

Buffering the Vampire Slayer
Episode 3.16: Doppelgängland

Jenny: *Hey, hey, everybody!* [Kristin laughs] Hello! Wow, I am so excited to talk to you. Did we have a week off or something?

Kristin: We had a week off!

Jenny: [makes "brrr" noise].

Kristin: Bright eyed and bushy tailed.

Jenny: I— so bushy of tail.

Kristin: Here we are to talk to you about Dopplegängland. But hang tight because we have some really important things to discuss; the first one being Prom. So, let me tell you all a story. Jenny and I were like, "well, we're in season 3; they have a prom. It's a no brainer! We have to have a prom. It's gonna be great. We're gonna do it in LA because that is where we currently reside. And we're gonna do it at the Ace Hotel 'cause that'll be super fun. And they're gonna partner with us. And we're gonna have this beautiful space. And the space isn't like super big, but it can hold about what we usually have—"

Jenny: Yeah, just like a reasonable amount of people.

Kristin: "It'll probably sell out in about a couple weeks or... something." So, then we announced the prom. And I saw a flutter of conversation happening. And many of the conversations started with, "I'm going to book plane tickets." And I thought— [Jenny laughs] I thought to myself, "oh dear."

Jenny: Oh, bother.

Kristin: "I have underestimated the Scoobies and their desire for a Buffy prom." And I was very panicked that perhaps we would sell out quickly. And I told my wife, Jenny—

Jenny: That's me.

Kristin: I was concerned. And then we released the tickets on Wednesday.

Jenny: And Kristin refreshed her browser—

Kristin: Three times.

Jenny: Once, twice, three times: a sold out prom.

Kristin: And I was like... you know, normally, if I were a business woman, which I'm not [both laugh], I would have been like, "yeah, look at us go!" But I was like, [anxiously] "oh no! Oh no! I've ruined everything." I felt so bad. We both feel so bad that we did not understand the, you know...

Jenny: The volume of prom enthusiasts.

Kristin: The passion, as Angel would say, [dramatically] "the passion."

Jenny: [imitating Angel] *Passion*.

Kristin: So, our biggest hope, which we were not able to accomplish, was that maybe we could figure out a way to, you know, really increase the capacity by a lot. We were able to increase the capacity by a little bit at the venue, at the Ace. But we weren't able to get everybody who wanted to go in. And so, first and foremost, we are so sorry. Second and secondmost [sic], we will be having another prom next year. Maybe we'll just have a prom every year for the rest of our lives.

Jenny: Hooray!

Kristin: And I can't explain to you the details yet but *because* of the interest that you all expressed and *because* of the fact that we would like to have a prom next year, there are some *pretty* exciting things happening behind the scenes. So, if you are sad and you didn't get a ticket, just hang tight because I think big things are in store for you in your future.

Jenny: Yes, yes, yes.

Kristin: And that said, you know, we decided that the day after prom, if you are local to the area, if you live nearby, on March 11—so, the prom is March 10. The evening of March 10th, it's a Saturday night. March 11 is a Sunday, and at 11:30 we're gonna just do a meetup in Griffith Park. You can find the beginning details for all of that on the prom page, bufferingthevampireslayer.com/prom. And as we have more, you know, meet-up specifics and all of that: where exactly in Griffith Park so we aren't all just running around Griffith Park screaming, [hesitantly] "Buffering? Buff—Are you here for Buffering?" We'll put that up and we'll also, of course, announce it in the podcast. So, if you didn't get tickets, Sunday March 11, if you live near here; everybody who has gone to prom, you should join us; and everyone who didn't get to go to this prom, you should all join us. Imma make Jenny bring her guitar...

Jenny: Hooray!

Kristin: We're gonna hang out. You know, bring snacks, bring blankets. It'll be really, really lovely and really sweet. And then just, like, hang tight. 'Cause, you know—

Jenny: Big things on the horizon!

Kristin: This is prom number one, and there's gonna be more. And I'm excited about things that are *happening* that I can't tell you! Cool. One other thing about prom because you're all excited, and we're excited, people have been reaching out to us to say, "hey, I live in New York, and I thought, like, it would be really cool to do a meetup here for prom and, like, maybe we could even do it at the same time as prom!" I know that many of you in other cities and other towns and other places across the world might really wanna use this as an opportunity—It also happens to be the anniversary of Buffy the Vampire Slayer!

Jenny: The 21st anniversary of the airing of the pilot.

Kristin: Yes, the DVD box set can drink now!

Jenny: Ha!

Kristin: It can have a cocktail. Anyhow, you might wanna do a gathering. So, we decided to centralize that, so that you can all see and find each other even more easily than you normally can. So, on our website, bufferingthevampireslayer.com/promups, which is like meetups, but with prom.

Jenny: Mmm!

Kristin: So you know, P-R-O-M-U-P-S, promups. You can find a submission form where, if you wanna hold a meetup, you know, it could be anything. It could just be like a small little gathering that you wanna have where you watch an episode—the Prom episode together. It could be something where you wanna, you know, all meet up at a coffee shop or meet up at a bar or, you know, whatever it is that sounds fun to you, just submit it. We can pop it up on the site. And then, while we have our prom in LA, you all can be doing really fun prom things together too and we're gonna use the hashtag "promups" as well. I don't know if it's a good hashtag, [Jenny laughs] but, you know what, I made it up and I'm sticking to it!

If you use that hashtag “promups” to announce your meetups and also when you’re having them, post your pictures, then we can all sort of see what we’re all doing...together!

Jenny: So great. So exciting!

Kristin: So, you can find all of those details—

Jenny: The prom heard round the world! [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: You can find all of those details, again, at bufferingthevampireslayer.com/prom in case all of my talking just started to sound like one long wail and you missed some of it, it’s all there for you to find out. We’re *really* excited. We’re *really* sorry that we didn’t think ahead to how many of you would wanna come in from out of town and on and on and on. But we know now! And now, we shall take over the world!

Jenny: Yeeeees. You know what else, Kristin?

Kristin: What else, Jenny?

Jenny: We have a couple of new shirts up for preorder at this very moment.

Kristin: It’s true.

Jenny: One of them is directly related to the episode we’re about to discuss, Dopplegångland. It says, “Willow in the Streets, Vampire Willow in the Sheets.”

Kristin: Mhm.

Jenny: You’re welcome!

Kristin: Copyright Kristin Russo [Jenny laughs], 2018.

Jenny: That was Kristin’s brilliant light bulb. And then we also—

Kristin: I ran down the stairs and was like, “Jenny!”

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: “I had an idea!”

Jenny: I keep envisioning it in my mind and bursting out into gales of laughter at inopportune moments. And we also have an *amazing* shirt, via Bad Girls, designed by Mallory Volk, that is representative of the local girl gang in Sunnydale, the Slayers.

Kristin: Yes, yes. If you remember the scene where they're sitting in the back of the police car, and the police officers are like, "What are you... [mumbles]" [Jenny laughs] That's what they sound like. And Faith's like, "Yeah, we're called the Slayers."

Jenny: Oh my God, a TV show where all of the men just sound like the parents on Charlie Brown. [Kristin laughs]

Kristin: Yes, I'm in. Sign me up.

Jenny: Uhm, okay. Also, just wanna remind you that our Patreon patrons at the \$10 level and above get 20% off merch all the time, useful to know if you are planning on snagging these shirts and/or becoming a patron.

Kristin: Yes!

Jenny: There may be some mutual beneficial activity that you could take advantage of.

Kristin: Yes. And you can find the store, of course, on our website bufferingthevampireslayer.com, just click on "Shop." Also, you can find Patreon there, just click on "Patreon!" We've really made it very easy for everyone.

Jenny: Yeees.

Kristin: Last, but certainly not least, we wanna let you know that within this discussion of Dopplegängland, we got the chance to speak Lani Diane Rich—

Jenny: Who is a dream!

Kristin: Who *is* a dream. If you don't already know Lani, Lani is the owner of Chipperish Media, where she talks about stories and storytelling. She's a story expert, she's an award-winning podcaster, she's a New York Times best-selling novelist and, perhaps most importantly, she does a Buffy video series and podcast called "Still Pretty." Many of you have been asking us to connect with Lani for some time and we have done it here within this interview.

Jenny: Thank you for encouraging that. Do you know what it was like talking to Lani? You know when the sky is overcast but then the clouds are parting and then there are like these very specific beams of sunlight shooting down upon the earth and illuminating it with a heavenly glow?

Kristin: I do. I know exactly what you mean.

Jenny: It was like standing [Kristin laughs] in a series of those beams.

Kristin: So, if you listen to the episode, you too shall get to stand within the beams that Jenny describes.

Jenny: Yes! Stand within the beams.

Kristin: And also, so you know, a segment of the interview is shared here. Our patrons will get the full interview, which includes some more Emma Caulfield thoughts, includes a spoiler...

Jenny: Ooh!

Kristin: Includes some other stuff. So, yeah! I think, Jenny, that was a long chat we had, but a very important one.

Jenny: A lot of important stuff to talk about.

Kristin: Very important things. But I think we should probably...

Jenny: Leeeet's get into it!

Kristin: Yeah!

[Theme song plays]

Kristin: Hello, and welcome to Buffering the Vampire Slayer, a podcast where we'll be watching and discussing every episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, one by one, spoiler-free. I am Kristin Russo.

Jenny: And I'm Jenny Owen-Youngs, and this week we're talking about Season 3, Episode 16, Dopplegängland. Stay tuned at the end of this podcast every week for an original song, written by us, recapping the Buffy episode we are discussing.

Kristin: Dopplegängland was written and directed by Joss Whedon, you may have heard of him. And it aired on February 23, 1999.

Jenny: This is the one where, while casting a magic spell, Anya and Willow accidentally summon Willow's evil double from an alternate universe.

Kristin: An alternate universe. We decided that, an alternate-universe-podcastland, maybe we did the intro reversed.

Jenny: Yeah, I feel weird. It felt very weird.

Kristin: It's weird. It's very weird. I'm sure you all felt weird. I'm sure everybody felt like, "what is going on?" So, this is an immersive experience.

Jenny: Ha!

Kristin: We wanted you to get a taste of what it might have felt like for Vampire Willow, or... you know what I mean? For Vampire Willow, really, that's what it felt like. She opened her eyes, and everything was askew.

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. We're all about her experience. Centering the experience of a bloodthirsty [Kristin laughs], soulless vampire, who is forced to live in—

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: a world of pink, fleshy, ensouled humans. *Disgusting*.

Kristin: A nightmare. A living nightmare.

Jenny: Total nightmare.

Kristin: So this is Season: Faith, Episode: Vampire Willow.

Jenny: Uh-huh, yes...

Kristin: Right? That's in the new listing, in the new episode listing we're creating, that's its official title.

Jenny: Yes. Absolutely.

Kristin: We have a lot to talk about, but I feel like we must start with the fact this episode *fucking rules*.

Jenny: It's *really* great.

Kristin: It's so good! It's so good! You heard up in the intro, if you listen to our intros, that we are gonna get to talk to Lani Diane Rich—

Jenny: One of our many doppelgängers out there in the world.

Kristin: One of our many doppelgängers! Yes. Just another person out there digging into the Buffy universe.

Jenny: Yes, yes.

Kristin: So, we're very excited because we talked to Lani and a lot of the stuff that we talk about is about, like, the story structure—of this, and also like the series as a whole—

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: Really good, good shit. So we're gonna get to that later, but it is headed your way. We're also, very soon, because we can't wait.

Jenny: We're not gonna be able to hold back for very long on the Fashion Watch.

Kristin: Just moments from now, and this is important folks, if you're driving your cars...

Jenny: You might wanna pull over! For safety!

Kristin: Yes. Because we all have a lot of feelings about this episode—we tweeted out to ask you about your feelings about this episode and oh, boy!

Jenny: You had 'em!

Kristin: I was really actually very happy because so many of you responded with quotes from the episode and I was like, "this is good because I am gonna be delivering more quotes from this episode than maybe any other."

