

Buffering the Vampire Slayer  
Episode 4.06: Wild at Heart

**Kristin:** Hey there. Kristin here to tell you a few things before we jump into today's heart-wrenching episode. First of all, let's talk about the episode itself, which will bring back special guest-host Joanna Robinson. So, get excited for that. Joanna and I equipped ourselves with tequila to ensure that we had the lubrication that we needed to move through this heartache wormhole together.

And if Willow crying wasn't enough to completely undo you, don't worry. We've worked real hard to just try to *completely* undo you in this episode of *Buffering the Vampire Slayer*, because Jenny and I worked on this week's song in a different and pretty special way, with me taking the lead on lyrics, and Jenny on melody. We wrote the song from Willow's point of view, and you know what that means, right? Apart from probably you had to pull over your car even with the thought of that; it also means we've cast ourselves a Willow. Singing this week's song is our friend Bess Rogers. If you don't already know Bess's music, run, do not walk. Bess Rogers is her complete name, and she rules. We've both known Bess for several years. Jenny and Bess actually went to SUNY Purchase together, and we are so honored to bring her into the *Buffering* universe today at the end of today's episode.

So many emotions; that's only the start. I have so many more things to tell you before we get into this episode. First of all, two weeks ago, we all learned that Buffy is getting a reboot. What the *fuck*? We know very little so far, but the few things we've learned have caused, you know, a stir on the internet, as they do. Speaking of Joanna Robinson, she and I sat down a few days after that announcement, and we made a special episode together for all of the *Buffering* Patrons and all of the *Storm of Spoilers* Patrons. *Storm of Spoilers* is one of Joanna's incredible podcasts where Joanna and I dig in on what we know, or at that point what we *knew*, how we feel, and all that good stuff. I'm sure that Jenny and I will continue to have a lot to say as things unfold.

Holy crap, guys! Related to special bonus content, our Patrons at the \$10 or higher level also got a sweet new mailbag episode from Jenny and I this week, including a reading of an email about Marc Blucas fan club that got Jenny giddier than I've ever seen her to-date, which is saying a lot, as you avid listeners will know. Just a couple more things before we get into today's sob fest. Last week, I guested on *Angel on Top*, it's the episode called "Room with a View." It's all about Cordelia and, oh my god, I missed her so much. I had so much fun guesting with Brittany, and I hope you all enjoy my sweet return to the arms of my personal Angel, Cordelia.

Speaking of *Angel on Top*, you might want to get on over and follow them on Twitter if you don't already. You can follow them @angelontopcast, because this

week they're picking three of their Twitter followers to win prizes, including an *Angel Casefiles* book, a Cordelia action figure—she comes with some weaponry; hold onto your hats—and the *complete* DVD set of *Angel*, all of the seasons. So, @angelontopcast on Twitter. That giveaway will be happening this week, and you can learn more over there.

Last but not least, a reminder that we have a new Patreon level where you get exclusive T-shirts and enamel pins. You can learn about us, our Patreon, and our shop—there's new crop tops if you missed it last time—over on our website, [bufferingthevampireslayer.com](http://bufferingthevampireslayer.com).

Are you ready? I am, Kristin. Are you ready also, Kristin? Yes, I am. Well then let's do this.

[*Buffering the Vampire Slayer* theme 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'm Kristin Russo.

**Joanna:** And I'm very special guest Joanna Robinson. [Kristin laughs]

**Kristin:** I sent Joanna on a script, I want you to know, that said, "And I'm a special guest," and I really appreciate that you added "very special," because it's true. [Joanna laughs] It is true.

This week, we're talking about Season 4, Episode 6, "Wild at Heart." Stay tuned at the end of this podcast every week for an original song written by Jenny Owen Youngs and I recapping the *Buffy* episode we're discussing. And today, as I mentioned up at the top of the episode, we have a song that is being sung by the incredible Bess Rogers.

**Joanna:** "Wild at Heart" was written by Marti Noxon and directed by David Grossman, and it originally aired on November 9th, 1999.

**Kristin:** This is the one—okay, IMDB says—

**Joanna:** *Bleh*. [Kristin laughs]

**Kristin:** Yeah, right, exactly.

**Joanna:** This is the one where *bleh*. [Kristin laughs]

**Kristin:** IMDB says this is the one when “Oz falls hard for a sexy singer”—I beg to differ—“who also happens to be a werewolf. He must choose between Willow and his own animal instincts.” But Joanna, I agree with you. This is the one where *bleh*. This is the one where literally every other note of mine is “Willow, no!”

**Joanna:** No, this is the one where Seth Green didn't want to be on the show anymore.

**Kristin:** Yeah, right? Seriously. Was it you and I who talked about this, because I feel like somebody gave me the insight into where Seth Green was? Like, he was in movies, at this time and he wasn't getting a lot of dialogue... Was it you who told me this story?

**Joanna:** I mean, I know that he left because his movie career was taking off and that's where he thought he should be. I believe this way.

**Kristin:** I mean, I'm behind it. I'm behind his decision in general, but like I really wish that we didn't have to live through this pain. Um, because of it, you know?

**Joanna:** Yeah, uh, there are ways in which to write off a character, and then there are ways in which feel like character assassination. And I will say, I think *Buffy* is often not great at writing off characters for actors who want to go. This is what it says on the Season 4 DVD: “The writing team just had nothing for us. They were already having a hard time coming up with stuff for him to do or say in Season 3, Seth proposed to go back to a recurrent character, but Joss thought he was too important of a character at the time to downgrade him. Meanwhile, Seth was pursuing bigger roles and finally decided to leave. Joss had this whole arc that he wanted to stretch over the whole season. But Seth got signed for movies, so they planned everything for him to leave sooner.”

**Kristin:** Ah, I see. The drama is there, and I'm here for the drama, but I kind of agree, and obviously we'll get into the play-by-play of this, but the whole time—not the whole time—but half of the time, I'm like, “Oz, would you do this?” Like it just—

**Joanna:** Oz wouldn't do this!

**Kristin:** Oz wouldn't!

**Joanna:** Here's what makes this episode work for me. It's entirely Alyson Hannigan, 1000% makes this episode work for me and makes this episode really effecting for me. So I'm not watching it just like shaking my head and going, “Oh, this would never happen.” You know? At the same time, if I step back for two seconds to think about it, I'm like, I don't think Oz would ever do this. It's a clever

way to try to come up with a way to explain uncharacteristic behavior in him. Uh, it's the wolf taking over, like whatever, you know, but I just—there are moments in this episode, and we'll get to them, where I'm just like, no, I wouldn't do that. I'm saying.

**Kristin:** Same! Same!

**Joanna:** Um, so it's frustrating. Like I said, it's fine for me when an actor wants to leave a show, it's fine for me when the plot has to bend in order to accommodate that, but with this instance and an instance that we'll talk about several years from now, [Kristin laughs] I don't think this show really rose to meet the occasion. I actually even feel like Angel leaving to have his own spinoff show at the end of Season 3—that reason doesn't really ring true to me. And what ends up happening in all of those cases—and like I said, one of those will remain a mystery—it creates this recurring narrative on *Buffy*. And I can apply it to every single male character that I can think of. All the men leave. And you know, that's, like, an okay thematic thing. You know, Buffy's dad—like Buffy feels abandoned by her dad to a certain degree, so it kind of makes sense for me that she keeps encountering this from men she knows. But still, I just don't feel like Oz would do this.

I don't think this is a spoiler cause it's a very minor character, but I was trying, I was talking to a friend of mine today and I was like, "Is there any male character on *Buffy* who hasn't let you down basically or whatever?" And she gave me a name, and I'm going to say it, and then you could edit this out if you feel like it's a spoiler. I'm just gonna say it, and we can move on. She said, "Clem."

