [both laugh]

**Jenny:** And just as she’s confirming for herself that she has hair that is simply in the bloom of youth, [Kristin laughs] and she still actually gets carded all the time, thank you very much.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** She spies, upon the counter next to the sink, what appears to be some...stuff.

**Kristin:** Twigs?

**Jenny:** Some twigs, maybe a feather—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Bound together.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** And she thinks, hmm. And then—

**Kristin:** [laughs] She thinks, hmm, I should pick this up. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Yeah. Ugh! I thought you had been to this school already, ma'am. [laughs]

**Kristin:** Yeah. And then we get a zombie ghost, our first.

**Jenny:** Zombie ghost! Uh, yeah.

**Kristin:** "You can't protect her, you couldn't protect me." This brings me to my biggest criticism of this episode, and I'm sure that there's a reason for it. But like, all of these beautiful, delicious, juicy callbacks, why could we not find three actors that had been in Season 1 of Buffy the Vampire Slayer? Or even seasons 1 through 3—

**Jenny:** Oh my gosh. Imagine they had gotten the very first guy from the pilot who Darla kills? Ahhhh!

**Kristin:** That's what I'm saying! Like, there—I mean, I'm sure that it was the kind of thing where, like, people are like, "Kristin, why didn't you do this in the podcast?" And I'm like, [high-pitched] do you understand how much I have to do?!

**Jenny:** [laughs] "I'm very busy!"

**Kristin:** Yeah, so, like, I have space, I have sympathy. But like, as a viewer, I just want so badly—'cause it's the only thing that's, like, not just fucking perfectly nailed, in my personal opinion.

**Jenny:** Or even—or even just, like, referring to actual events that we've seen. Like, if one of them had been mauled by the flying monkeys that Andrew released on the school play—

**Kristin:** Yeah!

**Jenny:** That would have been great!

**Kristin:** Yes! Yes. Exactly. So I don't know why. I'm sure there's a reason, but I want it. Dawn. [dramatically] "I love to dance." I say it like that. [Jenny laughs] She doesn't say it like that, but—

**Jenny:** No—

**Kristin:** That's how Sarah Jessica Parker says it in the movie Girls Just Wanna Have Fun.

**Jenny:** Oh my god. [Kristin laughs] Dawn is absolutely crushing—

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** The homeroom introduction.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** She's doing a great job. You know who's not doing a great job?

**Kristin:** Who?

**Jenny:** Buffy. [both laugh] Bursting in in the middle of Dawn crushin' it.

**Kristin:** Um...I'm sorry. But you're just gonna have to wait a minute, because I'm gonna talk about the fact that Dawn says, "I love to dance. I love music. I'm very into Britney's early work, before she sold out." Beat for a pause, Kristin gets mad. How dare you insult my Britney Spears?

**Jenny:** Mm, mm.

**Kristin:** [laughing] And then Dawn says, "So mostly her finger painting and her macaroni art."

**Jenny:** Yeah. Great.

**Kristin:** Ba-dum-dum! Tch! Okay?

**Jenny:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Kristin:** We can't pass a Britney Spears moment in this podcast. Now you may—

**Jenny:** Sorry, my mistake.

**Kristin:** Please continue.

**Jenny:** So Dawn's tight five is absolutely killing it. All the hard work she's been putting in on the club circuits, clearly paying off. When Buffy bursts in! And interrupts her amazing work to embarrass her and crush any potential for her to make friends today.

**Kristin:** "Dawn, we have to go, it's not safe!" And then as she back pedals: "I thought you were in danger. Of smoking." [both laugh] Okay.

**Jenny:** Oookay. And then Buffy excuses herself, and Dawn finishes her self introduction by saying, "I also have a sister." [laughter]

[AD BREAK]

**Kristin:** Alright. We're at The E Pump. We are at The E Pump—that is short for Espresso Pump. And there is a couple of people playing some live music.

**Jenny:** Indeed.

**Kristin:** They got word from Central Perk that some live guitar-playing and light singing would be nice. So Jenny, I was like, who are these two fucking people?

**Jenny:** Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** Like, where did they come from? And I did—

**Jenny:** A question.

**Kristin:** I did a little digging and I found out that this is actually a duo called—or a band. I don't know if there's more of them than these two—called Strange Radio. And the reason that this is actually kind of interesting to me—

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** Is that Strange Radio has another song called "Make Me A Star," and that song played at Anya and Xander's engagement party. So...

**Jenny:** Interesting.



**Kristin:** That's kind of a fun little—a little nugget to bite on. But other than that, yeah, it's a funny—it's a funny choice, because why don't we just cut—like, what were—was the budget really necessary? We coulda just gone to the E Pump and seen beautiful Kali Rocha and Emma Caulfield here at the table. But to each their own.

**Jenny:** Can I tell you a little something about Kali?

**Kristin:** Yeah. I might already know it, but you should tell me anyway.

**Jenny:** Well, Kristin. You may already know it, but [laughs] just in case our listeners haven't read the Wikipedia article about this episode. [both laugh] Let me tell you that every time you see Kali appear in Season 7—don't know how many times that's gonna be—but every time you see her, please know that she taped all of her scenes—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** She filmed all of her scenes in one day. So every time you see her, it was the same day as this—

**Kristin:** Yep.

**Jenny:** Being filmed.

**Kristin:** Yeah. And it's because she was in a production of Noises Off, which is especially exciting to me, a theater nerd.

**Jenny:** Oh!

**Kristin:** She's fucking amazing, Kali Rocha. I hope we're saying her name properly. But like...I mean, she's incredible. And she nails this scene, and this scene is here to essentially let us know that Anya is, um...not as vengeance-y as she once was. They're calling her Miss Softserve. Also, Anya's hair is brown. Important.