Jenny: Yeah. The highest density, maybe, of great lines of any episode so far.

Kristin: Just incredible! Incredible. But you know, so many of us had uh, awakenings watching this episode.

Jenny: Mmhmmm!

Kristin: Just, you know, really all of a sudden we were just watching a television show and minding our own business and *blam!* There was Vampire Willow lickin' the neck of regular Willow...

Jenny: Yeah, yeah. It's a lot.

Kristin: We were like, "what is happening to our bodies and our minds?"

Jenny: (laughing) Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Kristin: You know, it's just a very... listen.

Jenny: Reality... The edges of reality began to warp around us—

Kristin: Yeah!

Jenny: —and crackle, and melt.

Kristin: Season 3 is the gayest season, perhaps.

Jenny: There's a lot... going on.

Kristin: There's a lot of gay shit in this season.

Jenny: And you know who wasn't immune to all the gay shit going on in this season and specifically this episode? Kate Leth.

Kristin: Obviously.

Jenny: My friend and yours.

Kristin: (laughing) Obviously! Kate Leth doesn't even get to talk about the fact that at one point Giles is sucking on a lollipop!

Jenny: Oh, yeah!

Kristin: Just— in what universe would that ever not be a part of Kate's experience?

Jenny: That might be alternate-reality-Giles.

Kristin: Right! Alternate-reality-Giles! But the sexual tension in this episode was just, so high, that our Kate Leth—well, she couldn't even express it in regular words, could she Jenny?

Jenny: No, no, she had to go hard or go home.

Kristin: Yeah. We thought about making you wait till the end to listen to this. But we're not. We decided, instead, we're just gonna jump right into it. Right now.

Jenny: Yes. Yes. Yes!

Kristin: Reminder—this is big. This is a big deal and you're not ready for it...

Jenny: Sit down!

Kristin: No matter how ready you think you are... you're not ready for it, Goddamnit! Kate Leth.

Kate Leth: [to the tune of Science Fiction - Double Feature from Rocky Horror Picture Show]

Anya Jenkins was pissed because she sorely missed
Having power, being feared
So she sought out a witch to help her make a switch
The necklace that would let her get weird
But she wasn't that thick, Willow saw through her trick
When Anya poured that magic sand
Still what she didn't know was what would come and go
After it had passed through her hand

Dopplegängland (uh uh uh) Vampire Willow
I was 13 (uh uh uh) and what a thrill, oh
My favorite Scooby (uh uh uh)
Dressed in leather
And it confused me (uh uh uh) didn't know whether
Oh oh oh oh
I wanted to kiss, or wanted to be Vamp Willow

In her pink fuzzy sweater Rosenberg was better
Than any girl I've ever seen
But how could I predict how I'd feel when she licked
That girl's collarbone on my silver screen
I was young and perplexed, still what happened next
Was more than my young heart could take
When I heard good Will say, "I think I'm kinda gay"

I felt a yearning, a terrible ache
'Cause she's...

Dopplegängland (uh uh uh) Vampire Willow
I was 13 (uh uh uh) and what a thrill, oh
My favorite Scooby (uh uh uh)
Dressed in leather
Yeah it confused me (uh uh uh) didn't know whether
Oh oh oh oh
I wanted to kiss, or wanted to be Vamp Willow
But now I know
Oh oh oh oh
I want to be, and I want to kiss Vamp Willow
Can't I do both?
Oh oh oh oh
I want to be, I want to kiss both Willows
"Gosh! Look at those"
Oh oh oh oh
There's nobody who is quite like Vamp Willow

Jenny: (laughter)

Kristin: Oh, my ever-living God!

Jenny: Uhm... *yeah*.

Kristin: Are you—we didn't even play, we couldn't even play Kate's in-and-out jingles because—how?

Jenny: Yeah! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Kristin: We just needed to—and I hope that you all took our advice because we don't fuck around! We're not gonna tell you to pull over your damn cars unless—

Jenny: Unless it's necessary!

Kristin: —it's necessary. I don't even know—I asked Kate if she was gonna retire after this 'cause I don't know...

Jenny: Right? Like, where do you go from here?

Kristin: I thought—in Bad Girls, I thought how could it get any better than this?

Jenny: Right. Yes! Exactly!

Kristin: And then... a musical—oh my God!

Jenny: It's too much.

Kristin: Kate texted us and was like, "I don't know, I mean, I might have to do a song for this but I can't do a song." We were like, "uh, Okay" and then, like, the next day...

Jenny: She was like, "I did a song."

Kristin: She was like, "I did it."

Jenny: "And it's perfect."

Kristin: (laughter)

Jenny: Sooo....

Kristin: I thought about asking you guys to do the backup 'uhs', but then I just did them too.

Jenny: (laughter)

Kristin: Which is Jenny's—that's Jenny's favorite part of that little ditty.

Jenny: Yes. Yes! Yes.

Kristin: So, if you need to possess this song that Kate has created, you can. It is up on our Patreon page, it is free. You do not even need to be a Patron, we would never keep this from you. You just go to bufferingthevampireslayer.com, click on "Patreon ", and it'll be one of the top posts. You will see it. It'll be there for you.

Jenny: You're welcome, universe!

Kristin: [sigh] Kate. Kate. Kate.

Jenny: *Kate!*

Kristin: Queen Kate, thank you so much for gracing us with this, we almost made it the whole episode, you know? Just—

Jenny: Yeah, right? Just like a three minute episode?

Kristin: (laughing) Yeah!

Jenny: 'Nuff said.

Kristin: However, had we done that, we would have missed the re-entrance of Jenny's favorite character—

Jenny: Anyaaaa!

Kristin: Anyanka! Is here! And she is talking to who, Jenny?

Jenny: D'Hoffryn, of course!

Kristin: D'Hoffryn. Jenny just knew D'Hoffryn's name as though it were, like, her uncle D'Hoffryn. She knows... I don't, I'm sorry! I—Jenny's looking at me like "Of course I knew it, what are you—who *are* you?"

Jenny: You're my wife who can't remember anything and I should remember.

Kristin: Excuse me! "I'm your wife who can't remember anything," fair. But I'm your wife who has seen the series one time! So I don't, I didn't remember who D'Hoffryn was.

Jenny: Hmmmm. Yeah, yes.

Kristin: I thought who's this demon with his chin-ponytail.

Jenny: His chin-ponytail, his workman's boots, he's sort of like bottom half just got off of a shift at the Sunnydale docks, top half demon supreme lording over all the vengeance demons.

Kristin: Yes, yes yes. Jenny just made us re-tape that because she said chaos demons the first time. And she stopped—

Jenny: Unacceptable!

Kristin: She froze in her fucking tracks, and was like "Excuse me, but I have misspoke." So we re-taped her thoughts on the bottom and top half of D'Hoffryn. I love D'Hoffryn, and like, I don't know him as well as apparently you do—

Jenny: What do you like about him?

Kristin: I mean, I just like him as a demon, I think he's a fun demon.

Jenny: Hmmm!

Kristin: I think because he's like a Casual Friday demon, ya know? He's like—

Jenny: Sure, yeah.

Kristin: "I'm not tied to wearing demon garb, I'll wear what I wanna wear."

Jenny: Sure, sure.

Kristin: "And I'll put my ponytail beard in a chin-pony—" You know what I'm saying?

Jenny: Yeah, uh huh? Yeah, of course!

Kristin: (laughing) But the thing I don't like about him, and here's the deal—why can't demons cut their fingernails? Why don't they cut their fingernails? You know what I mean? D'Hoffryn's not gonna use—

Jenny: All the better to rend and tear your weak mortal flesh.

Kristin: You think? Is that what D'Hoffryn's gonna do, use his fingernails? Is that what The Master did? No. The Master had no dirt or grime under those fingernails.

Jenny: Well that's cause he had Luke! His in-house nail person.

Kristin: (laughing) I just don't like it. I don't like long... My one bone to pick with D'Hoffryn is long fingernails.

Jenny: Yeah, it's a bummer, I don't wanna see it.

Kristin: Uh, Willow, is graduating.

Jenny: Floating pencils all willy-nilly!

Kristin: Yes! This is a big deal. It's like, I mean, (laughs) the CGI? Is that what you would call this?

Jenny: I guess so?

Kristin: Is that even...? I don't know if that's correct, but whatever is used to make the pencil spin is very funny.

Jenny: (laughter)

Kristin: But it's, but it's, you know, it's 1999, and I think—

Jenny: Yeah, and I think probably in the context of 1999 that looked amazing.

Kristin: Yeah! Exactly. And also, in the context of the reality of Sunnydale, this is a big deal!

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Willow's not just packin' a satchel full of herbs, here.

Jenny: No, no no no.

Kristin: She's levitating and spinning a pencil, which is pretty big magic. I mean, if I did that I would be like, wow! I... You know.

Jenny: (laughter) So you've never done that?

Kristin: I was just trying to cover for myself, like pretending I had never done it. If I had done that, I would be like wow! No. I've never levitated a pencil, but as discussed in previous episodes, I think I can.

Jenny: So, while they're having this conversation and Buffy is doing like the most half-assed crunches I've ever seen in my life...

Kristin: (laughter) Yeah, Buffy.

Jenny: She's basically just trying to strain her neck while building no muscle anywhere.

Kristin: She's like a wet spaghetti noodle doing crunches.

Jenny: Bless her. I mean she probably had to shoot this a bunch of times in a row, and having a conversation while you do crunches is, like, hard to do, except I guess if you're the Slayer, but Sarah Michelle Gellar is like, arguably not the Slayer, so...

Kristin: Okay! Get to the point!

Jenny: Fine, I accept it. The point is they have this exchange where they're talking about how Faith isn't gonna be on the cover of Sanity Fair.

Kristin: Sanity Fair. Shoutout, Joanna Robinson. You hear that?

Jenny: Yes. Yes. And Buffy says "Well under different circumstances, that could be me." And Willow says "No, some people just don't have that in them." So what do you make of this?

Kristin: Well, okay, so here's, here's what I make of it. You brought this up and it got me to thinking and I realized this is just a setup, right?

Jenny: Right. Right.

Kristin: This is setting us up for Willow being like "Some people are just good and some people are just not." And like that's sort of Willow's understanding of reality at the start of the episode, but then of course, we're gonna go on this journey where Willow's gonna learn "Oh no, like this..."

Jenny: There's an infinite number of variations that could happen to my life based on the circumstances that I engage with.

Kristin: Right! Exactly. And in this episode it's certainly just I think that the throughline ends there. It's just like "Anybody can be Vampire Willow, even Willow." You know, like, we all have many permutations of whatever...

Jenny: Right.

Kristin: But in the context of what we've been talking about with Faith, and Faith's choices, and Buffy and Buffy's choices, it is really important. And I guess there is a thread here, cause it is, that is where this conversation is rooted. I'm just thinking about people's circumstances, and people's life experience, and how that might affect them, and that no—people aren't just born evil...

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Or like with the capacity—like person A isn't born with the capacity for evil and person B is not.

Jenny: Right. I don't know if Vampire Willow would just pull herself up by her bootstraps...

Kristin: (laughter) Yeah!

Jenny: And like, work hard enough to get her soul back...

Kristin: Yeah!

Jenny: And become a good person...

Kristin: Good point, Jenny!

Jenny: Thank you! It's very logical. Here to help.

Kristin: Everyone, even vampires, have access to being good people. Goddamnit, this world. Okay. (laughter)

Jenny: So.

Kristin: So!

Jenny: Willow and Percy are gonna breed.

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: Very exciting.

Kristin: And there it is, one of the lines, there's a lot of them in this episode, as we mentioned—but Willow saying "You... want us to breed?" Is pretty great.

Jenny: (laughter)

Kristin: Snyder's... prime Snyder in this scene.

Jenny: Yeah! This like, Armin Schirmerman's light touch, like a lot of the time he's like really beating it over the head, which I love...

Kristin: (laughter) It sounds like a perfume!