**Kristin:** Oh, Clem!

**Joanna:** And I was like, "Great, perfect answer."

**Kristin:** Yes, I agree with that 100%. And I don't know that that's a spoiler, right? Is it? Like I don't know, we'll decide.

**Joanna:** Clem is not even a twinkle in this show's eye yet. I don't think it's a big deal.

**Kristin:** Oh god, I cannot wait until Clem is a twinkle in our eyes. [both laugh] Oh, okay, so let's get into this episode so we can get to these parts that you and I want to eviscerate, it sounds like, together. So, I love this like cold open or whatever we call the part before the credits, because, whatever, there's this chase, she leads a vamp off the fucking thing, she makes a pun, and she's like, "You don't get my puns. My so my puns are so underappreciated." But then *really* the reason that I

like this opening scene, Joanna, is because I *forgot* that here you are again, and here Spike is again! We get Spike in the fucking precredits open.

**Joanna:** Yeah, I wonder if some of your listeners may be watching through for the first time, were watching this and were like, "Oh, it's a Spike episode." Psych! It's definitely not. [both laugh] I love this moment cause James Marsters is just like doing this over the fucking top grandiose villain, you know, "little girl," like all of his shit, and then he just gets like undercut and tased. Even though I knew that was coming, as I was watching it, I was like, "This is great, this is great, this is great."

**Kristin:** Yeah, and I feel like I didn't know who wrote this episode when I was watching it, and then when I put our little notes together and saw that Marti Noxon wrote it, I was like, okay, yeah, yeah, yeah. Because like, "The big bad is back, and this time—" *tase* is a line that is like super simple but just lands so well. So right. Spike is up, Spike is down. That's the last we see of Spike.

And then we go into the episode after the credits, and we go to The Bronze. And I wanted to ask you, Joanna, because this brought up feelings for me cause they're sitting around the table and they're having this conversation about, like, *why are we back here?* Like you know, we're in college now, but we're back here. And Willow is kind of like, you know, "It's kind of like this big, comfy blanket." And it made me remember what it was like to go away to college and come back and visit your old haunts. In my memory of myself at that age, I feel like I acted like I was an old woman, you know? And I was like, "Boy, don't I remember spending time at Denny's?" [both laugh]

**Joanna:** "Ah, the old Denny's is still here. The chicken fingers aren't as crispy as I remember, but.." When you were starting to say this, Kristin, I was like, well I know that Kristin was a lot cooler than I was in high school, and I don't think I had any haunts. And then you were like "Denny's." And I was like, oh no, we went to Denny's. Okay, I can hang with this conversation. We would go to Denny's until like three in the morning, whatever.

**Kristin:** Yeah, you and I are the same exact kind of cool, Joanna, where we grew up at Denny's and now we make podcasts. I think we're of the same.

**Joanna:** My old haunts: Denny's. Yeah, yeah, to go to old places. And, to be honest with you, I still do that. I was just thinking about that today. I still live in the Bay Area in Northern California where I grew up, but I live in Oakland, and I grew up sort of in the North Bay. That doesn't make sense to anyone who doesn't know what I'm talking about. But point being, let's just say I live like 20 to 40 minutes away from where I grew up. Sometimes, I just go over there to do errands

[Kristin laughs] because it feels more familiar. Even though we have all the same stores here in Oakland. It's just a thing I do sometimes.

**Kristin:** It's, like, nostalgia.

**Joanna:** Yeah, it's my warm, comfy blankie of, like, the car wash or whatever. I don't know.

**Kristin:** Yeah, I'm with you. Does Giles ever show up at the car wash with you?

**Joanna:** Yeah, and he's like, "Lattes on me." And I'm like, "Great, Giles. Thanks."

**Joanna:** This like Giles shit. This is the kind of thing where you watched— I didn't watch this series as a young person, but I think a lot of our listeners and a lot of us here in the *Buffering* universe did and then are watching it again as adults, and I feel like this is a scene that would have been lost on me had I watched it in high school or college. But it really hit me in all the feels when Giles sits down with the young people and is like, "It's been ages since I've been to a gig!" and they're all like, "It's really brave that you're here."

**Joanna:** I like that Oz defends Giles's record collection. We've talked before about how Oz feels about the record collection, but yeah, like everything that Anthony Stewart Head does in this episode, his like desperate, bored, loneliness is delightful to me.

And also, I think you and Jenny had a couple conversations about this already, but like this concept of "townie" is one I definitely learned about from this season of *Buffy*, cause I was definitely a freshman in college. I paced the show, as I said before. So, like, I was a freshman in college when this came out. So, like, whenever Xander refers to himself as a townie, which I think comes up the most probably in "Beer Bad," but like it, you know, is a thing for him this season. That was like my entire context for the concept of townie was Xander. That's what I think of when I think of townie, and he says that again in this opening scene. And I just sort of want to like maybe make that a Season 4 drinking game: Every time Xander refers to himself as townie, you get to take a drink.

**Kristin:** Ooh, that's good. That's good. And you and I both have tequila with us right now,

**Joanna:** We do!

**Kristin:** So, I can drink for "townie."

**Joanna:** So, let's drink! Drink to townie. Cheers to you.

**Kristin:** Cheers. [laughs] I'm glad we just took a drink, Joanna, because now we're gonna leave Giles and cut to Veronica—hah Veronica—*Veruca*, Veruca who Jenny and I talked about a little bit at "Beer Bad." I want you to know that for a live audience of 250 people, we said "Veruca," and they all booed, so I think collectively, we're all in the same place here with Veruca and how we feel about Veruca.

**Joanna:** There's a lot of bad shit that happens on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. There's a lot of evil people on this show. I think Veruca is my *least* favorite character.

**Kristin:** Ooh!

**Joanna:** Not that she's a bad character, and well-performed. I have a *visceral* hatred for every single thing she does. Because, I mean, I'm on record, and not like, this is a revolutionary thought—I'm on record as loving Willow and Oz so much, so this sexy little... What does Buffy call her? Kel Fiona or whatever?

**Kristin:** Yes!

**Joanna:** That'd be like a faithful friend to Willow—a wedge in between. Uh, I hate her. I hate her.

**Kristin:** I hate her right along with you. And this first moment, cause we talked about her last episode and how she's sort of like swallowing the microphone and like tilting her neck at all sorts of angles—in this first moment we have with Veruca, she picks up her left leg for no reason. She just picks up her entire left leg while singing. And I just like, can't. I can't with her body movements, and I can't with her lyrics. Every lyric she sings is like "I can feel you twist." Like what are you—why?

**Joanna:** Well, the first lyric, which I've written down in all caps, is "Dip a finger in me." [Kristin groans] Fuck you, Veruca. Go home. I hate you.

**Kristin:** Oh my god, I want everybody to know that that would've been a guttural scream, but I had just taken a giant swig of tequila. [Joanna laughs]

**Joanna:** That was like a tequila scream.

**Kristin:** Yeah, it was a tequila scream, but I'm glad that I have a little bit of tequila for that moment, because oh, fucking hell. And that moment... I'm sure that you and I will have many more opportunities for guttural screams, because there are so many more moments like that with her as this episode goes on.

**Joanna:** I can't tell if she's supposed to have some kind of like pheromone or something like that. Cause the fact that like Giles and Xander—I mean Xander, whatever—but the fact that Giles's sort of like captivated by her too... And not in a purely academic way, but in sort of like a mesmerized kind of way, makes me feel like she's got some sort of like wolfy pheromone thing that she's working in this room.