**Jenny:** Yep. Looking good. Miss Softserve, hilarious. Halfrek cites that there have been no deaths, no eviscerations. [Kristin laughs] Sounds like somebody wished their husband was a frog and Anya made them French.

**Kristin:** [sim] French.

**Jenny:** She says some rude things about French people.

**Kristin:** About—yeah, she does.

**Jenny:** No thanks.

**Kristin:** Just—it also doesn't—it's like, this is how you know there are writers in the room. Because Anya's lived for, like, a bajillion years and has traveled the globe and, like, probably would not be saying these ridiculous things about French people. 'Cause she's—

**Jenny:** Yeah. Though it does really pair well with her, like—her strange "I love America" [Kristin laughs] patriot capitalist streak. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Hallie's like, "You fell in love with Xander." And Anya goes, "It was a glitch! A summer thing!" [both laugh] Very nice. And then, Hallie says some important shit, doesn't she, Jenny?

**Jenny:** She says that something ancient is rising! And everyone's tail is twitching and she says, "It's a bad time to be a good guy."

**Kristin:** What a quote. [laughing] What a lovely quote.

**Jenny:** Yes. Interesting. I wonder what's gonna happen. Intense.

**Kristin:** [sighs] And then Hallie gets one last dig before this scene ends, which I just have to give her credit for, 'cause she fucking nails it. Anya's like, "What is this, an intervention? Shouldn't all my demon friends be here?" [laughing]

**Jenny:** Ooh!

**Kristin:** [sim] And Hallie just looks at her and goes, "Sweetie. They are." [laughs]

**Jenny:** Oooh!

**Kristin:** Burn! I love it, Hallie!

**Jenny:** Ouch.

**Kristin:** I love you. Okay.

**Jenny:** I can't remember if I've ever—yeah, I've seen them in a room together. I would say that Clem is one of Anya's demon friends.

**Kristin:** That's true. That's true. But still, sick burn.

**Jenny:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Kristin:** So Sunnydale High School, Xander and Buffy are chatting about the zombie ghosts. Just sort of establishing that that's happening.

**Jenny:** Yep. Yep, yep. Meanwhile, across campus, the stringbean sitting next to Dawn. [Kristin giggles] This is what I'm working with. Girl zombie, janitor zombie, stringbean zombie.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Great, great, great.

**Jenny:** Stringbean asks for a pencil from Dawn and when she hands it to him, he suddenly is decaying and tries to stab her in the eye! And she falls to the ground, shrieking!

**Kristin:** Yeah. And thinks of a great lie. "A bee flew in my eye and I'm allergic." This is how you lie, people.

**Jenny:** Dawn Summers, extremely resourceful.

**Kristin:** Good god.

**Jenny:** Don't encourage people to lie though, Kristin.

**Kristin:** Sorry. But if you're gonna, just at least do a good job of it. I also would like to give a special shout out to Dawn's adorable pencil case. [Jenny snorts and laughs] And I just wanna note something that happens at the end of this scene that's almost, like, a throwaway. But as Dawn leaves to go to the bathroom, a student says, like, "I guess it runs in the family." And because my brain was in such, like, a Season 7/Season 1 place—like, holding them next to each other—I just thought it was kind of interesting that—I think that in Season 1, in 1996, this scene would have been written like, "Guess it runs in the family!" Like, really, like, rude teenagers being rude about people. And in this thing, even though it's so small, it wasn't. It was, like, just this dude who was like, [quietly] "I guess it runs in the family." And they were all like, mm, yeah. [laughs] Like, it was like very—

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** So it's tiny, but I just—I was thinking about it. And like, thinking about the way that teenagers and high school students are portrayed on screen and, like, how that may have been changing from '96 to the early aughts and have continued to change. So that's my little thank-you thought for you. And, um...[Jenny laughs] now we can go to the next scene.

**Jenny:** To the bathroom!

**Kristin:** Moaning Myrtle. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Listen. Dawn is sitting on a toilet seat in her clothing. And I'm here to ask, have you ever sat on a toilet seat in your clothing? If you have, we'd love to hear your story. Please dial 1-800-I-sat-down. [Kristin laughs] What *is* this? Why are they always doing this on TV?

**Kristin:** [laughing] 1-800-I-sat-down. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Or! Are people just out there in the wild, doing this, and I'm the only one who doesn't know about it?

**Kristin:** I mean, I think—I think that—well, a few things. A, in a personal bathroom or a bathroom where the toilet has a lid, I sit—I've definitely sat down on many—

**Jenny:** Sure, on the *lid*. I'm not a—you know...

**Kristin:** Lidded toilets, but—

**Jenny:** Monster.

**Kristin:** But also, like, if you have to go and cry in a bathroom, you can do it standing up, or you can do it sitting down. So it's—

**Jenny:** No.

**Kristin:** I'm just saying.

**Jenny:** I guess a public school bathroom is probably getting cleaned, like—

**Kristin:** [sim] And if you are Ghost Face, you squat.

**Jenny:** Daily? Right. Ghost Face—there's no accounting for what Ghost Face gets up to in bathroom stalls. [Kristin laughs] Let's not use that as an example. But speaking of crying in bathrooms, Dawn hears some.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Cut to—now, my location-based notes are about to go on a wild lilypad ride.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Because it's like—like, two sent—one to two sentences—

**Kristin:** In each place. [laughs]

**Jenny:** In the hallway, in the bathroom, in the hallway, in the bathroom, in England, in the basement, in the hallway, in the basement. [both laugh] It's a lot. So we're back in the hallway, and Buffy runs right into Principal Wood. And I love—I really, really, really love how D.B. Woodside is playing this.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** He, like, has—he simultaneously has this, like, warmth and this strange distance, where you're like, what's going on here?