Jenny: (laughter) Armin Schirmerman:

Both, in unison: Light Touch.

Jenny: So, I just feel like he's really subtler in this scene than he is a lot of the time, which I like both variations...

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: But it's really fun to see this.

Kristin: Yeah, he's not, you know, in Go Fish like "Athlete's rule and everybody else sucks." But in this he's just like...

Jenny: "You're all garbage."

Kristin: (laughter) "You're all garbage!"

Jenny: "Go get me a trophy!"

Kristin: (laughter) "So figure it out." Also just a quick note, to the fact that on Snyder's desk there is a picture of a child.

Jenny: Who is that child?

Kristin: Who is the child? We know that that is not Snyder's child.

Jenny: Snyder can't be reproducing! Slash maybe married?

Kristin: No! He doesn't like...

Jenny: He doesn't have a girlfriend. Do you think that the picture came in the frame?

Kristin: I do. I think the picture...

Jenny: It's the kid from the frame.

Kristin: Yeah. It's the kid from the frame, and it's used as a decoy to like help, you know? It's like...

Jenny: Oh to convince parents that he's...

Kristin: That he understands and relates to them. Or something. I don't know.

Jenny: Sure. Sure.

Kristin: I don't know. No, okay. We have so much to cover that I almost don't wanna talk about some of the smaller things, but I have to. It's my job.

Jenny: (laughter) Literally!

Kristin: Yeah. So, this is a big sweater episode for Willow, and we know that, obviously you know, this pink fuzzy sweater, it's the one that Hot Topic chose of all the sweaters.

Jenny: To make.

Kristin: To make, again, for us.

Jenny: Yes, yes of course.

Kristin: In this day and age. So some of you might be listening to the episode wearing that very sweater. It is possible that that is happening right now.

Jenny: Not outside the realm of possibility.

Kristin: No. But a sweater, a lesser-known sweater happens in this scene and the next, and I call it Willow's Vulva Sweater!

Jenny: Okay, and yes, and what?

Kristin: It just looks like a vagin—it looks like a vulva! On her, on her sweater!

Jenny: Oh!

Kristin: It's just, that's all I'm saying. And given the nature of this episode, maybe it was chosen on purpose. It's like a Georgia O'Keefe...

Jenny: Woww!

Kristin: ...situation.

Jenny: Sure, sure.

Kristin: It's subtle, but I notice it. I notice even—

Jenny: The famous Georgia O'Keefe line available in the Macy's junior section.

Kristin: [laughter] Listen, Jenny. I notice even the most subtle of vulvas, okay?

Jenny: [laughter] Okay! Noted!

Kristin: So! Princess Margaret and Faith. Enter the library.

Jenny: Wesley can't keep up with Faith. But who can?

Kristin: Obviously! I mean, what kind of test did they design where the Watcher has to keep up with the Slayer? That doesn't even make any sense.

Jenny: Ridiculous.

Kristin: So, Wesley is, as I referred to him once before, he is Wesley "Winded" Price.

Jenny: [laughter]

Kristin: In this moment. He cannot keep up, but also this is weird, this is like a, we had a conversation 'cause I was like, "Wait, wasn't—didn't we end the last episode where Faith was like 'Buffy killed a man. Bye!'"

Jenny: And then she got captured by The Council and then she kicked Wesley in the face and then she like, jumped out of a moving truck, and then, and then, and then...

Kristin: So right. So we missed, I think, a few 'and then's, because we got from there to here, where they are doing this fitness test for... Slayer rehabilitation?
[laughter]

Jenny: Or something. They're just both being tested.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: To make sure they're in working order.

Kristin: Yeah. Just what you need. Just what you need, is to get tested to see if you're in working order by a bunch of tweed men in a castle.

Jenny: Yeah!

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

Kristin: So this scene contains a delightful nugget. Just, just, oh boy. Faith is leaned up against...

Jenny: Oh my God!

Kristin: ...the circulation desk, and she's— Buffy's about to go on her test now to do her thing with Wesley.

Jenny: Right, right, right. And there's definitely, it's tense between them.

Kristin: Yes, it's tense. And Faith does this move which is like, "I wanna touch her, and I want to connect with her, but I need to do it in a way that seems casual"... and she fails. [laughter]

Jenny: She looks like she's pushing off the edge of a swimming pool. Ya know? And then like, collides with Buffy, and I think you pointed out to me that it looks like she's gonna punch her in the shoulder and then she's like, "no, too gay," and then she like opens her hand and like sort of brushes, caresses her shoulder but like in a pushing way, and it just like comes off even gayer. It's a real thing.

Kristin: [laughter] If you are a queer person, you've done this. Like, you've had—and if not this, you've had some moment like this where you're trying to just—listen, probably if you're any person. You have tried to flirt, or not even flirt, but just be cool around somebody you are totally not cool around.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Just, really good. Really, really, really good.

Jenny: And you know what else is good, as you already mentioned, but is worth mentioning again now that we're here chronologically—Giles is eating a lollipop!

Kristin: Giles is eating...

Jenny: Giles. Is eating. A lollipop. What is happening?

Kristin: I want a shirt that just says "Giles is eating a lollipop".

Jenny: Sure, you should have that shirt.

Kristen: Just one, just one version of it just for me.

Jenny: Of course!

Kristen: Sooo, Willow is hacking into- or trying to hack into The Mayor's files—

Jenny: Classic Willow! Hacking!

Kristen: Which is- [laughter] Which is important because it sets us up really for a lot of the rest of the things that happen in this episode, Faith notices this and immediately.

Jenny: So slyly.

Kristen: Really not noticeable at all.

Jenny: Very subtle.

Kristen: "So can you uhh, can you do that?" and then immediately goes and reports this to The Mayor who she is now working for.

Jenny: Yes, and with prime benefits.

Kristen: I was gonna say, with— You kinda understand in some ways how this job is really paying her off a little bit better than her last job, we've been waiting for anyone to...

Jenny: Yeah. Maybe the council should, uh, assess their payment structure?

Kristin: Oh, you think? You think maybe?

Jenny: No, that teen girls should fight and die for free.

Kristin: Yeah, teen girls-

Jenny: And that- that old white men in- in tweed should get paid.

Kristin: Should get paid enough to get multiple tweed jackets and...

Jenny: Sure, sure, sure, tweed is not cheap.

Kristin: ...and green mugs that are quite expensive!

Jenny: Again, collector's jadeite mugs. Although, Giles is living in a fairly modest apartment I think, his water heater is exposed.

Kristin: [laughing] Yeah, okay.

Jenny: But regardless... regardless, she's got a Playstation, she's got, uh—

Kristin: Play! Station!

Jenny: Just a clean, not disgusting place to live. She also has a weird, i don't know if that's a chaise lounge or like what that is, that couch that's sort of like, looks like a... ocean wave, and it's mauve, and she runs her hand down it and I feel like that is not— I could not suspend my disbelief around Faith being enthusiastic about that particular piece of furniture.

Kristin: I can. I believe it actually. Because you're linking your attachment to Faith's queer identity to your own and where you would not maybe appreciate—

Jenny: The fuck? How dare you.

Kristin:— [laughs] a chaise lounge, but this is 1999.

Jenny: That's true, things were less gay then.

Kristin: Yeah and I feel like Faith has lived in shitty motel and who knows where she's lived before that, so she's like "this is the best of the best"—

Jenny: Yeah, ok.

Kristin:— "nothing has felt to my fingers like this chaise since I ran my hands through Buffy's hair". [laughter]

Jenny and Kristin: So...

Kristin: A few things that are important happen in this scene. I think one of your favorite exchanges happens at the top of this scene, Jenny.

Jenny: Oh my God I love it so much. When they're talking about how she's finally out of the motel and the mayor is like, "yeah there are immoral liaisons going on at the hotel" and Faith's like "yeah, plus all the screwing!" Great, great. What do you think she thinks immoral liaisons are?

Kristin: She probably just thinks it means something bad.

Jenny: Mmm, oh yeah like as a kid with context clues you're like, "mmm yeah that thing sounds bad."

Kristin: That's very sweet Jenny that you—Jenny's experience with that, that it's just as a kid you have that experience, but for a lot of us, including myself, that is still a very active part of my way that I hear other people. Jenny knows a lot of words. You know a lot of words. You can admit it. But some of us don't, I still have experiences like that where people say something and I just infer from the context clues.

Jenny: You're like "mmm yes, quite" and you stroke your goatee and pull on your pipe.

Kristin: But speaking of screwing another important exchange, I think, happens here because Faith has been set up as a character who really believes that her body is something that she should use as a means to exchange for other things that she needs, right? That she doesn't have an attachment to sex and she notices that all the boys are into her. [Sings] *And all the girls*. And she uses a tactic of hers and she goes for it in this scene with the mayor where she's like "I've always wanted a sugar daddy" and the mayor kind of comes back and says—

Jenny: "I'm a family man." And what do you think the mayor's family looks like?

Kristin: I don't think the mayor has a family.

Jenny: He just identifies as a family man—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: —with no family. Aw, that's so sad. [laughter] But now Faith is becoming his daughter, oh his chosen family. Oh no!

Kristin: Oh my goodness, he's still evil, but...

Jenny: Even evi, evil people can have vulnerability, and... great, that's lovely.

Kristin: And right, there's a lot going on here. We talked with Andrew Ti about, how do we know which side is evil, right? We're seeing it from a skewed—

Jenny: It's like how Gryffindor is the only clearly great house—

Kristin: Wow. Everyone just turned off their podcasts.

Jenny:— in the Harry Potter novels because you're seeing everything through Harry's eyes and it's like people are in Ravenclaw are really smart but some of them are loopy and some of them are snobs and people in Hufflepuff are good allies but they're real dumb and they like to snack and everyone in Slytherin is just evil. Like you wouldn't have a school that was like and then um, evil.

Kristin: Right, for the record, Jenny is a Ravenclaw and I am a Hufflepuff and I do love to snack. [laughter] And as mentioned just moments ago, I do sometimes not understand words [laughter] But I get your point, whose perspective are we coming to this from.

Jenny: Right, of course.

Kristin: Anyway, then the mayor says "we're gonna kill your little friend" So...

Jenny: Yeah, not great

Kristin: Not a lot to argue about there.

Jenny: But he also is respectful and is like, "I'm not gonna ask you to do it, not this early in the relationship." Which is nice.

Kristin: The mayor has his ducks in a row. You gotta give that to the mayor.

Jenny: Aw, evil dad!

Kristin: Now we're getting here. Now we're starting to dig right in to—

Jenny: [Rev-up noise] Run-dun-dun-dun-dun-dun-dun

Kristin: —the elements that will lead us to victory.

Jenny: Victory.

Kristin: [laughing] Yes, I consider it victory. Oz and Willow have an exchange.

Jenny: Oh yeah there's this wham, bam, pow, all in a row.

Kristin: There's just a series of events that lead Willow to feeling like she is "old reliable," that's the third.

Jenny: Right.

Kristin: So Oz and Willow have an exchange, she can't go to the show, she has to do homework, she's like, "why did you assume I couldn't go," but then of course that's exactly what happened, and then Percy is like, "I don't have time at lunch I gotta hang out."

Jenny: Mmm yes and he's like, "do my homework for me, that's what Snyder said."

Kristin: Yes exactly and Willow's like, "man is this just who I am?" And then unbeknownst to Buffy and Xander this has been brewing so when Buffy says, "see I told you Willow would know about Biology or whatever because she's old reliable," it's the straw on the vampire camel's back.

Jenny: Yes, yes, mmm vampire camel. They could fit so much blood in their dromedary hump.

Kristin: Oh my God is that what it's called, you freak.

Jenny: Well camels with one hump are dromedary and the ones with two humps it starts with a "b" but I can't remember, because it's the same shape as the letter! their backs!

Kristin: Dromedary for "D"?

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: And Bromedary for "B"?

Jenny: Not bromedary.

Kristin: Baloo-baloodadary.