**Kristin:** I agree.

**Joanna:** I wrote down—like I'm sometimes hard on the kind of friend that Buffy is; I feel like it's often all about her. But I wrote down, "She eye-fucks us in a way that even Buffy notices." [both laugh]

**Kristin:** We finally found out what can like shake Buffy out of her self-absorbed state, and it's the way Oz looks at Veruca, which is totally not okay. But yeah, I agree. I do think that they make a play here for like. I mean it kind of not *reminded* me of, cause that sounds like this preceded the other thing, but it made me think a lot about our *Twilight* werewolves, you know, the imprinting whole thing? Yeah, I think this is like a precursor to that. And like, you want so desperately in this episode to excuse Oz's behavior. So, I feel like I'm also just like clinging to any hope that like, well there was a chemical situation that was happening; it was affecting everybody. But just generally speaking, fuck you, Veruca, right?

**Joanna:** Yeah. Speaking of wanting to defend people or not defending people, I do want to really quickly say I watched "Beer Bad" before I watched this today. And I hadn't seen it—"Beer Bad" is not one of the ones that I ever rewatched—so I hadn't seen in a long time. And I forgot that Parker tries to pull that shit with Willow. [Kristin grunts] And when he does, and Willow's reaction is so great because she's the best. When he did, I was like, man, I think you cut out, and wisely so, some of the like weird, feeble Parker benefit of the doubt I was trying to give him in the episode last I was on. You were probably like, "That's quite enough, Joanna. Thank you." But, still enough of me sort of caveating him or whatever made it in that like when I watched "Beer Bad," I was like, no, this dude just sucks. So, I apologize. I've retracted everything that I said, and yeah.

**Kristin:** I'm glad that we could see you through your full Parker arc. Your full—

**Joanna:** Parcer?

**Kristin:** So, we cut from this like gross, horrible Veruca introduction to this really cute, sweet, like snugly scene, between Oz and Willow, which of course is here so



that our hearts can break all the more. I think that's the purpose of this scene. Do you agree?

**Joanna:** Um, I do. This is my favorite Willow line of all time, which is her fake-sleeping "All Geminis to the raspberry hats." [Kristin laughs] It is my favorite Willow line.

[Clip from episode plays]

**Willow:** All Geminis to the raspberry hats.

**Oz:** Now you're faking.

**Willow:** Am not.

**Joanna:** When she's tried to be as cute as possible in her fake sleep stupor.

**Kristin:** I think it sets us up for the very important dichotomy of this episode, which is Willow feeling like her relationship is one that is steeped in like a cute love, familial place, and that she's being threatened by something that's outside of that, which is like a purely sexual thing, right?

**Joanna:** He's her comfy blanket person and he says, shit like "The only thing I mind is being away from you for three nights," which is adorable, but it's sort of like a little infantilizing, right? Yeah. I hadn't thought about it that way, but yeah, like that she has like this cute high-school relationship with him, and they're in college now and what does that look like?

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Joanna:** But I, I like it, but at the same time, like once again, I can see this arc playing out over an entire season rather than let's cram Oz saying, "I thought I was your comfy blanket person" and like this other stuff in back-to-back scenes, like that he swings so widely. But what you could say is that he's overcompensating because he knows that something's wrong. And he's like, giving that extra effort of cute to her in order to mask this other thing.

**Kristin:** Yeah, that's true. That's true. But I think part of me saw like echoes of all of my past relationships, in like, you know when you get to that place where you just like comfortable? And Willow has this. Like, she's not talking like a kid, but she's kind of talking like a kid, you know?

**Joanna:** Baby-talking, yeah.

**Kristin:** Right, right. Yeah. And it's like, I mean, I don't know, I just feel this whole episode is kind of this line of the comfortability of their relationship and any relationship that hits like a longer period of time. Granted, it's Willow, and Willow has a very particular breed of innocence and what have you. But I do think that this is something that happens in like any relationship that's a long-term relationship, where you get comfortable, and then, like, what happens when somebody else isn't comfortable, you know? And they're just there cause they're like, "I'm a werewolf and we should fuck in the woods."

**Joanna:** Yeah. Veruca, I hate you. What? Sorry. [laughs]

**Kristin:** I'm going to just bring this up here, Joanna. Before we started taping, you had a dream. I don't know if I can make the dream come true, but why don't you tell us what your dream is, and then hopefully I can make it true for us.

**Joanna:** I had a dream that there would be a Veruca jingle—not the first hate-jingle on this show, but you know, maybe the most passionate one. Yeah, a hate-jingle.

**Kristin:** Yeah, we brought you "Go Away, Riley." Why not bring you "Fuck Off, Veruca" or whatever you—

**Joanna:** "Veruca, I Wanna Nuke Ya." [Kristin laughs]

[VERUCA jingle plays]  
Veruca! I wanna nuke ya!  
You mess with me,  
I'll fuckin' school ya!  
Veruca!

**Kristin:** Okay, so we go to school. Buffy is doing really well in class, which is a turn. It's not a side of Buffy we've seen, and Willow is jealous, which I love. [laughing] And then [sighs] there's this—

**Joanna:** I know, it's just like heavy sigh that proceeds every Veruca scene.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Joanna:** Let me tell you what this made me think of. I say like I wrote down that Oz is at least smart enough to be hesitant to sit with her, to say immediately that Willow's coming, like all this sort of stuff. So, he's not completely blind to the danger of what's happening here, right? But Veruca goes into what we now, thanks

to Gillian Flynn's novel *Gone Girl*, can think of as the "cool girl" thing where she's like, "I just love to eat. I don't like girls who are like, 'Ooh, does that have dressing on it?'" And I'm like, listen, I am pro-eating. Everyone should eat whatever you want to eat. But like this whole like, "Yeah, I eat burgers cause I'm a cool girl" thing, I'm like, go away, Veruca. Go away for good.

**Kristin:** Right? Well and here's like the lesson in there is you don't have to fucking tear other girls down for their fucking choices just to make yourself look sexy, Veruca. So yeah, I mean this is like the first bit of us seeing Veruca's real, true self of that she's just going for it. Like she's predator Veruca, you know. "What are you going to do, sit on the ground?" Like, I can't, and this scene, also, I think is the first time when this character-assassination, shit-gets-weird stuff happens.

So, Oz sits down, and they start talking about music, and he's—like you said—he's like "My girlfriend's coming," and she does, and she sits down. Also, just a side note: Veruca is hunched over in a way that I don't understand. Just, well, I don't understand why she sits the way she does. [laughs]

**Joanna:** Maybe she did some animal work, you know, like actors do, [Kristin laughs] and she's like, "This is the wolf in me. This is how wolves sit when they eat their meat, so that's how I'll sit."

**Kristin:** Very possible. But like, and I want to talk about it a couple of other things in this scene, but the thing that seems really fucked up to me for Oz is that when he gets uncomfortable, he just leaves. Like he does not take care of Willow *at all* in this scene. Like at all, for any moment.

**Joanna:** Okay. So yeah, I feel split on it cause I was like, is he nice here, reassuring her? Cause he says like— She thinks they're talking about Elvis; they're talking about amps—whatever simple mistake. They said, Hound Dog. I'm with Willow. I would've been like, sure, Elvis stole that song from a black person. And so, Oz says like, "Oh no, we're talking about amps, but I understand it gets confusing." And I'm like, is he being nice? Is he being condescending? I can't tell. And yeah, he doesn't, he just bails on her. And he would never do that. "As Willow goes, so goes my nation."

**Kristin:** Yes!

**Joanna:** I don't think that this is what, Oz would do and so I hate it. And I hate that he leaves, Veruca leaves... He like leaves her *with* Veruca.