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** And like, he's kind of, like, poking fun at her, but he also later asks her to do something serious—like, I just love how you have no idea what to make of him. And like, we've also just learned that his office is located directly on the Hellmouth, so there's, like, an added like, "what's this guy about?" kind of vibe.

**Kristin:** Yeah, he does a good job—'cause obviously, the episode is set up to make us suspect, is there something going on with the principal? Is there? But the way that he delivers the lines is not to point us in that direction at all. Letting us know that, like, probably that's just a—probably that's not real, right? Or is it, or am I being tricked doubly? [laughter] You know, it's—it is.

**Jenny:** Right.

**Kristin:** It's really effective. Back at the bathroom, we meet Kit, who tells us that someone was in here.

**Jenny:** Yes, Kit, played by Alexandra Breckenridge, who you might know from American Horror Story.

**Kristin:** Nice.

**Jenny:** Seasons 1 and 3. She was the young version of the woman in the French maid outfit in Season 1, Moira O'Hara.

**Kristin:** Okay.

**Jenny:** Ahh! And she was also in This Is Us and The Walking Dead. She's been in a lot of stuff.

**Kristin:** Nice.

**Jenny:** Look at her go.

**Kristin:** Back to the hallway. [Jenny laughs] Wood's like, "I know more about you than I let on." I think that's the only sentence that we get.

**Jenny:** Then back to the bathroom. [laughs]

**Kristin:** Then we go back to the bathroom again. Kit's like, "You wouldn't believe me if I told you," and Dawn's like, LOL. [laughs] You must be new in this town—

**Jenny:** [sim] Yeah, "you don't know what I believe. [laughs]

**Kristin:** Because my last name is Summers.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** And then—this is a great scene, I love this. They look in the mirror, the three zombie ghosts are behind them. The lights explode and then hands come up from the fucking—

**Jenny:** Ooh!

**Kristin:** Tile floor and pull 'em down through. It's—

**Jenny:** A classic.

**Kristin:** Chef's kiss. Nice. Nice, nice.

**Jenny:** It's very good. Are you telling me—now, from this moment until the end of the episode, nobody has to pee? Nobody goes into that bathroom? Is like—

**Kristin:** [laughs] Class.

**Jenny:** "There's a huge fucking hole in the floor. I should tell somebody." [Kristin laughs] Nobody. Okay.

**Kristin:** I'm suspending it. I'm suspending my disbelief.

**Jenny:** Alright, alright. Back in England.

**Kristin:** Ooh, Willow has felt the lights explode in the Sunnydale High School bathroom. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yep.

**Kristin:** She—yeah, Giles is holding her, sort of like, in the grass. And he says, you know, what just happened? And she's like, "It's all connected. Remember, I was telling you earlier. But it's not all good and pure and rootsy."

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** I just wanna say that Alyson Hannigan, in this scene and in the scene that's sort of kicked the episode off, is phenomenal. Phenomenal. And the way she's styled is so good. It's like, you really get the entire flavor of the fact that Willow has just gone through massive amounts of trauma.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** She looks—she looks, like, older and not in just, like, an age way, you know?

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** She just looks like she's been through some shit.

**Jenny:** She does.

**Kristin:** And that's a styling thing.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** And just the delivery that Alyson Hannigan gives to all these lines. It's really good.

**Jenny:** Yeah. She's not wearing, like, a corset or...[Kristin laughs] anything you'd really see at a renaissance faire.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Adds a certain weight to the performance. She says, "It's all connected. There's deep black. I saw the earth. I saw its teeth." And Giles is like, [mutters] "Oh, I know what that is, the Hellmouth." And she's like, "It's gonna open. It's gonna swallow us all."

**Kristin:** [exhales] And then the cameraman is like, "I'm outta here!" [both laugh]

**Jenny:** The cameraman's like, "I'ma get the fuck away from those impending teeth." [laughter]

**Kristin:** Just runs backwards all the way through the door, into Tony Head's house, and fucking—

**Jenny:** Yeah. Tony Head's house is probably the safest place you could be, right? [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Oh, god. Alright, so Kit and Dawn are on the floor. Wood is talking about how he knows about Buffy's—[laughs]

**Jenny:** He says, "The school board recommended that I read your record." Why?

**Kristin:** [laughing] Also, whomst?

**Jenny:** Also, whomst?

**Kristin:** [laughing] All the principals—like, there is no school board. Come on, they're all—

**Jenny:** No, no, no, no.



**Kristin:** They're all gone. But fine. He says that she has a checkered past. [laughs] And Buffy's like, "Or like a plaid, or like, a houndstooth—" I don't know what she—she lists a bunch of plaid type things.

**Jenny:** [laughing] Tartan.

**Kristin:** Tartan, right. And now we're in the basement and we meet Carlos.

**Jenny:** That's David Zepeda. You may remember him from walking away with a haunted basketball earlier.

**Kristin:** [laughs] I mean, this is—and just to—just to—I don't have anything super deep to say here, except for we've been at a high school in southern California for many, many seasons. And we have not seen very many if any Latinx students at the high school. So I'm glad that we have a Carlos, but just taking the magnifying glass out to be like, how is Carlos one of the first if not the first speaking character who is Latinx in this southern California high school? Dawn does a fucking great job again here. She gets right to the point with Carlos, you know. They're like, "Are you dead?" He's like, "What?" and she's like, "Here's the deal. There's some dead people, and now, we gotta get away from them. So that's what's going on and now we need to leave." [Jenny laughs] Doing what, like, so many television characters can never do. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah. Picking up the pace.