Jenny: I wanted to say it was bromelain or something but that's a supplement I take to pat down my cat allergies [laughter] Anyway...

Kristin: Wow, so "old reliable" And this is a brilliant exchange just in general the "old reliable," "old faithful," "old yeller"—

Jenny: Yeah, great

Kristin:— 'Who's on first' situation here. But it leads Willow to be like, "you know what guys I'm gonna eat my damn banana and it's not even lunch time!"

Jenny: [As Willow] "I might change my look. You don't know what I'll do!"

Kristin: And so this is what the episode hinges on, because if anything else had happened in that day, if a butterfly had flapped its wings—

Jenny: Yes, yes.

Kristin:— who knows what would have happened, but in this reality this set of events has lead Willow to run into Anya in the hallway, who is looking for Willow, she's heard about her pencil levitation or maybe just saw it, because Willow was just doing it in the courtyard.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah and notably carrying a math book that's facing the camera so that we can be reminded that she's flunking math, which I don't buy.

Kristin: Uh, yeah, you just reminded me that we talked about D'Hoffryn and we didn't talk about Anya's monologue at the top.

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: Which like, let's everybody hang tight, we're gonna get to this fucking spell but can we just hear a little bit of Anya's monologue.

[Clip of episode plays]

Anya: For a thousand years I wielded the powers of the wish. I brought ruin to the heads of unfaithful men. I brought forth destruction and chaos for the pleasure of the lower beings, I was feared and worshiped across the mortal globe, and now I'm stuck at Sunnydale High, mortal, a child, and I'm flunking math.

Kristin: Ok so, just so brilliant. Emma Caulfield, fuck man, she's just so good.

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: She's so good and this really sets it up. She's bad at math, mathematics textbook in her hands, but also she needs to do this spell and because of the Willow trilogy of events, Willow's like, "Is it dangerous? I'll fucking do it!" She's a little disappointed when Anya lies and says that it's not dangerous, but off they go together.

Jenny: Yes, yes! So Anya has prepared this spell, she's been getting ready for some time. She went down to Color Me Mine and got a plate and hand painted a convincing likeness of her missing necklace onto the plate and then glazed it and waited while it was fired in the pottery, firing, glaze kiln.

Kristin: Right, her with a bunch of other eight year olds.

Jenny: Oh, really? I was picturing like wine moms.

Kristin: That's what happens in the evenings.

Jenny: Ok, maybe it's a mix of wine moms and their eight year olds. [laughter]

Kristin: So right, the deal with the spell is when the purple dust touches the thing it's gonna be pulled, it's gonna create a temporal fold.

Jenny: Uh, love a temporal fold.

Kristin: Right, who doesn't. And it's gonna pull the object that it touches from that reality into this reality. Pretty cool, pretty cool spell.

Jenny: Sick spell! I wanna do that.

Kristin: And you know, it doesn't work. I blame Anya, because Anya has not prepared Willow.

Jenny: Yeah no warning of the weird flashes that she's gonna see of an alternate reality she has no recollection of.

Kristin: Right, that include her—

Jenny: —in vampire form.

Kristin: If you need somebody to carefully pour purple dust on an item, you should probably warn them a little bit that they might need to brace themselves.

Jenny: So Willow sees these flashes and she gets freaked out so she... first we see an intense struggle of like, "are we gonna pour the sand or are we not gonna pour the sand?"

Kristin: Purple lights are flying.

Jenny: Also, is the purple sand from the sand art store next to Color Me Mine?

Kristin: Ahh I think the purple sand is from Uncle Bob's Magic Shop. I think that's where it's from. But, so it spills on Willow and we see Vampire Willow disappear out of—

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: —the universe which we of course last saw in The Wish. I can't imagine any of you have watched this episode without watching The Wish but just in case you have there's a whole episode about the other reality. You should go there, and see that.

Jenny: Go back and watch The Wish.

Kristin: So Willow is pissed.

Jenny: She's been hoodwinked.

Kristin: She has been hoodwinked. There's some great lines in this ending when Willow gets mad. First she says "did you try looking inside the sofa in hell?!"

Jenny: Which is up there for me with "I hope evil takes MasterCard." Lots of great lines in a short amount of this series.

Kristin: Pretty great, and then that line is not to be topped by the next line but they're both great, which is she snatches the chicken feet and says—

Jenny: Oh my God.

Kristin: "I believe these chicken feet are mine!" [laughter]

Jenny: It's like, didn't you just use them? Can you reuse chicken feet while you're doing dark arts?

Kristin: Probably. I believe you could probably reuse chicken feet, if you don't dunk 'em in a cauldron and get 'em all soggy.

Jenny: Mmm ok. It's more of a vibe.

Kristin: You know we hung out with Joanna Robinson recently and she suggested that we have a cauldron in our house, I just reminded myself of that. Do you remember her suggesting that we keep our firewood for our fireplace in a cauldron?

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, and it's interesting because I feel like Joanna Robinson has yet to be inside of our home, which is a tear in my heart, but without having any sort of idea what our decor situation is, she felt very confident that a cauldron would fit.

Kristin: Yeah, and she wasn't wrong.

Jenny: No.

Kristin: She wasn't wrong at all.

Jenny: She said it has to be an iron cauldron, it can't be like a plastic cauldron—

Kristin: I mean, I'm sorry.

Jenny: —nobody wants a plastic cauldron—

Kristin: Why would you even say that, like we would consider a plastic cauldron?

Jenny: But think about how heavy an iron cauldron would be.

Kristin: It's probably as heavy as our iron coffee table. Imagine we had a plastic cauldron, Jenny. A plastic cauldron is for one thing, it's for Halloween candy, that is the only reason for a plastic cauldron.

Jenny: [sighs] Oh my God, I was not suggesting that we—

Kristin: Insane.

Jenny: Oh my God.

Kristin: [sighs]

Jenny: Ok. So...

Kristin: So, Vampire Willow hath arrived.

[VAMPIRE WILLOW jingle plays]

Here come Willow
She's a vampire Willow
And she ain't got time for you

Here come Willow

She's a bored now Willow
Wearing leather and born anew

Licking ladies, making puppy stew

Kristin: She has woken up! She does not know where she is.

Jenny: But you know what is interesting about where she is, wherever it might be? Her fucking hand is just sitting in some sunlight that is just streaming in from the window. Uh, just letting you all know.

Kristin: Well, I guess she's just real powerful.

Jenny: Mmm yes.

Kristin: You know, maybe she just brought some of those witch powers over to her vampire powers—

Jenny: Sure.

Kristin: —and she's got some double whammy shit happening. You don't know, Jenny.

Jenny: Double whammy shit, why didn't I think of that. [laughter]

Kristin: Alyson Hannigan is a fucking genius, ok, I'm just gonna start there. We have a lot of scenes that we're gonna get into, obviously, but just to generally give it a shout-out. It's like we see Alyson Hannigan playing Vampire Willow in Vampire Willow's clothing, Willow in Willow's clothing, Willow in Vampire Willow's clothing, and Vampire Willow in Willow's clothing.

Jenny: Oh my God.

Kristin: And she nails *every single* piece of it.

Jenny: And also had a huge hand in creating the popular idiom, "like a Vampire Willow in regular Willow's clothing." [laughter]

Kristin: Yeah, I say that all the time.

Jenny: Me too!

Kristin: So she rules, and we're gonna give her credit in each piece of this, but just a general note that holy shit, this is amazing! This is amazing! Joss Whedon, great fucking writing here.

Jenny: Great job.

Kristin: Great fucking story.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Speaking of story, I think now would be a fantastic time to hear from our friend and yours, Lani Diane Rich. Lani is a patriarchy smasher by trade. She is the owner of Chipperish Media where she talks about stories and storytelling. She's a story expert, award winning podcaster, New York Times best selling novelist, and she does a Buffy video series and podcast called *Still Pretty*. So yeah, and I think Lani's in season 6 or 7 over there.

Jenny: Mhm, mhm. Seven.

Kristin: And has plans to restart back at one so, just letting you know there's some more Buffy fun for you. But Lani talked with Jenny and I about this episode but also kind of about general Buffy arch feelings.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, yeah, from the story centric perspective.

Kristin: Which was really fun and really amazing, and we're gonna play a piece of the interview here but if you want to hear the whole interview cause we did get into some of the specifics of the episode—

Jenny: With some spoilers.

Kristin: —with some spoilers. So if you want to hear all of that, we'll be putting that up for our patrons but we gave you a good chunk of the story pieces here, what we're about to share.

[Chime]

Kristin: Hello! Hello, hello, Lani, so should I say your full name, Lani Diane Rich?

Lani: Well, you can if you want to but that usually invokes a spell. [laughter]

Kristin: Yeah fine. I have to say it three times probably, into a mirror.

Lani: It's just like D'Hoffryn. If you say it out loud three times I'm gonna show up in your living room so you just want to be careful.

Kristin: Right, right right. [All laugh] So we are so excited to speak with you Lani. We wanted to speak with you of our own volition but also the internet has just been aflutter for so long, saying. "Kristin, Jenny, Lani, we know that you need to speak to each other about Buffy the Vampire Slayer."

Jenny: It's very important.

Lani: I know I feel like I'm being set up on a date cause everybody's like, "you guys would be perfect together you have to meet."

Kristin: Yes this is it, you're witnessing our very first date listeners, this is it. It's happening. But really, thank you for talking to us. There are so many different angles the three of us could come together to talk about Buffy, you know, there are just so many different pieces of expertise that you have specifically.

I emailed you to be like, "what exactly do you want me to say when I introduce you?" Because you have literally done one hundred million things. You've written books and you're a professor, you know what I mean, you have a Buffy series that you do. You've just done a lot of things that all overlap with the things we discuss over here so it's pretty awesome that you're here today.

Lani: Well thank you, I really appreciate it, and I cannot tell you guys what a huge fan I am of you and your work. It is amazing to me, first of all, that the podcast is as good as it is, but that you write a song for every episode, which just by the way I have to say as a fan, I love so much, the jingles and everything. You guys are exactly the Buffy podcast that I have always wanted.

Jenny: [squeals]

Kristin: Wow!

Lani: I'm so excited.

Jenny: Oh my God.

Lani: You guys are everything.

Kristin: That is a very high compliment coming from you.

Jenny: Thank you so much.

Lani: Well I'm a story nerd so I go deep into the narrative and how it all functions and I talk about these things from the perspective of writers and I tend to get caught in that space and you guys come in and you have such a broad sociological context for everything you talk about with Buffy but you're also really fun and you're fans. And then you write this amazing music on top of it, like I feel like you guys cast a spell too. I feel like there's been some kind of caspian bargain to get that much talent in one marriage.

Kristin: Don't blow our cover Lani, they don't need to know we're relying on magic.

Lani: Hey baby, you do what you gotta do to pull it out.

Kristin: But that is what is so exciting, I think in general, doing podcasting, or blogging, or writing, or whatever it is, taking something that already exists and pulling it apart is so fun because you take your life experience and what you've learned and apply it.

So it's like we're looking at Buffy one way and you're looking at Buffy another way and of course there's overlap. I make a joke, is it a joke? When we get to the end of the series we'll just start right back at the beginning again, that it will never end. You can think of different ways at it.

Lani: Yeah, that's what I'm doing with *Still Pretty*. I'm in season 7 with *Still Pretty* right now and when I finish season 7, I'm starting over again at the beginning, I'm going through the whole thing.

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: Oh my gosh, that's amazing! I was hopeful that was a thing, so I'm glad to hear that is the plan.

Lani: That is absolutely the plan because Buffy, I think, seriously, is one of the great literary texts of our time, and I say that without any hyperbole without any irony. I really fully believe that. I think there are things that are happening in Buffy, there are things that are being discussed in Buffy, that are so important and so important to look at from that deeper level.

A lot of times people look at literature and they think it's gotta be this classic canon, that if you're not reading Dostoevsky it's not worth your time or whatever, but I really think that Buffy and there are a lot of other television series, a lot of other modern pop culture properties that actually really do fall into that space where you can go back in and you can find new things with every watch.