**Kristin:** He leaves her with Veruca! Like, in what universe do you not—like our Oz, the Oz that we know would be like, "Willow, do you want to go talk about that

homework thing that you needed?" Oz is nothing if not quick-witted, you know? Oz is nothing if not able to get himself out of this situation in a way where he takes Willow with him, and he doesn't. He leaves her there. And then, of course, Veruca is like, "I guess I gotta go too. Good shirt." And she says it in this shit way, and this is—

**Joanna:** Uhh [pained].

**Kristin:** Right. Like, I almost said it's the most heartbreaking moment of the episode. It's not, it's not. But it's really up there for me, because we've seen Willow wear whatever the fuck Willow wants to wear for like 3.6 seasons, three point whatever the measurement is, seasons at this point, and like never really doubt herself and just boldly wear what no person has ever worn before. And to see her hear this comment from Veruca, and then have Buffy sit down and say like, "Why did you let me leave like this? I look like a clown" is *gahh*.

**Joanna:** Or "like a crazy birthday cake," and Buffy doesn't make it entirely better because she's like, "I thought that was like what you were going for." Like people with shitty bandanas cannot throw stones, Buffy. [Kristin laughs] But what I was going to say is like the last time someone said something like this to her, I think, is in the pilot when Cordelia's like yaps her for like "finding the softer side of Sears."

**Kristin:** Yes!

**Joanna:** And like I don't think—and please forgive me, and I know your listeners will know better than I do—I don't think we've seen this. And I don't think *yet*. And I don't think it's a spoiler to say, but there is a fantasy or dream sequence at some point on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* where Willow flashes back from her like cooler college self to like that exact wearing corduroy rompers from the pilot sort of look. And so that's obviously like a sore point for her. It's like the equivalent of flashing back to yourself in like braces or something like—this is her ugly duckling sore point. And so, to have Veruca press right on that wound, I'm just like, *ahh*. "I wanna nuke ya, Veruca!" I don't like, I don't like it. It's pretty cheesy.

**Kristin:** And then the other thing that I really want to talk about in this scene, which I think is really cool, and this show has already—and you've been here for some of these conversations, Joanna—done some really cool things with the conversations around relationships and sex, and we're growing together with them as they go through high school and enter college. But Buffy and Willow have a really cool conversation here. Of course, as we all know, it backfires *horribly*. But before we get to the horrible things in this episode, they have this conversation about the fact that Oz has—might have—feelings for somebody else or—

**Joanna:** Attraction.

**Kristin:** Attraction, yeah. And I love their awareness in this, cause I wasn't this aware in college. This awareness of the fact that you can be in a relationship and love somebody and have attractions to other people was not something that came onto my plate until much later. And so, I really appreciate the fact that the two of them are having this conversation and that Buffy is really leading the charge of being like, "You know, Willow, you look at other people too, and Oz isn't this person who's going to leave you. You can be attracted to other people, of course, without it being a threat." Which is true; don't let this episode be your meter. That is true. It goes horribly wrong, of course, in this episode, but I just thought it was cool that at this age they were there having that conversation.

**Joanna:** And we'll get to this, but there's Xander advice scene where Xander gives stellar advice, and I'm like, who's here with the good advice this episode?

**Kristin:** Right? Yes, I have several Xs with exclamation points after them for when I get really excited about Xander's advice later too.

**Joanna:** But, I guess it's, like, if Oz has to be the shittiest version of itself, let's let Buffy Xander be like the best versions of themselves.

**Kristin:** Yes, that's true. That's true. If we lose one of the pieces of our backbone, we really need to pull up the other pieces.

**Joanna:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** So, then I have a little side note, which is just, *what is this cage*? Cause I believe this is the first time we see this cage. Where the fuck are we? What is this cage? What happened? [laughing]

**Joanna:** It's like under—he's in a mausoleum, and my notes say, "That cage, frankly, looks unsound." [both laugh] It's the most fucking rusty, ramshackle cage I've ever admitted. And even if I had never seen this episode, as soon as he walked in, I'm like, "Well that's not lasting the night." Like what is that situation?

**Kristin:** It's like every piece of the cage is made of a different kind of pole. Like they're all like mismatch.

**Joanna:** It's like a *spooky* mansion cage [said spookily], like what is this thing? [Kristin laughs]

**Kristin:** It really is. I, for a minute, thought we were at Angel's house, you know, like this is a cage that would be at Angel's mansion, 100%. It actually reminded me of the alternate dimension in "The Wish" dimension, when Angel's in the cage basement—like that were the feelings that I got from this weird, weird cage that we never learned anything about.

**Joanna:** Nope.

**Kristin:** So, I just want to take a moment and let you know... There's a whole scene here, but I only have a few notes and I feel like it really sums it up pretty well. Because my notes are: "Oz is loose. Nice jacket, Professor Walsh. Two werewolves—what?" And then just "Noooo" where the Os slowly devolve into straight lines and fill up the rest of the page. [Joanna laughs] That's where I went.

**Joanna:** You and Jenny did such a good job of breaking down the initial appearance of the werewolf on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. I was wondering if you could give me some of your thoughts on the "she wolf."

**Kristin:** The "she wolf" [laughing]. Can we get through this episode without playing a clip of "She Wolf" by Shakira? No, we can't. So, let's just play it real quick. Thank you. [Joanna laughs]

[clip from "She Wolf" by Shakira plays]  
There's a she wolf in the closet

**Kristin:** I will say, I do give the she wolf like two more points, if the measurement scale is one out of a thousand, I give the she wolf two more points than the Oz wolf.

**Joanna:** I feel like the she wolf has been doing, like, some deep conditioning on three nights out of the month and then possibly applying a flat iron to her pelts.

**Kristin:** The she wolf 100% has a flat iron; I agree with you wholeheartedly.

**Joanna:** Yeah, she's got like a VO5 hot oil treatment that she does on her main, so that she looks glossy and ready to go three nights out of the month. [Kristin laughs]

**Kristin:** It's like it's akin to when you have a baby, and you're like, my baby is a girl so I'm gonna put—

**Joanna:** Slap a pink bow on her bald head.

**Kristin:** Exactly [laughing]! They're like, how do we let the audience know that this is a she wolf? I know we're going to straighten her hair and make it a little more blonde, give it a little body, you know?

**Joanna:** Yeah, it's glossy; she like tosses it around. Yeah.

**Kristin:** She does [laughing].

**Joanna:** So, this all happens. Props to Maggie Walsh for just sort of being like, "Oh you know what? I'm gonna step outta here and go. Bye!" Um, you know, they wake up, they're naked, they're covered in scratches. She says, "You know what I am. You've noticed that the first time you saw me," which, I kinda liked that line. I kind of believe it. But then, when they move this operation to the dorm laundry room, where they're stealing clothing, she keeps saying all this shit, and the note I have written down is, "She sex purrs all the time. I hate her."

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Joanna:** Every line is like a little moan, and I just despise her.

**Kristin:** That's the thing is, it's a little too much. It's just a little, maybe—no, that's a lie—it's *a lot* too much for me with her, because she doesn't have another... Actually, one of my notes in this scene is, couldn't they make her likable *at all*? Like, couldn't they, like wasn't it possible to, wouldn't it have been—and I love to hate her—but wouldn't it have been possible to write this episode where we didn't have to hate her so much, where it there was a conflict of like, *fuck*, like there's this other werewolf and Oz is all fucked up because of chemicals and she doesn't even mean to. But instead,

**Joanna:** But I think that's the nuance you would've gotten with like a *full season* arc, rather than like let's jam it into mid-season, or like the first quarter of the season. But yeah, like I feel like we could've gotten to know Veruca as like, you know, a *fully* dimensional character and not just some like "cleavagey sex bomb," to borrow a description for another character, you know? Um, yeah, some dimensionality to her. And, you know, they mentioned in "Beer Bad," and I know you guys talked about this, but in "Beer Bad," the description of Veruca is "dresses like Faith," and she doesn't dress *exactly* like Faith, obviously, but she's got some Faith stuff about her.