**Kristin:** Carlos explains, like, he just came downstairs for a—I saw the sign, it said no students, so obviously, what that read to me as is, smoking. Down here. Down this way. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yes. Correct.

**Kristin:** He unfortunately is gonna give us our Patriarchy jingle, because he says he ran away like a girl.

**Jenny:** No, Carlos!

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

**Kristin:** So Kit's like, "It's not real." And fucking Dawn is like, "I learned this lesson. Lesson one, learned it just last night. It's always—"

**Jenny:** [gasps] Another lesson?

**Kristin:** [laughs] "It's always real." And then she pulls out that weapon that she was given.

**Jenny:** It is...the very first Scooby cell phone!

**Kristin:** If the apocalypse comes, you may now call her cell phone. [laughs]

**Jenny:** It's true, and Dawn does. She calls Buffy, who's still talking [laughs] to Wood. And she answers the phone, much to Principal Wood's chagrin. [laughs]

**Kristin:** He's like, "Lady!" [both laugh]

**Jenny:** I know.

**Kristin:** What are you doing?!

**Jenny:** Ma'am.

**Kristin:** You're still here. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Get. Off school property and take your call.

**Kristin:** [sim] You're taking a call from your dog walker. I'm trying to run a school here.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah. She says, "It's my dog walker," and then is like, [gasps] "Three dead?" [both laughing] loud enough for Wood to hear and he's like, "oh my god!"

**Kristin:** Wood's like, "oh my god, now I see why nobody else applied for this position, Jesus Christ." It's another really cool shot where they're kind of going around and around and around, which probably isn't the technical name for that shot. [both laugh] The around—can you do one of those around-around-around shots?

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** And then, Dawn has one last line on this cell phone call, which I have to point out, where she says, "Isn't the reception amazing?"

**Jenny:** Yeah, she's so pumped on the reception.

**Kristin:** "I'm in the basement." And so, if you don't mind, listen. It's the season premiere, so it's gonna be a little longer than most of our episodes. You're—it's fine. But it made me think about, of course, the infamous Verizon commercials and I was—

**Jenny:** [gasps] "Can you hear me now?"

**Kristin:** Yeah. "Can you hear me now? Can you hear me now?" So I looked that up, and that run of commercials started in 2002, and ran for nine years until 2011. This—the actor's name—I don't know if you remember him, Jenny. But his name was Paul Marcarelli. And—

**Jenny:** Mmhmm, mmhmm.

**Kristin:** I just wanna tell you three facts that I learned.

**Jenny:** Hit me.

**Kristin:** One, massive in, like, the marketing and what have you spheres. This dude did these commercials for nine years for Verizon. His contract ended and then fucking Sprint hired him—

**Jenny:** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

**Kristin:** Big deal.

**Jenny:** Sneaky. Very sneaky. [laughs]

**Kristin:** And then two personal things about his life, which are kind of upsetting from a fame perspective. One, small, at a wedding he attended, more people lined up for pictures with him than they did with the bride. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Ohh...kay.

**Kristin:** And two, this one's real rough. At the funeral of his grandmother, as her—as his grandmother's casket was being lowered into the ground, he heard someone in attendance whisper, "Can you hear me now?"

**Jenny:** Oh, god!

**Kristin:** Fucked up!

**Jenny:** People! Get your shit together.

**Kristin:** Just so fucked up. So anyway, that's my cell phone information. [laughs]  
Got a lot darker than I'm sure many of you thought it would.

**Jenny:** Thank you for letting us know.

**Kristin:** You're welcome.

**Jenny:** So. Buffy hangs up and flits away from Wood. And he calls after her, "Good luck with that dog tragedy."

**Kristin:** [laughs] Down in the basement, zombies are grabbing—have grabbed Dawn by the throat.

**Jenny:** Boo!

**Kristin:** Buffy jumps imme—like, does one of these flying jumps.

**Jenny:** [sim] Yeah. She's like, oh, this is my—this is my spot. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Bing! Have hole, will jump, you know?

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yes.

**Kristin:** And we get some more of this conversation between, like, the zombie ghosts and Buffy, where—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Stringbean is like, "I think what I'd like, actually, is for Dawn to be my girlfriend." [laughs]

**Jenny:** Buffy's like, "No, no, no. I'm the Summers who dates dead guys." [makes snare drum sound]

**Kristin:** And then this girl is like, "While you were busy making out with your dead boyfriend, werewolves tore me apart!" What are you referencing, ma'am?

**Jenny:** Yeah. Do you have an ep—a season and an episode number? [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Yeah. [laughs] So they—you know, they basically say, like, this high school was built on our graves. Just leave.

**Jenny:** Alright. Alright. But Buffy realizes that they are definitely blocking a door deliberately.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** So she fights them, pow-pow-pow. They kind of teleport or something, I don't know, whatever. But she finally gets through.

**Kristin:** [sim] They do. They—yeah, they take a couple ticks off the zombie and add a couple on the ghost and they—

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** Disappear and reappear.

**Jenny:** But she finally gets through, opens the door, and oh, fuck.

**Kristin:** [gasps] First of all, she does a flying jump over their heads, which—

**Jenny:** Yes. Yes, she does.

**Kristin:** Needs to be noted.

**Jenny:** Yep. Yep.

**Kristin:** And then...in all caps, do you wanna know what my note is?

**Jenny:** What is it?

**Kristin:** Take a guess.

**Jenny:** Um. His roots grew out.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Fucking ding-ding-ding. [Jenny bursts into laughter] Spike has roots, is my note, in all caps.