You know Shakespeare in his time was regarded as this very casual, for the groundlings, kind of guy. But the work that he did was obviously so powerful, we're still talking about it 4-500 years later. And I think that Buffy honestly is on that level. I don't mind saying that. I will go on the record. I think it's on level with Shakespeare.

Jenny: Hell yeah.

Lani: I think there's lots of value there. I think it's on level with Jane Austen. I think that if you can keep going back to something over and over and over and still get value out of it, there's something there worth talking about. And the thing that's so great about Buffy is that Buffy works in this space of fantasy.

Fantasy is always about metaphor. It's always about being able to isolate certain human experiences and bring them into this metaphorical space so that you can look at them with focus. Which is one of the things you can't do in life, because everything is so complicated.

Kristin: Yes, totally.

Lani: But it simplifies things.

Kristin: We could have brought you in on any episode, this one we thought was a little extra fun. A) because as you mentioned Doppelgangland has a really incredible story, so we are really excited to hear what you have to say about the story but also because Doppelgangland played on the fact that there are many realities. It's like if Jenny and I exist over here in this reality and we're looking at Buffy, we feel like you're in another reality looking at Buffy.

Lani: Yes.

Kristin: I don't know which Willow you want to be.

Lani: I'll be evil Willow. [laughter]

Kristin: Yep, I mean, that's like top pick right? Who doesn't want to be Vampire Willow?

Lani: I'm gonna pull off that outfit someday. That's what I want to be able to do. [laughter] When she looks down and says, "hey! look at those" I'm like yeah, that's basically me. I'm good Willow in evil Willow's outfit.

Kristin: Oh my gosh amazing! Let's dig into what your thoughts are on this story. Jenny and I just did a rewatch right before we're having this conversation because we wanted it to be super fresh in our minds and like *damn* it's such a good episode!

Lani: Isn't it delightful! It is so good! It is structured like a Swiss fricking watch.

Jenny: Yes!

Lani: Which is one of the things you come to expect from Joss Whedon. This of course was written by Joss Whedon, we have Jane Espenson as executive story editor and then we have Doug Petrie as story editor and these are three, I mean there are a lot of talented people, I could go on about the writing staff for days on this show, but these are three of possibly the most talented people I've ever seen and to have them all combined on one episode is kind of astounding.

They work so, so well together. Whenever Jane Espenson and Doug Petrie work together those episodes are usually exceptional. But this one, honestly, is one of my favorites in the whole series. Absolutely nothing is wasted. Every moment feeds into everything else and we build up so beautifully. When they see Vampire Willow and they go back to the library and then of course Angel comes in [chuckles] and he's like, "I have to tell you something." It's this big dramatic moment.

Kristin: Right, right.

Lani: It's so beautifully structured and escalated and put together and to have Oz playing when Vamp Willow walks in and to see his face. And how is Oz cool no matter what? His girlfriend has been vamped as far as he can tell and he's so chill. And then he's telling Angel what to do.

Kristin: Yeah, Oz is so good in a crisis.

Lani: He's so tough. Like he could fit in Angel's pocket, I believe Xander said that about him once. But he's like "go get Buffy now" and he's telling him what to do and I was like, "yeah Oz."

Kristin: Yeah I feel like something, and I'm sure this is what comes when you have that team you were mentioning, but something that was really compelling to me was how evil vampire Willow was not just one dimensional.

Lani: Yeah.

Kristin: I just felt like in the storyline it could have been so easy to just have her evil and wanting to kill everybody but she's so sad and it seemed like a very specifically brilliant choice for her.

Lani: Well it is, right, because one of the things you need to do with characters is make sure they have strengths, weaknesses, *and* vulnerabilities in order to make them compelling. Because without vulnerability we can't connect with each other. We connect with characters and fiction as though they are real people.

How we respond to these characters is as though they are real people, we connect with them in the same way. And it's only through seeing that vulnerability that we end up being able to make that emotional connection. So when you're able to make an emotional connection with an antagonist, we see that vulnerability. We see that with Spike and Drusilla, right?

Jenny: Yeah.

Lani: Because they loved each other. Even as bad guys they had that love for each other, that made them vulnerable and that's what makes them compelling. We have this here with Faith and the mayor. They love each other and they have that relationship and that makes them vulnerable. When Faith has that wonderful scene when she's getting her apartment from the mayor and she's bouncing around and she's so excited. That whole thing with the two of them is so compelling and you see how deeply they care for each other even while they're doing evil things.

Kristin: One of the questions I had for you is how, you know, you love Buffy obviously, that's why we're all here, and so I'm wondering how Buffy has interfaced with the work that you do, especially in a way of telling stories.

Lani: Oh, most of what I learned about storytelling, I learned from Buffy. I watch Buffy, I use it in my classes when I talk about dialogue, when I talk about structure, when I talk about episodic television. Buffy is one of the first television shows to do this sort of Russian nesting doll of structure. You've got the episode that you're in at the moment, and that episode is part of this bigger season arch and then that season arch actually landed nicely over seven seasons.

So we have sort of these nesting structures and Buffy is one of the first television shows to do that. Prior to Buffy, prior to the late 80's and early 90's, when people started taping things on VCR and you could actually go back and rewatch these episodes without waiting for some random rerun over the summer, which you might miss some of the episodes, you could actually start following a story.

So Joss Whedon was right at the forefront of this idea, telling a highly serialized story that is contained within the season itself, the season itself is a complete story and every episode contributes to that story, which is where we get our big bads for each season. It's so interesting the way that they did that.

And so much of when I started studying storytelling, I had written a novel, I wrote a novel without knowing anything, I just like, "la la la I'm gonna write a novel" and then it ended up getting published because, I don't know how that happened. But I didn't know anything about storytelling, I was like, I really want to understand it and it was right at about that time that I discovered Buffy. And Buffy lit me up. You know the Crazy Ex-Girlfriend "I feel like glitter is exploding inside of me?"

Kristin: Yeah.

Lani: This is me and Buffy.

Kristin: Right, right.

Lani: So I would go in and I would study what they would do on this really deep episodic level, like the way in which the dialogue bounces back and forth it's like a dance. And then you pull out further and you see how all of the scenes build on each other and escalate the story until we get to the end of the episode and then the episodic story is resolved but we'll still have things that are hanging out there, like the mayor and Faith, that's part of the bigger story. And we move all this stuff along together and it's like all of these gears interlocking and it's beautiful. And I'm not gonna say that every episode of Buffy is perfect. [laughter]

Jenny: We don't like Beer Bad.

Lani: Yeah, we've had a couple, we had a Go Fish, I'm just saying, stuff happens. But what is really amazing is just how incredibly strong the craft of Buffy is along with this magical metaphorical we're talking about all these human experiences, that Buffy can be so funny sometimes and it can also make you weep. I mean I still, *Becoming*, I cannot with *Becoming*. If I watch *Becoming*, I'm in the fetal position weeping for the rest of the day. That's just how it works. I gotta have a whole day to watch that episode.

Kristin: I feel you on that.

Lani: No seriously. It's devastating. It's because we always work within this very deep metaphorical space, we always work within these real, difficult emotional spaces and Joss Whedon one of the things I love about him is he always finds our way to consequence. Whatever anybody does, unless it's Xander and that's a whole other discussion, but whatever anybody does, if they do something bad there's a consequence for it and you see that consequence through.

You know, fiction allows us to process the things in our own lives that are too complex, too hard, too hurtful for us to really look at directly. You go to fiction and that's where you can address those things through somebody else's experience. And Joss Whedon knows how to turn that knife so well. You know?

Kristin: This is brilliant because this is what you bring to the table that Jenny and I don't. We don't have the knowledge to crack it open in this way. Jenny just kept looking at me while you were talking and nodding like, "yeah!" Um Lani thank you so much for talking to us and this is certainly not even close to the last time that we're gonna all talk together about Buffy, I feel like.

Lani: I hope not, yeah.

Kristin: I mean listen it's our first date, I don't want to put too much pressure on you. You sit with it.

Jenny: Yeah play it cool Kristin, jeez!

Kristin: I gotta calm down.

Lani: No I'm totally into it, let's move in together, I'm there. [laughter]

Kristin: Great, amazing.

Jenny: Oh my God, we'll finally have someone else's Buffy stuff to intermingle with our Buffy stuff, in the guest room?

Kristin: Together I think, we could probably furnish a house at this point with our Buffy stuff.

Lani: I imagine we could. Thank you so much for having me on the show. I'm such a huge fan of both of you. I think you're both incredible. I love the podcast. Everything you do I'm gonna follow you forever because I just think you're amazing.

Kristin: Ah back at you, back at you. And I know that so many of our listeners know where to find you but specifically can you tell them where they can find *Still Pretty*? Because I know they're gonna want to devour that if they haven't already.

Lani: Yeah Still Pretty is a YouTube show that I do. I also have it available in podcast. If you go to YouTube and search under *Chipperish* which is like chipper gibberish, there's a long story about that but that's just basically who I am. You can find it there, you can search under *Still Pretty*. If you go to chipperish.com you can find all of the stuff that I do including all of my story narrative work, I have a podcast called *How Story Works* that is all about narrative theory so if you would like to know all of the things that I have learned from Buffy, it's all in there. You can find me there.

Kristin: Amazing and we'll put all of that in the show notes so you all can find it.

Lani: Well thank you.

Kristin: Lani, thank you again so much.

Lani: Thank you so much, it's been so much fun talking to you guys, and I can't wait to hear the song!

[Chime]

Jenny: What a treasure.

Kristin: Such a delight and I'm sure that we will be speaking with Lani again about many other things.

Jenny: I've been listening to Lani's *How Story Works* podcast, which I want to highly recommend to anybody who makes anything or who just is generally interested in the craft of story. It is so awesome and it's broken into very digestible 7-8 minute episodes and they each tackle a different idea and then they all kind of attach to each other kind of like—

Kristin: A story!

Jenny:— Buffy the Vampire Slayer. [laughter] Where there's an arch within an episode, then an arch within a season, then an arch within the series.

Kristin: So we go to The Bronze.

Jenny: Oh my gosh.

Kristin: And K's Choice is opening.

Jenny: Opening for Dingoes Ate My Baby. So Dingoes Ate My Baby got a strong pull in Sunnydale.

Kristin: K's Choice, Jenny.

Jenny: I have some things to say.

Kristin: I mean, K's Choice playing made me have all the feelings. 90's music in general, and I'm sure that people feel like this about whatever era that they were a teenager in.

Jenny: Sure.

Kristin: At least I think that a lot of people who are teenagers hold really tightly to music and so the music of that era becomes threaded in your soul. I don't know if I talked about this last time but we watched Ladybird and that did what this scene does. It pulls on things for me.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: And so I wanted to say a couple of things about K's Choice and about music.

Jenny: Please.

Kristin: The first being that when we watched this scene I had all those feelings and it reminded me of having just listened through *Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?* and I listened to it because as many of you know we recently lost Dolores O'Riordan the lead singer of The Cranberries and that was an album, that album and the white album...

Jenny: *No Need to Argue*

Kristin: *No Need to Argue*, were albums that I listened to on repeat. They just have that. They hold little cells in my being.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: We didn't talk about this in our last episode, although this had already happened, and I just feel like given the fact that this is a podcast where we dig into the 90s, and obviously for Jenny and I both the 90s is our teenage years, we are parallel to Buffy in age, I just wanted to pay some respect to Dolores and The Cranberries and just say that we are very sad by her passing. Jenny I know her music meant so much to you too.

Jenny: Yes. My first favorite band. And my first favorite singer. I probably have listened to *Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?* and *No Need to Argue* more than any most other records I've ever listened to. I couldn't begin to count the number of times I've listened to them. And they each are very unique.

Especially the first album has this very ethereal quality to it that just feels like it's own little micro-universe. I love those songs, I love those records, I love Dolores. By Dolores, thank you.