**Kristin:** She does.

**Joanna:** Especially later, when she talks about how she gets all *buzzy* right before she transforms. So that reminds me a lot of Faith talking about the high she gets

after slaying and stuff like that. And so, Faith, whom you guys love, is this kind of figure done well, where she's super sexualized but has humanity to her core. And like Faith gets seduced by the ability to kill people and all sorts of stuff, but she's conflicted; and like it would be nice to have that in Veruca. Hopefully it wouldn't feel too much like a Faith retread, but it would be nice to have that in Veruca—some dimensionality. But it really just feels to me like they didn't have time to do that, and that's a shame.

**Kristin:** Yeah, that's a really solid point. Because, of course, I saw that too and notice that too—the parallels between Veruca and Faith, which probably the audience is so mad at me or us for comparing them. But they are here, and I guess Veruca just doesn't get the time, but ay.

**Joanna:** This is Faith done shittily, you know what I mean? And I don't think it's an insult to Faith to say that. I just think like, okay, Faith is a character done well. Faith is a character at least with a lot of different things going on and different modes. Whereas Veruca has like three episodes, if you can include like a cameo, so basically like an episode and a half, let's say, to make an impression and be gone.

And make *such* an important impression that she throws a wrench in a really foundational relationship in the show. And that's like, it's just, I don't think you can do it in an episode and a half. And I understand that there were external factors, but, like, that's just why we have this visceral hate for her, because there's just nothing else. There's no other *there* there.

**Kristin:** Yeah, yeah, totally. “There's no other there there”—very well said. Um, my practical questions about this scene. Well, my practical question and then I have a couple of other things I want to talk about. But they walk naked to the laundromat? Is that what we are to believe? They stand up in the woods, and they walk naked...

**Joanna:** The sun was up! I was like, what time is it? Because the sun was up not even in like a gray, predawn sort of way. But, sun fully up in the woods. What time is it that (A) the laundry room is deserted for sure, and (B) they could scamper there naked the whole way?

**Kristin:** Yeah. So I just want—like if any of you got any pics of Oz and Veruca on the way to the laundromat, let us know. Let us know. [laughing]

**Joanna:** Streak, streak, streak! And I do like that Oz is just putting on whatever. And Veruca has found sexy black lingerie that fits her perfectly.

**Kristin:** Yes! Yes! That is one of my other notes that Veruca has been, like, going through the washers and dryers and she's like, “Oh, I'll just put on this old thing.”



And it's a fully form-fitting, perfectly like lace, black lingerie set. And um, Joanna, I want to say that I want to find out what Kate Leth thinks about this ensemble, if you will, from Veruca, and I don't know yet what the Fashion Watch is going to be, but what I do know is that Kate said it's going to be mostly about Veruca. And then I watched the episode and I was like, "But, Kate, Veruca is naked the whole time." So, let's just take a moment, go over to our very favorite Kate Leth, and see what she has to say in our Fashion Watch this week.

[Fashion Watch intro theme plays]  
It's time for our friend Kate  
To give you the Buffy fashion update!

**Kate:** Well, welcome back to Buffy Fashion Watch and to another of my all-time favorite episodes, because I love to hurt emotionally. I often think that Season 4 is my least favorite because I *hate* the overarching plot and the Big Bad, and Riley is essentially a sack of potatoes with abs, but there really are some bangers, this one included.

In rewatching this episode, I realized sort of for the first time how much *Buffy* and its sensibilities and the way it dealt with issues made me want to be a writer. And you would think this is something I've thought of before and maybe it has been subconsciously, but I really—I dunno, it hit me. I cry *every single time* I watch this episode.

Alyson Hannigan's performance is so raw and so vulnerable and *real*. It's like in between the goofy werewolf make-up and the sort of heartless seductress trope, there's an incredibly sincere story here about realizing that you're losing something and there is nothing you can do about it. It's really painful and really honest, and it's one thing that *Buffy* excels at so much that I think other shows that tap into the genre don't always get. It's something I've always tried to put into my work, whether I realized it or not—something real, something tangible, something hard to talk about or hard to pin down, and expressing that in between all the candy, all the aliens, all the whatever. And I have to say, "Wild at Heart" is an incredible example of that. You don't have to agree with me, but I'm right.

And obviously, I'd like to talk about Veruca—her Shirley Manson vibes, one of my first crushes that lasts to this day, and her silver eyeshadow, the little nick in her eyebrow, her abundance of leather pants and sheer tops. She's presented as this polar opposite to Willow. Even though Doppelgangland Willow wears twice as much leather and is way more bad-ass, except for the one part of the episode where she's wearing jean bell-bottoms, which takes away a little bit of her cred. But how can we not talk about Veruca when there's not really much else in this episode to talk about fashion-wise?

Buffy wears a head-kerchief that is truly awful, and also something I definitely did in the sixth grade. And other than that, you know, she has some pretty cute hairstyles and a nice sundress, but it's Veruca. It's all about Veruca here. She appears, she disappears, she changes everything.

We're coming up to my favorite episode in the *entire* series in a couple of weeks. And before that, we're taking a little stop off in Holiday Land. But until then, I'll see you at the mall.

[Fashion Watch outro theme plays]  
That was our friend Kate  
She gave you the Buffy fashion update!

**Kristin:** Thank you, Kate for that wonderful Fashion Watch. We love you, as always, more and more each episode, truly. Um, Joanna, something else I want to talk about, also is what happens in this scene, and we've talked about it a little bit already in our conversation, but this is the scene where this... You already used the word "dichotomy," but it comes up that like, are you a wolf for three days, or are you a wolf all the time? Which reminds me of *Beauty and the Beast*, right? Like, it's what's the monster and what's the man? It's the same theme coming up again. And Oz in this scene has a line that makes my heart break, which is where Veruca is like, "You know, you shouldn't be in a cage and *blah blah blah*." [Joanna laughs] And then Oz was like, "No. I know where I belong." And that's the Oz that we know, right? Yes, that's true; he does know where he belongs. I don't know what happens to him in this episode [said sadly].

**Joanna:** And then he goes, and then he says [laughs] This is the most feeble thing I think I've ever heard anyone say, which is like, she goes, "You should be free," or whatever she says. And then he goes, "Free to kill people? I won't do that. You shouldn't." [both laugh] "You shouldn't."

**Kristin:** Always convincing, our Oz; he's got a lot of arguments behind him.

**Joanna:** You should maybe not kill people. Don't do that. Think about not doing that. [imitating Oz]

**Kristin:** So then, brief aside to this wonderful scene between Professor Walsh and Buffy, where Professor Walsh is really dramatic, and she's like, "I was attacked by wild dogs!" Like, were you? Cause I feel like we just watched the scene, and I'm pretty sure you weren't attacked. I'm pretty sure you *saw* a wild dog. And I'm pretty sure that it just found another wild dog and that he ran away.

**Joanna:** I have a note for you here.

**Kristin:** Yes, please.

**Joanna:** It says, "Go away, Riley."

[GO AWAY RILEY jingle plays]  
Riley, you are kind of a cardboard  
Your mansplaining's best to be ignored  
No one cares, you're our TA so please  
Please go away

**Kristin:** Great, fantastic. Thank you for that setup. I also feel like Walsh is like that thing where there's a character that voices for the audience, where she's like, "I think it was a dog, but it might've been a gorilla." And what I say to you is, I agree with you, Professor Walsh: these costumes could be better. [both laugh]

**Joanna:** One of them had a flatiron; that's all I can tell you for sure. Dog or gorilla, one of them was glossier than me. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Oh, god. Oh no. Okay, so here comes a scene I hate. This episode is full of scenes that I hate, but Willow comes in in her leather pants. And now, we should've been playing Bingo for like every character—every female character—that wears leather pants after Faith, and then, we could check off Willow in this moment.