**Jenny:** Yeah, no, this hearkens back to a question that we have—

**Kristin:** It does.

**Jenny:** Have vollied about since the dawn of the podcast.

**Kristin:** Yeah. We were like—

**Jenny:** What's up with vampires, like, having—does their hair grow? Do their nails grow? What's going on?

**Kristin:** Yeah, and I got, like, one million emails back then of, like, "You should just check out Season 7, Episode 1, [laughing] because Spike has roots." [both laugh] Spike is looking like fucking 1999 Justin Timberlake, NSync—

**Jenny:** Mmm.

**Kristin:** In this shit.

**Jenny:** Yes. But bad. But rough.

**Kristin:** But yeah. I mean [crosstalk]—

**Jenny:** [sim] He's been having a hard time. He's been living in a basement.

**Kristin:** Yeah. And—

**Jenny:** His shirt is open, his chest is cut up, his hair is, uh—has not seen peroxide in many a moon.

**Kristin:** Ugh. And Buffy is like—Sarah Michelle Gellar, again, incredible. "Spike, are you real?" Like, she's just absolutely in shock about this situation. And Spike just starts laughing.

[Clip from episode plays]

**Spike:** [laughs maniacally]

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** James Marsters, good job with that fucking laugh, man. That's good. He's not doing okay. He says, "Buffy, duck." [Jenny laughs] I mean, I know you can't see my eyeroll. [Jenny laughs] 'Cause this is a podcast. But like, Buffy. Duck!

**Jenny:** [sim] Duck!

**Kristin:** "There's a duck?" [Jenny laughs] Dude. Come on, now. So she gets clanked in the head—

**Jenny:** Clank.

**Kristin:** With a pole that the zombie ghost has. And...she, like, sort of shuts herself into the room that Spike had been in—that he came out of.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm, mmhmm.

**Kristin:** Spike says something important. "No one comes in here. It's just the three of us."

**Jenny:** Eeeek!

**Kristin:** Whomst? And then he says—this is really—first of all, very, very good performance by James Marsters and very, very sad. He's—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** He is very upset. And we are to believe—like we learned at the end of the last episode of the last season—that he got his soul back. And we have some familiarity with what might happen to a vampire who has lived a long vampire life and then gets his soul back.

**Jenny:** We've seen a certain broad-shouldered brunette with long, flowing hair—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Weeping and—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm. Eating rats.

**Jenny:** Darting around in various New York alleyways, trying to catch rats.

**Kristin:** Yeah. So he's like, "I dropped my board in the water and the chalk all ran." [Jenny groans] So he's like, all the way back to, like, childhood memories.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And then Buffy, like, is just so concerned. I mean, like, obviously she's concerned, but I just, like, note it as something that is different than, like, other types of concern that we see in traumatic moments in this show. Like, this is—they have taken a beat for this. And she is looking at him and she pulls back his shirt and she sees all these cuts on his chest and says, "What did you do?" And he says, "I tried to cut it out." This is hard, heavy stuff.

**Jenny:** Well, I'm just thinking about how it's really interesting that because this is a fantasy, horror show and a fantasy, horror universe where—that has different rules from our universe, that—sometimes I think, you know, it's not uncommon to think about somebody who you've seen, like, do terrible things that, like, really hurt people—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** And to wish that those people could know what it's like to be on the receiving end of the pain that they've inflicted.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Right? Or something. And because of the nature of this story, that is within reach, right? Like, the switch has been flicked on Spike. And he is, like, being destroyed by it. And it's just...interesting.

**Kristin:** [sighs] It is. And I think, you know, either between this episode and our next episode, or somewhere very—in the near future of your ears—we'll be re-airing in the main feed—I know this isn't precisely what you were talking about, Jenny. But we'll be re-airing in the main feed the conversation that I had with Alba and with Jess Clark, talking about Seeing Red specifically. But I think that there's just...there's a lot of nuance here, right? Spike is back, Spike got his soul. What does it all mean? And specifically, what does it mean that Buffy is moving with care and compassion towards Spike?

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** Right? Like, I think that's, like, a really important element of this all, too. So we'll—I don't think it's a spoiler to say we'll have plenty of time to fucking talk about this.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** We're gonna have plenty of time to talk about it.



**Jenny:** Mmhmm!

**Kristin:** So Dawn is like, beep-boop-boop-boop-beep-beep. [Jenny laughs] Phone rings, Buffy answers it. And Buffy's like, "They're not ghosts, they're not zombies." And Spike, from a corner, is like, "They're manifested spirits, controlled by a talisman, raised to seek vengeance." [laughs] He's like—

**Jenny:** Oh!

**Kristin:** A tale as old as time. He's like, "I might be struggling with my new soul, but even I know the answer to this one, buds."

**Jenny:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Kristin:** And Dawn is like, "Who is that?" And Buffy doesn't say.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm. But she does tell Dawn, "These things can hurt you, but you can hurt them too, so find a weapon."

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Right?

**Kristin:** [laughs] And then to Spike she says, "I'll get back to you." [laughs] She's like—

**Jenny:** Yeah, Spike sort of, like, turns to the wall and is kind of, like, moaning. And Buffy's like—

**Kristin:** It's all very upsetting.

**Jenny:** Buffy's like, "I'm just in the middle of something. So—but I will be back."

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yeah. So Buffy calls Xander. This is like, hey, cell phones are here now. Right? We're seeing things that could not have happened in years past.