Kristin: Yes, yes. And you know the thing that stirred that up was the way that K's Choice makes me feel. You know that we pan into The Bronze and I was like oh man I have all the feelings. I also apparently have a crush on the lead singer of K's Choice?

Jenny: Wow, ok, I'm gonna just skate right past that [laughter] and tell you what my history is with K's Choice. My introduction to K's Choice—

Kristin: Yes, please.

Jenny: —I went to the very first run of the Lilith Fair tour.

Kristin: [sighs] You should have a badge for that.

Jenny: Thank you, as a high schooler.

Kristin: I believe I did too, do you know what year it was?

Jenny: I don't know what year it was, it was just whatever the first year was.

Kristin: Ok we'll have to look it up, find out.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, see who has more cred.

Kristin: Who has more 90s cred.

Jenny: I went to this festival and immediately upon entering the festival grounds there were all these people handing out free stuff and I was handed two things: one was a cassette, a sampler cassette tape with songs on it. Cassettes are the thing that came before CDs, which are the thing that came before MP3s.

Kristin: Uh-huh

Jenny: And vinyl is actually interesting because it's now and it's also way back.

Kristin: Yes it's the bookends.

Jenny: Right, right. So they were handing out these free cassettes with a bunch of songs on them. Artists that would be of interest for people going to Lilith Fair, I guess. And one of the first songs was *Not an Addict* by K's Choice.

Kristin: Hell yeah.

Jenny: Which I listened to many times and enjoyed heartily. And the second thing that I received in the handout area of the Lilith Fair, I took home and used and was like wow this is amazing, I've never heard of anything like this and this is going to be huge and what it was, was a Biore pore cleansing nose strip.

Kristin: [laughter] You fucking called it Jenny!

Jenny: Yes I am a genius! I can yes and no products all the day long and tell you whether or not your invention will be a success.

Kristin: The start of a revolution the Biore nose strip and we were there for the dawn of it.

Jenny: Truly.

Kristin: Ok so K's Choice is playing at The Bronze, just probably after coming off of Lilith Fair.

Jenny: Sure.

Kristin: And Vampire Willow is here at The Bronze.

Jenny: Yeah and she's like "this isn't right."

Kristin: Yeah she's like, "things feel funny," she can't figure out why. She does a stroll down Sunnydale's main strip and is like, "hmm."

Jenny: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Kristin: But she still hasn't put it together. She doesn't completely put it together until she sees Xander. But before that we get this incredible interaction with Percy who's like "why do you look like that?"

Jenny: Yeah and, "you're supposed to be doing my homework for the rest of the year," like, "I own you." Immediately we discover that actually who's getting owned is Percy by Vampire Willow

Kristin: Yeah!

Jenny: She throws him across The Bronze then she picks him up by the neck. Then Xander intervenes because he thinks the reverse kind of violence is happening, and then Percy runs away like a scared little baby.

Kristin: Yes, so what I love is we had Vampire Willow in *The Wish* and listen, I love her, but she wasn't this version of Vampire Willow. This version of Vampire Willow is so pouty and sad.

Jenny: So sad!

Kristin: And I just adore the way that it's brought to the delivery of the lines and stuff where she's like, "I'm having a terrible night." [laughter] She's just so pouty and I love it. So Xander realizes, "whoa Willow, what are you, you're gonna dress differently to an extreme, but I'll support it." Everybody's kind of afraid, they don't want to make Willow more upset or feel worse than she felt earlier. And then Buffy walks in and is all, "aren't you gonna introduce me to your, whoa!" [laughter] Classic. And it's all kind of funny until...

Jenny: And Buffy's like, "it's a leather thing," and it's like Buffy, we've seen you adjacent to leather before and you didn't seem to have an issue when Faith was wearing it!

Kristin: Yeah! That's true and you know if Willow was going to be going hard in one direction it probably would be in the leather direction because she's—

Jenny: Oh, jealous,

Kristin: —really threatened by Faith. So, anyhow, then Willow whips around in vamp face.

Jenny: Oh no.

Kristin: Right, this is sad. It's played really well 'cause it's like we know, the viewer knows that Willow isn't dead so they can't take it too far but they let us know of course that this is devastating for all of them, for Buffy, for Xander, for soon to be Giles, and eventually of course Detective Angel [laughter] will be on the case and figure it out himself.

Jenny: Yes, yes.

[DETECTIVE ANGEL jingle plays]
Detective Angel!

Kristin: Oh boy, sorry, just any chance we have.

Jenny: He's on the case.

Kristin: Any chance to have to use that new tiny little mini jingle we will, because we love it. So everybody thinks Willow is dead but before we go into the scene in the library where they're all mourning this, we go to the alley where—

Jenny: Ah yes.

Kristin: —this vampire like straight up has a clipboard, he's like "Uh, Willow Rosenberg?" [laughter] "Is that your name? Yes, ok."

Jenny: "You sign here for imminent death please?"

Kristin: Vampire Willow has this great— I've seen this gif a lot, the snapping of the fingers, the who do you work for, one snap is the mayor two snaps is you, I work for you boss.

Jenny: Yep, yep.

Kristin: That's fun and then we go to the library where everyone is "oh my God, Willow is dead."

Jenny: It's so great.

Kristin: It really is because you can see that they're sad but the way that it's written and shot, it's so funny.

Jenny: Because we have—

Kristin: Because we know.

Jenny: Yeah exactly. Giles being like “she was the best of us,” and Xander being like “way better than me,” and Giles being like “much, much better.” [laughter] It’s so great.

Kristin: That scene is full of a lot of really funny moments, that moment, then of course Willow walks in.

Jenny: Mhm.

Kristin: And is like—

Kristin and Jenny: “Who died?” [laughter]

Kristin: And Xander comes at her with the crucifix in what is just a really good physical comedy moment for Xander. Er for Xander? [correcting herself] For Nicholas Brendon.

Jenny: Ah shake this thing and turn it back on!

Kristin: Right, really funny. And then there’s this incredible hug situation.

Jenny: Oh my God.

Kristin: First Buffy and Xander hug Willow, then they pull back and Willow’s like “whewf!”

Jenny: “Giles, what’s up with these freaks?”

Kristin: And then he just attacks Willow in a huge bear hug and it is so special. And then all of that you’re still laughing and fucking everyone looks to Giles like “how is this possible?” [laughter] And Giles is like—

Jenny: “Mm uh something terribly strange is happening, hmm.” [laughter] Great.

Kristin: It’s so good. It’s a wonderfully executed scene as is pretty much every scene in this episode.

Jenny: Meanwhile.

Kristin: Meanwhile!

Jenny: Anya wants a beer.

Kristin: Anya just can't get a beer.

Jenny: I love, this is I think the only time we've ever seen anyone working on the service end at The Bronze.

Kristin: Oh yeah, true, that happens very rarely. And this guy is not having it.

Jenny: No "I.D."

Kristin: Which I don't really buy. I feel like The Bronze's whole vibe is maybe lenient.

Jenny: Like, "this is where teens come to drink."

Kristin: When I was in college, this is great, I'm sure this place is gone, I hope it's gone, whoops! I won't name it just in case it's still there, God, imagine the bar is shut down because of Buffering the Vampire Slayer's admission. So when I was in college I went to SUNY Binghamton and there was this bar where, first of all I was 17 when I went to college, I wasn't even 18. So there were some places where I couldn't go that did card because I wasn't even at the 18 mark. But this particular bar, your I.D. was your Binghamton I.D.

Jenny: Oh, wow.

Kristin: You just showed them your Binghamton fucking I.D.

Jenny: That's fucked.

Kristin: And you went in and you drank whatever you wanted. Beer, I guess.

Jenny: That... is...

Kristin: And you want to know what's even crazier? Is that I, at the time, I mentioned that I was big into camcorders when I was a teen and even into my college years. I loved making movies. I just loved filming things. So I had that camcorder or a different camcorder, who knows, when I was in college. I would film all sorts of things.

Jenny: Oh my God.

Kristin: And my roommate at the time, I had two roommates, and one of them did a great impression of the host of 20/20, which at the time was Hugh Downs and Barbara Walters.

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: And so we would do segments where she would be like “and this is Hugh Downs on 20/20,” and then we would do a report. So we decided one night that it would be hilarious to do a report on 20/20 on underage drinking at this bar. These fuckers let us come in with a video camera.

Jenny: My God.

Kristin: Somewhere in the universe, who knows where it is, there’s a video of us sitting at the table, drinking beer as 17, 18 year olds and being like, “we’re at this bar that doesn’t I.D. us.” Incredible.

Jenny: Oh my God.

Kristin: Anyways, sorry I got off on a tangent, but Anya can’t get beer.

Jenny: Anya can’t get beer, Devon wants a roadie, then we see Angel and Oz talking to each other. I was just trying to remember if we’ve ever seen Oz and Angel talking to each other without any one else around before.

Kristin: Oh good question.

Jenny: Because they both have a sort of similar, quantitatively their syllabic output is low, but for different reasons.

Kristin: Yes, right.

Jenny: Like Oz is cool and weird and Angel is—

Kristin: Dramatic.

Jenny: —emotionally corrupted?

Kristin: Wow! Harsh, Jenny.

Jenny: He’s all fucked up, like he’s overthinking it all the time and holds back a lot and doesn’t want to be vulnerable and whatever. Meanwhile Oz has no issue being vulnerable but the way he communicates by default is just very, very minimalistic.

Kristin: Yes. And so this scene, you're right, it's pretty hilarious cause they're both like [staccato] "buh buh, bubuh bubuh bubuh."

Jenny: "Looking for Buffy?" "As ever." "Seen her?" "Not yet." "Said she's show."
[laughter] And then suddenly vampires flood The Bronze, and they're like, "oh shit."

Kristin: Yes, vamp tosses a person right through a table.

Jenny: Yep, classic.

Kristin: Classic Bronze. The Bronze is fucked up after this.

Jenny: Just in general, carpenters and contractors in general in Sunnydale must be making a, no pun intended, killing.

Kristin: Yeah, they're in high demand. So Oz sees Willow and says "get Buffy" and then Angel stealthily climbs up the wall?!

Jenny: What the fuck! [as Angel] They said, "Nobody leave, nobody gets hurt so I'll just scale this rope like I'm in gym class in the 70s."

Kristin: It's like, I mean, Angel's a big guy.

Jenny: Onto the stage where it's like well lit. [laughter] Sort of like designed to be the central focal point of the room.

Kristin: Yet another brilliant moment with...

[DETECTIVE ANGEL jingle plays]
Detective Angel!

Jenny: Yep, yep, yep. [laughter]

Kristin: Vampire Willow hath arrived.

Jenny: Maybe the best part of this scene is Devon being like, "check out your girlfriend!" He looks so stoked.

Kristin: I think the best part of the scene is Sandy and Willow's...

Jenny: Oh yeah, the old neck lick.

Kristin: Yeah which comes in second I think for sexual tension in this episode.

Jenny: Ok.

Kristin: I just love how she goes over to her and she's like, "hello there" you know? "What a lovely young lady you are."

Jenny: Yeah yeah yeah. Back at the library, Angel busts in moments after having just scaled the gym class rope. He vaults into the library looking very distraught.

Kristin: This is another, it's not *Who's on First*, but it's that same kind of comedic delivery of like, "Willow's dead, hey Willow." Then like the beat after being like, "wait!"

Jenny: And Giles' eyebrows as he's watching Angel put it together like they just all put it together.

Kristin: So I think two important things happen in this scene, well a couple. One is Willow, they're all off to The Bronze, they're gonna go deal with the situation so the first thing is Willow saying, "wait, what are you gonna do with me?"

Jenny: Mhm.

Kristin: And that's the introduction of the, "this is weird right? Like this is me, it's not somebody that looks like me, it just is me."

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Willow doesn't want Vampire Willow to die or at least feels very conflicted about it at this point. And then, of course, the second most important thing, well the most important thing but the second thing, is they all leave and who's there but Vampire Willow. Alone at last!