**Joanna:** Oh, I like it?

**Kristin:** Right? She walks in in leather pants, and this episode really highlights, I think—I've talked about it already—but like the vulnerability of sex and somebody that you love is desiring someone else, and then you try to make your play, which is what's happening here. Like Willow's like, "But look, I'm wearing leather pants, and like we should have sex now." And the *worst* thing that could ever happen when you're feeling insecure about your own sexuality and your own desirability is that you proposition the person you love and trust, and in that moment they say, "No, I don't want to right now." Which is heartbreaking to witness here with Willow.

**Joanna:** The sad part is when she tries to replicate the morning. Well, there's a lot of sad parts, but the part where she tries to replicate the previous morning when she's like "So busy, busy in here," like pulls his hand up to do the little gesture, like "Remember? We've got cute stuff that we do." And Oz doesn't want to for a number of reasons, right? Like (A) his body is covered in scratches; if she saw that, she would know something's up. (B) I don't think he showered since he last had sex. So

like, that's not a thing that you're going to want to do, and then (C) his mind is preoccupied with what's going on. Here are my notes.

**Kristin:** I'm ready for `em.

**Joanna:** Hi, Oz. Number 1: tell her the truth. If not, number 2: just go down on her, [Kristin laughs] because he could've helped her feel like sexy/desirable without giving the game away. But he shouldn't; I mean, he should tell her the truth. Like that's what he should do. But if he's going to be like shitty and not tell her the truth, like at least do that for her so that she doesn't walk out of there in her little leather pants feeling completely undesirable.

**Kristin:** Totally.

**Joanna:** Also, I want to note for your younger viewers—listeners, I always say that—your younger *listeners*, Oz is reading what's called a “newspaper.” [Kristin laughs] Later, Xander will be reading what's called a “newspaper.”

**Kristin:** Yeah, a lot of newspapers in this episode!

**Joanna:** It's a newspaper-heavy episode. They used to put the news on paper,

**Kristin:** And print it!

**Joanna:** And you would read it, and that's how you would find out if anyone was maimed in a wild dog attack. [Kristin laughs]

**Kristin:** Yes, and you'd get the ink on your fingers while reading it. It was a whole experience. I miss it. Um, but yeah, I agree. I mean, I think I do understand why Oz would have not engaged in any sexual activity of any kind, because you don't know where it's going to go, and you don't want to... He's feeling... I get it.

But he would have told her, he would have told her—the Oz we know would have told her, and I beg of anyone to send me a damn email explaining why Oz would not have done that, because it's just, it's ridiculous to me. And then that's all my notes is. Why aren't you telling her? Why are you being so weird? Why are you doing this? I got very angry during the scene.

**Joanna:** Yeah, my go-down-on her note is not like really real, but it kind of is, cause like, if your main excuse is like “I smell like sex and I'm covered in scratches,” there are still options available to you. But *mostly*, tell her the truth. That's the sexiest thing you could do at this moment, actually.

**Kristin:** Agree.

**Joanna:** Okay, let me get to maybe my favorite part of the episode, which is Giles watching *Jeopardy!*, but, obviously, they did not have the licensing to actually do *Jeopardy!*, [Kristin laughs] cause it's not *Jeopardy*. It's like very close to the theme and not Alex Trebek doing the announcing on that clip that we don't see. But Giles gets the answer, is very mad at the morons who don't get the answer, and then he says, "That dinette set should be mine?" These have been your further adventures of Giles is so sad and lonely.

**Kristin:** Oh, it's good. It's kind of like just a few weeks ago, I posted a photo of one of our listeners who was on *Jeopardy!* just this past April and wore our "Smash the Demon Lizard Patriarchy" [Joanna gasps] tank top *underneath*. You can't—like if you watch the episode, you don't know it's there—but this person sent us their reveal. They wore it underneath their button-up and their vest and came in second place on *Jeopardy!* So, this is like a little *Buffering/Buffy* crossover moment here where we get Giles watching *Jeopardy!* just weeks after we posted a *Jeopardy!* post on our socials.

**Joanna:** Wow.

**Kristin:** But yeah, Giles is great, so excited to see Buffy. This is continuing the theme of Giles being so bored and not knowing what to do with himself. He wants things to go wrong in Sunnydale so that he has purpose. Uh, and you know, whatever. We love Giles.

**Joanna:** Um, I used to watch *Jeopardy!* every single night with my family over dinner.

**Kristin:** Did you continue on to—wait was *Wheel of Fortune* before or after *Jeopardy!*?

**Joanna:** After. We would *not* watch *Wheel of Fortune* after. I think it actually depends what market you were in. But, in our market, *Wheel of Fortune* was after. We did not watch *Wheel of Fortune* after, but we watched *Jeopardy!* every single night. It was like a competition in my family, where we would sort of try to yell out answers first and stuff like that. And one of the best parts about growing up was when you, like, just started to get as good as your parents at *Jeopardy!* and you're like "Yes!"

**Kristin:** Yeah, I did watch some *Jeopardy!*, but I have to that my heart was with *Wheel of Fortune*. I *still* have dreams of being on *Wheel of Fortune*, but I—you didn't watch *Wheel of Fortune*—but there was always like one person on *Wheel of*

*Fortune* who was definitely able to get the answers, but just would always spin bankrupt. Like, they just would land on bankrupt. And I knew that if I was ever the person to go on *Wheel of Fortune*, I would be that person—that I would know the answers, but it wouldn't matter because I would keep landing on bankrupt. So that's my *Wheel of Fortune* truth, Joanna. You've heard it here first.

**Joanna:** I believe that you are lucky enough to not land on bankrupt.

**Kristin:** Well, there's only one way to find out: Get me on *Wheel of Fortune*.

**Joanna:** Also, I'm looking at the photos of Arielle on *Jeopardy!* Arielle looks amazing.

**Kristin:** It's so cute, right? I love it. Um, okay. So, now we get towards my X exclamation points, my Xander scene—our Xander scene—where Xander is really giving great advice and being such a good friend to Willow.

**Joanna:** This is good advice, nine question marks? [laughing]

**Kristin:** Yeah. Xander's just growing leaps and bounds. And this teaches us—

**Joanna:** "If you're doing it, I think you should be able to say it." Yes, Xander, yes!

**Kristin:** Exactly, I have two quotes and I'm sure you have the same: "If you're doing it, I think you should be able to say it" and "Have you asked Oz about it?" Like you need to talk about it.

**Joanna:** That's not my second quote. My second quote says, "Sarah McLachlan kind of love."

**Kristin:** Okay, that's fair. That's fair. That's good.

**Joanna:** You know, cause when you really like want to get down with your partner, and you just, you know, it's just like, "the winter is cold and bitter." [Both laugh]

**Kristin:** Oh god, I can't wait until we finish the entire series, and I put together the compilation of just Joanna singing Sarah McLachlan on our podcast.

**Joanna:** I'll try working it into every episode.

**Kristin:** Please, please. And listeners, please, please do your due diligence and help me by grabbing the timestamps of every time Joanna sings Sarah McLachlan for us,

so that in four years when I'm ready to put together the compilation, one wonderful listener will be like, "Here's all the moments."

**Joanna:** Well I missed my opportunity to like "In the Arms of the Angels," right? Cause we're no longer talking about Angel on this podcast. You're doing it on your companion podcast.