**Jenny:** Pretty exciting.

**Kristin:** Yeah. She's like, "There's a talisman in the bathroom. You probably know what to do, because we've been doing this for years." So Dawn, getting her fucking

next award. Fucking Carlos finds a couple of bricks. She takes one look at Kit, she's like, "Kit, empty your bag," puts the bricks in Kit's bag and is like, boom!

**Jenny:** So good.

**Kristin:** Weapon. Yes, Dawn. Yes!

**Jenny:** Yes!

**Kristin:** Who dare not like the character of Dawn Summers? I challenge you to a duel!

**Jenny:** Yeah. It's good, she's doing some real good stuff in this ep.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Ugh, then the friggin' zombie ghosts are back and zombie girl is telling Dawn, "We picked the ones that no one will miss!"

**Kristin:** This is such a throwaway thing.

**Jenny:** Fuck you!

**Kristin:** It's such a throwaway thing. It didn't need to be that. It could have just been that Kit was in the fucking bathroom where the talisman was, and Carlos went down to smoke a cigarette. I don't like that they add this, like, "You're the students that nobody would have known went missing."

**Jenny:** Like, what?

**Kristin:** I don't know. It just seems—it seems unnecessary and a bit weak. And you know, of course, it's—[laughs] of course, it's like, the Latinx kid and the goth girl who are, like—[laughs] the students who no one will know is missing.

**Jenny:** [sim] Oh yeah, "no one will miss them," and later, "they have the thickest files, waa-ohh!"

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah. Do a little better, guys. Do a little better. So. Whatever. Xander goes into the bathroom. He finds the talisman. A zombie jumps on his back. Fucking—in the basement, Buffy is playing whack-a-zombie with the bag. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Dude, this is another—I love this fight sequence a lot. I don't think we've ever seen anything quite like this before on the show.

**Kristin:** No. It's really good. They—the—

**Jenny:** Imagine doing the fight choreo for this show for even two years, let alone, like, for seven seasons and just trying to keep it fresh and find new things to do.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah. No, it's really good.

**Jenny:** Also, though Xander is, you know, focused on his mission of “collect talisman, destroy talisman,” he first is distracted by—[Kristin laughs] you can see his brain calculator going like, ah, how much can I charge to repair [Kristin laughs] this broken bathroom floor?

**Kristin:** I mean, he couldn't have entered into a better profession in this town.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, true!

**Kristin:** Right? It's a smart choice. So. The zombie ghosts are, you know, dispelled the moment that he breaks this thing. And—

**Jenny:** Dawn's like, “Buffy, how did you know it was a talisman?” And Buffy's like, “Bah, there's—[laughing] there's always a talisman! Am I right? Am I—you know how it is!”

**Kristin:** [sim] “Of course I knew that. There was not a newly ensouled vampire in the back room who told me that.”

**Jenny:** And then she says the real question is who put it there? Kristin, who put it there?

**Kristin:** Who put it there, Jenny? Buffy says what we all say when we return to our former high school, middle school, elementary school, as she leaves the basement. [Jenny laughs] “It seems smaller.” [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** Which is nice.

**Jenny:** And then, she gives Dawn, Kit and Carlos a little pep talk about sticking together and how everything's gonna be okay. And I'm like, this is...awesome. New Scoobies? Scoobies: the Next Generation?

**Kristin:** I know.

**Jenny:** Do we ever see these children again?

**Kristin:** You know, I know that we're not supposed to get ahead of ourselves—

**Jenny:** [sim] I don't think we do. [laughs]

**Kristin:** But we don't. And I actually read a little bit about this that, like, you know, a lot of people watching the season in real time were, like, so stoked. Like, oh my god, we have these two new main characters, Carlos and Kit. And like, that would have been so fucking great!

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Womp, womp.

**Jenny:** But no. Kit gives Buffy a hug and Carlos says, [Kristin laughs] "You are the coolest mom ever." [laughs] Carlos!

**Kristin:** Ohh, Carlos. Ohh. I'm so sorry, Buff.

**Jenny:** Wood rolls up on this scene and is like, "Why are you still here, ma'am?!"

**Kristin:** [laughs] It's noon. It's noon. [both laugh] And he sort of is like, "Wow, Kit and Carlos, of course, have the thickest—" which you already said, Jenny. "The thickest files. Their files are as thick as yours. And now you've got them hugging and socializing and heading to class. How about you have a job here at the school?" [laughs] Well. Really?

**Jenny:** Uhh...

**Kristin:** Community outreach.

**Jenny:** Yeah. He says, "The money we could pay you wouldn't even fold." Does that mean there is none?

**Kristin:** I know. I was like, wait. If that means a small—you could fold a dollar bill. Like, you could still fold it.

**Jenny:** Yeah. So quarters?

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** She's gonna be paid in quarters.

**Kristin:** Paid in change. Yeah, he's basically just like, "Why don't you stick around?" She's like, "Am I gonna be a counselor?" And he's like, "Well, that would be silly. [Jenny laughs] 'Cause you certainly have no license to be a counselor."

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. "We already have a *real* counselor."

**Kristin:** "But we need a *fake* counselor, so can you do that?"

**Jenny:** [sim] "We need a young, cool, hip counselor the kids can really rap with."

**Kristin:** [laughs] So...then we have one last scene and it's a doozy.

**Jenny:** Oh, man. Buckle *up*!

**Kristin:** This is incredible.

**Jenny:** Yeah, it's really sick. [laughs]

**Kristin:** It has to be up there with one of my, like, favorite moments in the series. It's just so *tasty*.

**Jenny:** It's like, you think you know, but you really have no idea. You're like, okay, I—Sunnydale High is back, so we're, like, back to the beginning. Everybody is, like, newer, older versions of themselves. They've all been through some stuff. Willow is on the mend, Spike is in disarray. Xander is wearing suits. Dawn's going to high school, whatever. And you're like, okay, wow, it looks like there's a lot that's gonna happen this season. And then! You fools!