Jenny: Ah yes! Yes yes yes

[Clip from the episode plays]

Vampire Willow: Well look at me, I'm all fuzzy.

Willow: What do I want with you... I...

Vampire Willow: Your little school friend Anya said that you're the one that brought me here. She said that you could get me back to my

world.

Willow: Oh. Oh! Oops.

Vampire Willow: But I don't know, I kinda like the idea of the two of us.

Kristin: I don't mean to startle anyone but I wrote an erotic novel, Jenny.

Jenny: Oh, what's yours? I might have also written an erotic novel.

Kristin: What!?

Jenny: Not to... obviously I would never... I know what you do is an art form and I'm sure mine is just... derivative.

Kristin: There's room for all the erotic novels Jenny.

Jenny: Oh your erotic novels are like quotes though, right?

Kristin: Yeah, that's why I thought it was funny that you were saying "I don't want to encroach on your artistic..."

Jenny: Right right right, mine is taking—

Kristin: You wrote your own?

Jenny: Yes mine is original material.

Kristin: Incredible, incredible! So I'll start with mine since it's source material, then you can read yours.

Jenny: Ok.

Kristin: My erotic novel is: "I kinda like the idea of two of us, we could be a team. If you came around to my way of thinking. What do you say? Want to be bad?"
[laughter]

Jenny: That is really good, and also something Faith could have said to Buffy, recently.

Kristin: Oh yeah, for sure. I mean, it's the leather. It brings out the erotic novel in all of us.

Jenny: Totally.

Kristin: So what's yours, Jenny?

Jenny: So, my erotic novel is: "Willow licking Willow. Willow throwing Willow. Willow tranq darting Willow."

Kristin: Wow. Dark.

Jenny: It's just a list of Willow doing stuff to Willow, in different directions.

Kristin: I would say that that's closer to a poem.

Jenny: Yeah, almost a haiku.

Kristin: Maybe we can work on it.

Jenny: Let's sand down those syllables.

Kristin: [Laughs] Speaking of Willow darting Willow, that is what happens here. It's a great fucking moment for Vamp Willow when she just looks at her and she's like, "bitch."

Jenny: Yes, great great.

Kristin: Very reminiscent of Heathers, you know?

Jenny: Yeah yeah yeah yeah.

Kristin: "Corn nuts."

Jenny: Yes, yes! And then we assume fuzzy Willow runs after everyone and is like, "wait don't go to The Bronze yet first come back and drag Vampire Willow into the library cage!" You know, wouldn't you stop keeping very valuable texts—

Kristin: In the cage?

Jenny: —in the locker where you occasionally have to store a very violent werewolf or an unconscious vampire.

Kristin: It doesn't seem like anyone's ever had any interest in destroying the books.

Jenny: Right, but wouldn't you just assume that if something is evil it will probably want to destroy your one of a kind, invaluable texts.

Kristin: Maybe I find having owned a kitten that I often learn things after they happen.

Jenny: Oh they're just waiting for tragedy to strike, before they make a rule.

Kristin: Yeah, they just don't know it yet. So this is a conversation, now everyone's back and Vamp Willow is in the cage.

Jenny: Oh yeah.

Kristin: And regular Willow is sort of reflecting here, "I'm so evil" she says, "and skanky and I think I'm kinda gay."

Jenny: Mhm.

Kristin: And Angel and Buffy share this moment, where Willow, who says it? Buffy says, "well Willow, disregard that, that's not you, that's totally not you at all." It's how she looks at Angel, right? That's really how Buffy views Angel, right? It's two different things, the two don't overlap.

Jenny: Ohh right.

Kristin: I think for Buffy it's a coping mechanism of sorts.

Jenny: Yes, totally.

Kristin: So then Angel has this moment where he says, "well actually..." and he never finishes his sentiment but you get the idea that he's suggesting that Willow is—

Jenny: That Willow is skanky.

Kristin: He's suggesting that these qualities that we're seeing in alternate reality versions of people are not just sourced from nothing. They might be perhaps sourced from something but he sort of realizes halfway through his sentence that—

Jenny: Best to just keep that.

Kristin: —it's comforting to Willow to hold onto this last thread of this, "I could never be these things."

Jenny: Right right.

Kristin: Or whatever, however you want to interpret that. So then we go back to The Bronze.

Jenny: Is there anything better than regular Willow walking around in Vampire Willow's dominatrix outfit?

Kristin: Nothing. There is nothing better!

Jenny: The way they introduce it with, "they must really be afraid of you" and Willow's like walking like she's wearing a human suit for the first time, who wouldn't be!

Kristin: So good! "Oh gosh, look at those!" she says. She's so incredible Alyson Hannigan. I just can't. I just can not. The ability to walk around in that outfit as Vamp Willow and then as Willow in Vamp Willow's outfit is just unbelievable. And you say is there anything better, there isn't but Vampire Willow in that fuzzy fucking sweater—

Jenny: That's also great.

Kristin: —is also just great.

Jenny: I get the same feeling watching this episode that I get from watching *Orphan Black*.

Kristin: Yes!

Jenny: Where I forget that Tatiana Maslany is one person.

Kristin: Yes! Yes!

Jenny: You know, because she so clearly creates individual characters—

Kristin: She's incredible.

Jenny:— that I'm just like yeah wait who plays Alison again? No wait, no, no dummy they're all the same person.

Kristin: Right I sometimes forget and I'm waiting for a cast photo of all of them and I'm like oh no it's literally all her.

Jenny: So, when she reenters The Bronze I just want to highlight that it's silent and I think it's weird that the vampires are listening to Rasputina or Type O Negative or something.

Kristin: Fair.

Jenny: I question that choice.

Kristin: "I killed her."

Jenny: Also did K's Choice already load out or are they in peril also?

Kristin: Ooh great question! We should hit up K's Choice and ask them, since they are K's Choice in both universes. So Willow delivers her first line, or one of her first lines. She's explaining that she killed the other girl

[Clip from the episode plays]

Willow: I killed her... and sucked her blood... as we vampires do.

Jenny: Oh my God

Kristin: And Anya is horrified like, "what are you talking about you fool?!"

Jenny: Like, "how are we gonna get back?"

Kristin: "I told you that was your only way back, why would you do something like that?" And then this is where having a podcast just isn't enough for this. I need to be able to show this clip of fucking Willow waving at Oz.

Jenny: Giving a quick wave to Oz.

Kristin: It is miraculous.

Jenny: Priceless.

Kristin: So fucking great! It is ahh so good!

Jenny: And then we get a quick shot of Devon hiding behind the drums, which is hilarious.

Kristin: I missed that.

Jenny: Willow goes on to roast herself “I killed her, she was weak and letting people walk all over her and getting cranky at her friends for no reason, so she had to die!”

Kristin: I feel like Oz and her have this moment where they both recognize that she’s working though some of her shit [laughter] in this moment. So now we’re back to the library where the reverse has happened.

Jenny: Cordelia’s on her way to maybe—

Kristin: A gala.

Jenny: A gala, I was gonna say an Academy Awards viewing party at the country club.

Kristin: Oooh.

Jenny: Where all the wives dress up and are served dinner and watch the Academy Awards.

Kristin: All the wives? And daughters? Or just Cordelia’s going to hang out with all the wives?

Jenny: I meant, because of the nature of her outfit I feel that she is a grown woman in this.

Kristin: That’s an interesting point to bring up, Jenny, because we’re starting to walk into territory, I mean we kind of flirted with it, no pun intended—

Jenny: That nobody wants to see.

Kristin: But last episode we sort of had this scene between Wesley and Cordelia and we were like [uncomfortable noise]. But Wesley thought she was a teacher so we made a little bit of allowances for this. It’s just interesting to hear you say she really looks like a grown woman.

Jenny: And she’s clearly trying to, right?

Kristin: She's clearly trying to and it's like ahh, we're skipping ahead a bit, but we can since we're here. The scene that happens in the bathroom after what we're about to discuss is, [grossed out noise] you know?

Jenny: Not great

Kristin: It's not great. I mean it's not Cordelia. It's not Cordelia putting on a dress and trying to look adult, it's not. It's Wesley, knowing now. Wesley knows now.

Jenny: That she is a student.

Kristin: And he is still not really keeping it together and so just put a pin in it, we see this, what have you. Let's go back.

Jenny: Let's talk about the enjoyable part of Cordelia.

Kristin: First of all before Cordelia even walks in, Vampire Willow wakes up and pulls her sweater away from her body [laughter] and is like, "ugh this is a nightmare." And her voice! Alyson Hannigan's differentiation between their vocal registers is really something to be noted.

Jenny: Totally.

Kristin: So then Cordelia walks in, in her Academy Award party viewing dress and Vampire Willow and Willow, now we're seeing what Angel means, right? There is a shared thread between them because the exact delivery of Willow in Vampire Willow's suit or outfit, being like, "that is what vampire's do" is exactly what Vampire Willow does in the Willow outfit.

Jenny: Oh yeah.

Kristin: Where she's like, "let me out, I'm so helpless." [laughter] And my favorite line that she says in the outfit is, "I like books 'cause I'm shy." [laughter] Just amazing! It's amazing! It's amazing! It's amazing!

Jenny: Really good.

Kristin: So now Cordelia is about to let Willow out, because of course she thinks it's Willow.

Jenny: But then she realizes she has a captive audience and she has some things that she's really been needing to get off her chest about the fine art of boyfriend stealing.

Kristin: Yes and this is great. I particularly enjoy— we had a lot of back and forth about Cordelia and Xander and why were they together. And like, what was it? Cause it just didn't make sense and it didn't seem to make sense to them. And Cordelia has this line, "we were always being put in life or death situations and that's sexy!" And I was like, "I see you Cordelia, that is sexy." So I just wanted to shout that out.

Jenny: Mmm, something that I think is worth noting here to is that, and we'll see this moving forward through the series at different times, sometimes two characters need to have a conversation or admit something or whatever and they can't do it in the conventional sense because it doesn't fit with the characters or, in this case it's also just way more fun to watch Cordelia talk Vampire Willow's face off, but also I feel like this is going to get us over a bump, an existing tension between Willow and Cordelia, without actual Willow and Cordelia having to sit down and be like, "hey that really hurt me." And Willow being like, "I'm really sorry."

Kristin: Totally, good point. So then Vampire Willow says, "how 'bout dinner?"

Jenny: Wait but first she says, "I'll never steal your boyfriend again."

Kristin: Which pisses Cordelia off, [laughter] "As if you could."

Jenny: As if.

Kristin: As if. Originating the "as if," no, I guess, when did Clueless come out? Clueless came out in '95. So she did not originate "as if".

Jenny: But she's nailing it.

Kristin: She's nailing the "as if" personality.

Jenny: The vibe.

Kristin: So Cordelia is like, "I'll let you out, we've had our talk and I think you should be let out now." And also doesn't she say "do I have something on my neck?"

Jenny: Yes, yes.

Kristin: Ah Vampire Willow's like, "not yet."

Jenny: Yeah yeah yeah.

Kristin: Sexual tension!

Jenny: Oh my.

Kristin: Then of course it's Vampire Willow and she's chasing after Cordelia and I just really need to give Cordelia a shout out for these desk moves that she has.

Jenny: Oh yeah she's so good!

Kristin: Putting together desks just meticulously, great job! Great job Cordy.

Jenny: Strong survival instinct.

Kristin: Wesley hears a scream and—

Jenny: Ok listen! Just a quick side thing, I can swallow ok the librarian is in the library at any hour of the night, ok three students are also, and the only people ever, in the library at any hour of the night. A guy who's not employed by the school, just this random British guy is just in the high school whenever?

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: Just saying.

Kristin: Also not even in the library, just walking the halls.

Jenny: Just walking down the halls, like a creep.

Kristin: So, Alexis Denisof's comedy is just brilliant. It's just brilliant. He's so incredible at his startle moves and his screams—

Jenny: Yeah his shrieking.