**Kristin:** I think that moment might come to you, Joanna, you know? Like don't count your chickens before they've hatched or whatever. What I wanted to say about Xander is I feel like this is because Xander's not going to college and Xander is still learning and growing. And I feel like this is a really important thing to note that you don't *need* to go to college to grow and learn as a person, which I feel Xander is exemplifying for all, that he's growing and learning as a person. He's watching the environment around him, he's learning from his experiences, and he's helping his friends.

**Joanna:** Yup, I would say this is justice for townie Xander. A townie moment.

**Kristin:** Yes. Okay, so Buffy and Oz have like a little moment where they, you know, whatever, they have a little exchange.

**Joanna:** Uh, my note is, "Oz is fixing his cage and it's hot," and it's true. This is the second time, because this reminds me of when we got the Spike reveal a couple episodes ago, where like,

**Kristin:** Yes, another blowtorch [laughing].

**Joanna:** You talk about blowtorch in a facemask, I'm like, that's hot. I don't know why. I will examine it on my own time. I'll ask my therapist about it, but as it is right now, I had to write down, "Oz is fixing his cage. It's hot."

**Kristin:** You make a really solid point, Joanna, because we're only six episodes into the season, and we've already gotten Oz with a blowtorch, Spike with a blowtorch, and Giles with a chainsaw. And *I* say that is a lot of hot men with power tools for six episodes, and I'm here for it.

**Joanna:** I don't think this is a spoiler. I don't know if I'm on this episode, but I will just say we might have Yahtzee when we get to the Thanksgiving episode. [Kristin laughs] So wait for the Yahtzee!

**Kristin:** Yahtzee! Oh, shit.

**Joanna:** And the episode that I believe is called "Pangs."

**Kristin:** Oh, so soon. It's just right around the bend. Um, okay. So, *fuck*. So then, there's this montage scene of Oz in bed, Willow with her witches, which I like, and "Veruca sucking," which is my note. But Veruca is playing music but at The Bronze, and The Bronze is empty. So, I don't know if The Bronze allows for rehearsal space, if that's what we're to believe.

**Joanna:** Well, at first when she was playing, I was like, what kind of gig is it during the fucking day, Veruca? And then I saw that the chairs were up, and I was like, oh, this is band practice, I guess.

**Kristin:** So I guess The Bronze is very generous with their time is what we're learning.

**Joanna:** Well do you remember that sadness montage from Season 3, [Kristin laughs] where Oz is playing his guitar on the pool table at The Bronze? We were like, does he just have keys? Like why is he there? I don't understand.

**Kristin:** I guess the owners of The Bronze are like super chill with the teens of Sunnydale just using their space on the off-hours, is what we're to believe. And at the end of this montage scene, we see Oz calling someone. And I wrote in all caps, even though I knew the answer, Joanna, "Who is he calling? What the fuck?"

**Joanna:** Ugh.

**Kristin:** And he calls her. He calls her on the *phone*.

**Joanna:** "On the *phone*!" [imitating Kristin] [both laugh]

**Kristin:** But, I feel like I would have been here more for this arc if we didn't have so many moments of Oz *not* being a wolf and doing these things. Like he calls her on the phone when he is a *human* boy, and he says, "You need to come," and he justifies it for himself. I'm sure that's what he's doing in his Oz mind—well, I don't want her to kill anybody.

But he fucking *knows* what he's doing. Like he knows. You can tell that he knows. He looks guilty from the beginning of this episode. He knows. And I just find it so hard to believe that he's going to pick up this phone and say, "Come. Come to fucking 1427 Cage Lane. It's downstairs." [both laugh] I hate it!

**Joanna:** Right off Mausoleum Street. On the one hand, I don't buy it. On the other hand, I think it's good to not let him off completely. I think it's good to not just be like, oh he's a wolf, he has no control. You know, like I think it's good to hold him



accountable, which is something that... There is *one* moment in this episode where I like, I dunno about *like* Veruca, but I am with her, so we'll get there.

**Kristin:** Okay, I know what you mean. I know what you mean. So, we're in the cage. We get to the fucking cage. You know, Veruca comes in like, and he's like, "You'll be safe," and she's like, "Not from you." And then she's like, "I sensed you. Did you sense me?" And the whole time, I just am wanting to throw up all over the cage and all over both of their faces.

And then this is another moment. Like, you picked up the phone and you called her when you were a human boy, and now you pulled her into the cage and you kissed her, and it's before you changed. And *that* is the transgression, right? I mean there's a couple of like major transgressions in this episode. One, you know, Oz not telling Willow right from the jump.

**Joanna:** And not telling Buffy either. He comes in; she's like, "So, two wild dogs, what do you say?" And he's like, "Dunno."

**Kristin:** Right. Like, that's fucked up. You lied *twice*, and now you're kissing this girl when you're a person and she's a person, and you're not even wolves yet. And it's real bad. It's real bad. And the only thing worse than this is the hand CGI that uh— [both laugh]

**Joanna:** Their Jack and Rose, *Titanic* moment but with wolf hands?

**Kristin:** Yes. The slow crossfade from human to wolf hands with, of course, one of the wolf hands having very nicely manicured fingernails because she's...

**Joanna:** Sure, sure; she's a lady.

**Kristin:** She's a *lady* wolf.

[clip from "She Wolf" by Shakira plays]

There's a she wolf in the closet

**Joanna:** But like what I do like about it is that Willow calls him out in the next scene when she shows up. Veruca gives her the shitty look, and I hate her. And he's like, you know, "I had to do something, blah, blah, and she's like, "Yeah, you could've told Buffy, but your solution is lock her in a cage where we're definitely gonna fuck just the two of us." She's exactly right that like he has this excuse that he's made for himself of like, this is all I could do, when in reality, he just wanted to like have sex with her again. That's just true. And this is the moment where I don't *hate* Veruca with *everything* I have when she was like, "She has a point." And I'm

like, *yeah*. And he like roars at her, like *get out*. I'm like, Oz, you're not the good guy in this. She's not *entirely* the bad guy in this moment, and you're not our good guy at all. I

Kristin: Totally, totally. And, actually, I want to play this sound clip of this scene, because it's the three points that we hit of Willow's line, Veruca's line, and Oz's line is real good. So, let's just go there real quick.

[Clip from episode plays]

**Oz:** I didn't have a choice!

**Willow:** But you did. You could have told somebody. Your, your solution? Just put you two together in a room all night?

**Veruca:** Girl's got a point.

**Oz:** Leave.

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

**Oz:** Now!

**Kristin:** So, fuck, you know, and I agree with you 100%, Joanna. Like Oz is trying to redeem himself in this moment, and he is not redeemable. Also, in the scene, just like want to give a moment to the opening moment, where Willow walks in, and she has like a slushie or whatever the fuck, like a drink.

**Joanna:** She brought him coffee and donuts.

**Kristin:** Right. And she just drops everything, and her fucking face. And you, Joanna, you've been on episodes with us before where we talk about Willow and the kind of hold that Willow has on us as an audience. And I want to say that I think this is the darkest we've gotten with Willow and the saddest *I've* felt for Willow. Just like when you see her face seeing this scene and just not believing, like all of us, right? Like, we're all watching, we're not believing it, and we're watching Willow not believe it. It's just devastating.

**Joanna:** The thing that Alyson Hannigan can do, which she does, especially after Veruca leaves and they keep talking. And I'm glad that the episode brings up Xander and Willow in Season 3, and I'm glad it addresses that, all of the ways in which it addresses that as like a parallel I think are good. But here's what Alyson Hannigan can do, which is that she's *weeping* through all of this. Her eyes are just

gushing tears or she's doing the like the lip tremble thing, all of that, that's devastating. But it's not stopping her from acting other things at the same time. And, like, that's really hard to do. I think a lot of people, like I think, actors, it's hard to convey sobbing while also carrying like anything else with it, you know what I mean? And Alyson Hannigan can just do this thing where her eyes can just like *leak*, her mouth trembles, you're *so* upset. But then she's also just like hitting all these other grace notes at the same time.