**Kristin:** God.

**Jenny:** You fools. Then what happens [Kristin exhales] is Spike is down in the basement, talking to himself. And who's talking back to him? Well, first. It's Warren.

**Kristin:** Oh. Mm. From Season 6?

**Jenny:** Warren from Season 6.

**Kristin:** "I'm more than that. I'm more than flesh." He's more than something else, though, isn't he?

**Jenny:** He's more than blood! But that comes from Glory, who you may remember from Season 5!

**Kristin:** Season 5? Hmm, six minus one equals five. Okay, okay.

**Jenny:** Uh-huh.

**Kristin:** Keep going.

**Jenny:** Uh, but that's not all. Adam can be patient. [Kristin laughs] Buffy's exactly where he wants her.

**Kristin:** Do you think that in the writers' room, they tried desperately to give Adam the line "Mommy" but just couldn't—

**Jenny:** I was thinking it the whole time.

**Kristin:** [laughing] Figure it out, how to work it in. "You do not—your hair does not look like the hair of a mommy," said Adam. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Then Mayor Wilkins appears and says—

**Kristin:** [singsong] Season 3!

**Jenny:** "A soul slippier than a greased weasel."

**Kristin:** So good. He gets the best lines of all, I think, the most—I mean, the mayor is just—I think—had probably the most wonderfully character-specific lines in the series—in the series of villains?

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** 'Cause he also says, [laughs] "What'd you think?" He's talking to Spike. "What'd you think, you get your soul back and everything would be jim dandy?"

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** And then he gets a delicious mayor chuckle in, which we've missed.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Oh, Jenny, what's three minus one?

**Jenny:** I think that's two, which rhymes with Dru! [Kristin laughs] Who says, "You'll always be in the dark. With me."

**Kristin:** Ugh, "singing our songs."

**Jenny:** And drinking our fruit punch, because it's the Master! Who says—

**Kristin:** Whew!

**Jenny:** They're going back to the beginning. Not the bang, not the word, the true beginning.

**Kristin:** [sighs]

**Jenny:** And then the Master says something that's not just true for Spike, and not just true for the residents of Sunnydale, but true for each and every one of us, making and listening and participating in this podcast.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** The Master says, "The next few months are going to be quite a ride, and I think we're all gonna learn something about ourselves in the process."

**Kristin:** Wow! [both laugh]

**Jenny:** I'm so excited!

**Kristin:** Yep. And then he gives us one last pivot, doesn't he? Pivot!

**Jenny:** Yeah, he says—

**Kristin:** "Look at you, trying to do what's right. It's not about right. It's not about wrong." Ba-bum-ba-bum!

**Jenny:** Buffy Summers morph!

**Kristin:** [sim] Buffy Summers?! "It's about power."

**Jenny:** Mic drop!

**Kristin:** Pew-pew-pew-pew!

**Jenny:** Hell! Yeah!

**Kristin:** Make your air horn noise, I can't do it.

**Jenny:** [makes an air horn noise] [Kristin laughs as Jenny continues making noise] It's about power! Who had—who had—everybody check your bets. Who had "it's about power"?

**Kristin:** [laughs] I'd like to play some fucking jingles, okay? Just a couple of jingles here. I would like to...play the Drusilla jingle, because we saw Dru and her jingle is one of my favorites. And I would like to follow that immediately with the Hellmath jingle, because that's what we just did, [Jenny laughs] counting backwards through the seasons. Literally, on the Hellmouth. Here you go.

[DRUSILLA jingle plays]

Dru...silla

You...fill up

My heart with dread

And still I'm led

Right back to you

[HELLMATH jingle plays]

Hellmath!

**Kristin:** Wow. Jenny. There's only other one [sic] jingle I can think to play at this moment.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]

Sexual tension award!

**Jenny:** Well! Kristin, here we are, at the top of Season 7, bright-eyed, bushy-tailed, and ready for hot, heaping, fresh doses of sexual tension and the awards that pair with such a thing.



**Kristin:** Jenny.

**Jenny:** Yes?

**Kristin:** I don't know if you know this, but I happen to be the first host of this podcast to ever make it—

**Jenny:** Oh my god!

**Kristin:** To the Sexual Tension—

**Jenny:** Here we go. Look at what you've done to me, people!

**Kristin:** [sim] Award podium! So—

**Jenny:** Look at what you've done.

**Kristin:** So. It's not a big deal, but in case you missed it, I came in third runner-up, me and Anya on rollerskates. So, [Jenny groans] I actually know a lot about this segment and all that's entailed, as the only one of the two of us—

**Jenny:** Okay. Okay.

**Kristin:** Who has ever made it to the podium.

**Jenny:** Alright. I'm very happy for you. [Kristin cackles] And I'll have no choice but to nominate myself in one slot for every episode moving forward—

**Kristin:** [laughs] Overruled.

**Jenny:** In hopes of righting this grievous wrong. [laughs]

**Kristin:** Overruled. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Okay. For today's episode, which is—I mean, there's just, like—nothing is sexy about this episode. So we're just—we're grasping at straws, but in a loving way.

**Kristin:** Which is kinda sexy. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Mmm...in the first slot. I'm already shipping it. And it's just cloaked in mystery and uncertainty, I wonder what's gonna happen. So wild. It's Buffy and Principal Wood. [cackling] Hell yes!