Kristin: —and his shrieking, it's just delightful.

Jenny: "And men in combat, rrrr."

Kristin: Right, exactly! So he has a lot of incredible moments in this scene where he's terrified and of course pretends like he's brave and you know whatever, but as we discussed this scene is. [grossed out noise]

Jenny: Yeah and they hug and it's like no, no, no, no, no! And I was gonna say this earlier about Giles hugging Willow.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Where taken a la carte it would be very easy to be like whoa that school librarian is hugging a student but at this point they've been fighting evil side by side for three years and Giles has a real patriarchal, in the good sense of the word, relationship to all of the Scoobies. He's like leader dad.

Kristin: Totally. They've grieved, lost together.

Jenny: They're family.

Kristin: Yes that is the difference.

Jenny: And this is not.

Kristin: This is not. Also Cordelia getting a real Cordelia moment in here where like they're like, "Willow, they got Willow." And she's like, "so, what are you uh..."

Jenny: Classic Cordelia.

Kristin: Uh Cordy.

Jenny: So back at The Bronze.

Kristin: Back at The Bronze, we got a little moment that I want to just shout which is when Willow in Vampire Willow's clothing tries to be Vampire Willow and she says, "I'm so bored" instead of "bored now" and she runs [laughter] her finger, she attempts to run her fingers through a girl's hair and it gets stuck.

Jenny: Yeah. That is hilarious and also that she's like, "ok I gotta do this to girls specifically. I've gotta center on girls."

Kristin: Yes! And then of course doubt begins to set in amongst the vampires.

Jenny: Right right.

Kristin: They had a pretty good plan and she was executing it pretty well at first, sending a vamp out at a time to get staked.

Jenny: Yeah and she makes a compelling argument, "I'm a blood sucking fiend, look at my outfit!"

Kristin: [laughs] And then to, again we're just quoting, this is Jenny and Kristin read the script.

Jenny: Fine, that's fine.

Kristin: But she says, "could a human do this?" And this is another of those moments that is just so hysterically funny and executed brilliantly, where she screams and there's a beat, and everyone's like, "yeah, a human could mhm."

Jenny: Mhm, do you know about humans?

Kristin: Then Willow punches Anya! Holy...

Jenny: Yeah!

Kristin: Ok we have to give the sexual tension award out because Willow. Willow and Anya have a thing, Cordelia and Vampire Willow have a thing, don't ever forget about what was her name? Sonya? Sonya? Sonya?

Jenny: Sandy?

Kristin: Sandy! Don't forget about Sandy! Jenny let's play the jingle and give this award out.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Jenny: I think we all know where it's going.

Kristin: I mean, could you imagine. We would get fired. We would fire ourselves if we did not give the sexual tension award in this episode to... [drumroll noise]

Jenny: Regular Willow and Vampire Willow!

Kristin: [symbol noise]

Jenny: Really good!

Kristin: Thank you. [laughs]

Jenny: They've earned it. Trophy's in the mail, ladies.

Kristin: It's the first time that we'll have to send trophies to two different realities but I think we can figure it out.

Jenny: [laughs] Great!

Kristin: So The Bronze is destroyed. Willow and Vampire Willow are now fighting each other in reverse clothing.

Jenny: Great.

Kristin: Which is so great. And regular Willow in Vampire Willow's clothing is like, "no more snuggles?" [laughter] She's about to get choked out. They push the choke out a little bit because—

Jenny: It goes on and on and on. It's like, that vampire is really strong it wouldn't take that long. Oh maybe it was... autoerotic asphyxiation.

Kristin: Oh my God or...

Jenny: I'm sorry!

Kristin: I thought we were having the same realization.

Jenny: Oh what was your realization?

Kristin: My realization was maybe Vampire Willow also can't kill herself.

Jenny: Oh my God! You know it's wild that they can even tough because some law of multidimensional physics I believe or multidimensional reality that dictates the same object cannot occupy the same space at the same time.

Kristin: Ahh interesting.

Jenny: But that's neither here nor there. Oh maybe because she's a vampire and because of metaphitics (metaphysics) it's cancelled out but maybe also she can't hurt herself. But she has punched herself a bunch.

Kristin: But I meant emotionally.

Jenny: Ohhhh boy. Whoops.

Kristin: I meant emotionally, maybe, I think that's the only space that I would give this. Cause otherwise Willow would be probably dead, but not just dead, when Buffy comes over to kill Vampire Willow, regular Willow still has enough breath to say, "Buffy no!" She can fully speak. So a little nahh there, we'll chalk it up to Vampire Willow having an emotionally difficult time killing herself just as regular Willow has an emotionally difficult time killing her vampire self. So we're winding right around the bend to the end here, which is good because we've been talking for a long time.

Jenny: There was a lot to talk about

Kristin: There was, it's a big episode. So we have captured, [corrects self] we? We've all captured Vampire Willow and the decision has been made to release Vampire Willow.

Jenny: Back into the wild, so beautiful.

Kristin: Which I stand behind.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: I know that Vampire Willow is a vampire but they disrupted her environment.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: I really stand on the side of this reasoning that they didn't have rights to interfere with that reality.

Jenny: No no no.

Kristin: So they're gonna release her back into the wild and she's very excited to go back to whence she came. She says a nice goodbye to Willow which is punctuated by Willow's eyes widening and her saying—

Jenny: "Hands, hands!"

Kristin: "Hands!" But it's really sweet the relationship that they have to each other. I really like it. I know it's, whatever, Vampire Willow's being all sexy and Willow Willow is being like, "what?" But they have a respect and an appreciation for each other I think. Which is nice.

Jenny: Yeah, they're also sort of two halves. Like Willow is too good to be a real person, right? And Vampire Willow is of course just default evil. So if you put them together in combination then they sort of average out to one regular person.

Kristin: I mean I don't know that I would describe it exactly like that, but that is kind of where we get, which is Vampire Willow is sent back—

Jenny: Unfortunately.

Kristin: —and we get this unfortunate scene where she is sent back the moment before she is dusted. But then we go to school and Willow is saying to Buffy, "between and my evil self I have double guilt coupons." She's just all over the map here. But then she has a moment with Percy where Percy of course doesn't understand anything that's happened, but knows that he has a respect and fear—

Jenny: Healthy fear.

Kristin: —of Willow now. And so he's done his work.

Jenny: He's done double his work because he wasn't sure which President Roosevelt, plus a bibliography, plus an apple, plus he promises he can do a better job if she doesn't like what he's done so far.

Kristin: And it's a good moment for Willow because she realizes some of the strengths that Vampire Willow had.

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: And bringing it back to what Angel said in the, I think she starts to realize that some of those strengths that Vampire Willow has are also—

Jenny: Inherently hers.

Kristin: —yes.

Jenny: That she just has to access them.

Kristin: Exactly.

Jenny: Aww.

Kristin: So that's special and good and you know, we played Vampire Willow's jingle but I think Willow deserves a jingle at the end of this episode.

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: She has gone on a journey.

Jenny: Double Willow jingle.

Kristin: Yes double Willow jingle for double Willows.

[WILLOW jingle plays]
Who knows the square root of 1,225?
Willow!
Who is gentle of heart and nimble with a hard drive?
Willow!
Willow, Willow, Willow.

Jenny: Well I dare say that's all the Willow that's fit to print. [laughter] Thus we make our exit from this episode into the world.

Kristin: We shall.

Jenny: I am Jenny Owen Youngs.

Kristin: You are, in this dimension.

Jenny: In this dimension I am Jenny Owen Youngs, it is indisputable. When I'm not making this podcast, I am making music and you can hear some of it over at jennyowenyounsgs.com/buffering where I have made a little playlist of some of my works. You can also give me a shout on twitter @jennyowenyounsgs.

Kristin: Yes, and in this dimension I am Kristin Russo and you can find more about me at kristinnoeline.com that's k-r-i-s-t-i-n-n-o-e-l-i-n-e. Jenny just mocked me from across the room. She shook her head back and forth—

Jenny: I was lip syncing.

Kristin: —and lip synced the spelling of my name. You can also find me @kristinnoeline on twitter and instagram and you can find more about the work that I do specifically with LGBTQ communities over at everyoneisgay.com and mykidisgay.com.

Jenny: Buffering the Vampire Slayer is on twitter, facebook, and instagram at bufferingcast and you can always email us at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com.

Kristin: You can of course support our work, and you do, you do really!

Jenny: Good gravy, you do!

Kristin: Which is how we continue to create more and more fun events.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: It's just really [sings the Kelly Clarkson song] *because of you*. I like to spin that song as a positive even though Kelly was not happy about that person in that song.

Jenny: No no no.

Kristin: Anyway, because of you and your support we really are able to do so much. If you'd like to support this podcast and our continued work you can do that on Patreon. Our Patreon page is a really fun place. We have 3 levels of giving and you get really fun things in exchange. We also have Kate Leth's rendition of, what would you title the song? *Why Can't I Do Both?* [laughter] *Why Can't I Be Both?* by Kate Leth.

Jenny: Mmm, maybe just *Both*. *Both* by Kate Leth.

Kristin: That is perfect. Yes, *Both*.

Jenny: *Both* is just one of the wonders that awaits you over on Patreon.

Kristin: Yes and that's for everyone, but if you're a patron on our Patreon page you'll also get a ton of fun things. Specific to this week you'll get that full interview between us and Lani Diane Rich which is super fun. Another way you can support us is by going on over to iTunes and rating and reviewing us. It helps people find the podcast. And of course you can help us by purchasing some of our Buffy the Vampire Slayer themed merchandise over in our store. Two new shirts this week, one that is really inspired by Kate Leth, if we're gonna be real.

Jenny: Oh yeah.

Kristin: I think the inspiration started there with that song. Willow in the streets, Vampire Willow in the sheets. And then the beautiful design done by Mallory Volk, the local girl gang, The Slayers, Buffy and Faith, it's a beautiful shirt. You can check it out over in our store. A reminder for those of you who were not able to get prom tickets here in Los Angeles, we'll be doing a meet up on March 11th over in Griffith Park. More details to come on that. For those of you in other cities who are wanting to gather with your fellow Scoobies for prom celebrations of your own, in any shape or form. They could take full prom scale planning or they could be something smaller and more intimate, you can send us those details at bufferingthevampireslayer.com/promups which is also the hashtag we'll use so you can see all of your beautiful, perfect faces as you gather with each other in other cities.

Jenny: Please.

Kristin: Alright.

Jenny: And until next time.

Kristin and Jenny: Awoooo-mwah ha ha ha ha.

Kristin: That's what we just decided to end with cause of Vampire Willow.

[Jenny performing "Dopplegangland" from the album "Songs from Season Three" by Buffering the Vampire Slayer]

Well, you'll never believe it but this wild thing happened:
Vampire Willow showed up from a different dimension
When we first saw the double, she avoided detection
Whoa-oh-oh-oh

See I accidentally hurt her feelings with Xander
Had this whole exchange involving Old Yeller
Then we saw her at the Bronze in full-body leather
but we didn't know that we had the wrong Willow
2-for-1 Willows this week, buy one get one free
2-for-1 Willows this week, it's a doppelgänger hootenanny

Things got more confusing when she showed us her vamp face
Sent us crying to our library safe space and we
Broke it to Giles that our friend was a memory
Whoa-oh-oh-oh

But when the Willow we know came in, our brains couldn't hold it
Turns out that Anya did some temporal folding
And she went necklace-fishing but she reeled in a hellion
Who seems kind of gay in that lady-lickin way
2-for-1 Willows this week, buy one get one free
2-for-1 Willows this week, it's a doppelgänger hootenanny

Anya can't can't even get a beer because she's underage
But never never never never never fear cause Detective Angel is on the
case

2-for-1 Willows this week, buy one get one free
2-for-1 Willows this week, it's a doppelgänger hootenanny
2-for-1 Willows this week, buy one get one free
2-for-1 Willows this week, it's a doppelgänger hootenanny