**Kristin:** Hell yeah. Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Hell yes. They—the camera went around and around them, Kristin. I don't know what to tell you.

**Kristin:** [sim] "Oh, you're younger than I thought." "Oh, you seem older than a high school student." [Jenny laughs] Ooh! [both laugh]

**Jenny:** "I'd love to see you around my place of work more often." [both laugh] Okay. Good luck to them. In slot number two—

**Kristin:** Yes. Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** The noms I have procured for thee.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** It's Willow and it's Gaia. They've been *connecting*, Kristin!

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** They've been connecting a lot.

**Kristin:** It's true. [Jenny exhales] Everything is connected, Jenny, as a matter of fact.

**Jenny:** I...I know. That's why I'm bringing this to your attention. [both laugh] In slot number three, my personal fave. It's Tony Head and not leaving his house. [both laugh] Tony Head and getting his way. Tony Head and convenient television filming. [laughs]

**Kristin:** Mmhmm. Hell yeah. [laughs]

**Jenny:** And in slot—

**Kristin:** Poor Kali Rocha had to, like, fly in for a day.

**Jenny:** Yeah! [laughs]

**Kristin:** And Tony Head was like, “mm, no.”

**Jenny:** Come to me, my children.

**Kristin:** No thank you.

**Jenny:** And in slot number four, something familiar about this pairing. It’s Buffy, question mark, and power, again!

**Kristin:** [laughs] In case you’re worried about the future of Sexual Tension Awards, please note that I, Kristin Russo, declared Season 7 the horniest of all seasons. [Jenny laughs] Just yesterday on Twitter. So you know, there’s gonna be plenty of things for us to chew upon in this segment, as the episodes continue.

**Jenny:** [cackles] In the meantime. To cast your vote for this questionable lot, [Kristin laughs] please find our Twitter poll on Twitter, @BufferingCast. It’ll be live for one week from the airing date of this episode. So run, don’t walk, go cast your vote, democracy, blah-blah-blah. Sexy, sexy democracy. Democracy, but make it sexy! Slots, noms, what more can I do for you people to make this democracy enticingly sexy? Come join us, thank you.

**Kristin:** Could you imagine if you were like—if we were like, “Come and find our Twitter poll on Facebook.” [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Alright, alright, alright—

**Kristin:** [sim] Our Twitter poll, on Instagram.

**Jenny:** Alright, alright, alright.

**Kristin:** Uh, hey. Okay. Let’s leave this segment.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]  
Sexual tension award!

**Kristin:** Well, Jenny. It’s the beginning.

**Jenny:** Yes.

**Kristin:** It’s the beginning. We’re going all the way back to the beginning.

**Jenny:** It's true.

**Kristin:** Can't believe we got Fruit Punch Mouth. Man. [Jenny gasps] It's been a long time. It's been a long time. I wonder what is going on in this back room of this basement.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** I'm happy to now know that vampires can have their hair grow, though. It begs the follow-up question: does their hair only grow when they have a soul reinstated? Is a soul connected to the growth of hair?

**Jenny:** Question on everybody's mind, I think.

**Kristin:** I mean, think about it. We've got—Spike is back. We've got fucking—Hallie is here. Anya's hair is brown.

**Jenny:** Yep. Yep.

**Kristin:** It's a bad time to be a good guy. There's a lot—

**Jenny:** High school.

**Kristin:** The high school's here. There's just a lot. There's a lot to process, but lucky for all of us, there's a podcast [Jenny gasps] where we do exactly just that. [Jenny gasps] We process each episode, one at a time. There's gonna be a lot to talk about this season. We're already working on some deeper dive episodes, 'cause, you know. Yeah.

**Jenny:** We dig because we care. Well. I'm Jenny Owen Youngs.

**Kristin:** Wow.

**Jenny:** You know what I mean?

**Kristin:** It's lovely to meet you.

**Jenny:** And you as well. [Kristin laughs] Thank you so much. And when I am not making this podcast, I am often writing and recording songs. You can hear some of those on your favorite streaming platform. I release music under my name, Jenny Owen Youngs, and also with my band, L.A. Exes. And you can give me a shout on

Twitter @JennyOwenYoungs. And find me streaming live on Twitch on pretty much a weekly basis. Come on down.

**Kristin:** My name is Kristin Russo. And when I'm not talking about Buffy the Vampire Slayer with Jenny Owen Youngs, I'm often doing work with LGBTQ communities. You can learn more about that work on my website, kristinnoeline.com. That's K-R-I-S-T-I-N N-O-E-L-I-N-E. And you can use that spelling to find me on Twitter and on Instagram, where I do that work, Buffy work, and also share lots of pictures of my cats. One of my cats now climbs the trees outside, but is also on a leash, so it's fun content for everyone, really. [laughing] I highly recommend it.

**Jenny:** [laughs] Buffering the Vampire Slayer is on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook @BufferingCast. You can drop us an email at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com.

**Kristin:** And you can support the work that we do here on our Patreon page, of course. Bufferingthevampireslayer.com, just click on Patreon. You can go to our store, which is chock full of new, fun things, like fucking candles, if they're even still in stock. I mean, who knows? It's been a couple of days since we announced it, but just good shit. There's a lot of good shit over there, so—

**Jenny:** Mmhmm, mmhmm.

**Kristin:** Bufferingthevampireslayer.com, click on Shop. And you can always rate and review us or just think good thoughts about us.

**Jenny:** Oh yeah, think good thoughts! 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:** Awwwwwoooooooooooooo!

[Jenny Owen Youngs performing "Lessons" off the album "Songs from Season Seven" by Buffering the Vampire Slayer]