And, I have to say this is another failing of this episode. You know I love Seth Green. You know I love Oz as a character. I don't think Seth Green is actually terribly good at, uh, a lot of modulations, and that's sort of been Oz's hallmark. And so, there are things that he is asked to play in this episode that I don't think as an actor he's quite entirely up for. And so, when he has to do like sweet and loving, when he has to do sort of stoic, when he has to do dry—I think he can do all of those things. I think that's one of the things that make Oz so charming. But when he has to do like overcome with lust or overcome with grief or all that sort of stuff, I think Seth Green doesn't quite match, at least what Alyson is bringing. But she's bringing *so much* that, it gets there.

**Kristin:** Right. She almost brings it for the both of them, enough for us to kind of forgive that. But I agree, and I had a note about that towards the end, or at the end, when—well, we'll get there—I felt the same way, where I was sort of like waiting for a little bit more, um, from his end of things.

**Joanna:** Yeah, at the very end.

**Kristin:** Yeah. So this scene—just again, I'm like, Oz, I was, why are you not telling the truth? And then, one of the last lines in the scene is from Willow where she's talking about like, “You wanted her in an animal way. Did you want her more than you wanted me?” Um, which is just, *fuck man*, ah, the whole thing!

Then, obviously, like, Willow leaves in a trance, and this is so believable I think. Willow's whole arc is like spot-on in just the way that she's coping or, probably a better way to say it is like *not* coping, with what she's just witnessed, and that she's sort of walking right into traffic. Like, I buy every beat of it. Um, there's Riley again, of course, saving Willow.

**Joanna:** And I say, he is very condescending. I don't like this.

**Kristin:** Yes!

**Joanna:** I don't think you look at what's going on with Willow right there and say like, this is a person like really actively trying to hurt herself.

**Kristin:** I agree. This is a person who's like, doesn't know what they're doing. You know, she didn't like throw herself in front of a car. She just like sort of walked out into traffic cause she didn't know what she was doing. And like that's different. And so for Riley to be like, "Whatever it is, it's not worth hurting yourself," I'm like, you're doing a nice thing and I hate you. "You really should take her home" [imitating Riley]. And I'm like, *yeah, she's on it; don't worry!* Buffy's got this. Thank you, Riley; thank you for your service.

**Kristin:** Right? We did not need your advice. I agree. This is why Jenny and I have a deep, deep dissonance in our Riley opinions, because everything he says, I'm like, dude, you're just saying shit that people already know. And you're saying it louder and manlier, and I'm not here for it. I'm not. Thank you for saving Willow. I will appreciate you for that. But everything else, goodbye.

**Joanna:** Byeee! But this is another thing that Willow does in when they're back in their room, there's something that Alyson Hannigan does, which she... I'm a crier; I'm a big crier. I'm a fan of it. I do it. There's this feeling you get when you've like cried yourself out where you feel tired and hollow and sort of dazed. And Alyson Hannigan is just like giving that to me in this scene so much where she's just like scooped out, you know, and she's just sitting there and Buffy is talking to her, and she's just her little guts out and there's nothing in there for her anymore and it's so good.

**Kristin:** "Scooped out" is such a great fucking phrase, Joanna. That is exactly it: *scooped out*. She really is. And I actually forgot that the scene was going to go where the scene went, because I was like *with* her. I was like, oh yeah, I guess she is fine. I mean she's not fine, but she's, like, not there. That I actually forgot that the scene continued, and that she sort of puts the blame where it belongs. And then I'm going to take a turn here...

And so, I mean this is probably where most of us would go in Willow's position should we have the power that Willow had. She gets up and she goes to her fucking magic drawer.

**Joanna:** Seems like something Amy would do, right?

**Kristin:** Hell, yes. This is, I think, the Amy-est that Willow has gotten to-date. Right? And, and that's one of my notes later is Willow's getting some dark magic. Like she's *really* getting dark in this episode that we have books floating, we have pictures that are about to go into flame, like—

**Joanna:** Oh yeah! She calls on Borabis, Satanis, and the devil. [both laugh] Then I wrote, "Not great, Bob." Like, I don't understand why you need to call on Satanis *and* the devil—that seems overkill, but that's what she does.

**Kristin:** Right, right. Before we get right into the magic scene, there's this Buffy and Oz moment, which I *really* like. I just, I like Buffy in this episode, you know? And you mentioned this, that Buffy is sort of standing up and Xander is standing up in this episode, and I think this is one of those moments where Buffy like shows the fuck up. She knows what's gone on with Oz, and she's *not* here for his shit, and she's just like, "Now might be a time for your trademark stoicism."

**Joanna:** Perfect line.

**Kristin:** Right? A fucking perfect line. And just like says what she needs to say. Like, I don't want to hear it. I don't want to hear it. Show me where this fucking girl is.

**Joanna:** I love that they show up, and they don't even need to talk about it. She's just like, "Where is she?" and he's like, "I don't know," not like, "Whoooo?" No, we don't need to talk about it. Let's just go and do some stuff.

**Kristin:** So then we get into it, right? Like this is the scene where thereafter Veruca, and of course the foil, the always, come on guys. She's left her clothes in the forest, cause she's never wearing any clothes.

**Joanna:** A *decoy* pile of clothes. Clever girl.

**Kristin:** Yes, And Willow, like god knows what would've happened had Willow gotten through this spell. I mean, I really don't want to know, but, she sees Oz in the picture, and she can't do it. She can't do the spell, because she sees him, and she loves him, she puts down the fucking picture, and then *fuck us all*: Veruca's here in the fucking chemistry classroom lab or wherever we are. And she won't stop rolling her neck, is my first complaint.

**Joanna:** Super weird.

**Kristin:** She won't like—what is that? I guess you're right. Maybe this actress kind of did a lot of animal study, and that's why she likes sat more hunched. I don't know, but I don't like it. Stop rolling your neck. And Oz gets there, and fucking...

**Joanna:** We should mention why Buffy's not there: She got, like, waylaid by a commando.

**Kristin:** I wonder what that's all about. We should have seen those commandos a lot. I guess it's just a weird thing we'll never find out about ever [sarcastically].

**Joanna:** ROTC, right?

**Kristin:** Yes [laughs]. In the lab or wherever the fuck we are, we get a scene where they're half-werewolf and then they're full werewolf. [Joanna laughs]

**Joanna:** You know, listen, listen. Some people see the world half-wolf; some of them see it as half-human. [Kristin laughs] I wrote, "They fight as half-humans that is full wolves," so I guess we just figured out what kind of people we are. I want to ask your listeners, are you the type of people who see this and say "half-human," or do you say, huh, "half-wolf."

**Kristin:** Oh, that's good. That's goods.

**Joanna:** And then he fucking kills her and bites her neck.

**Kristin:** Yes! "Oh my god, he killed her" is my note. I've seen that episode more than one time, and yet I kind of forgot that this is a—speaking of Faith—this is like a very Faith moment. Like this is Faith killing Allen in the alleyway and being like, "Oh fuck."

**Joanna:** I mean, it's not even like, "Oops, I was defending Willow and then, oh like something happened, and then she died," which is like the copout death for a lot of Disney villains or whatever. Your hero can't be seen *killing* a villain, so like, *oops*, they stumbled off a cliff or whatever. But no, he *fully* bites her neck out, and yeah, it's pretty rough. And so, Willow has all that trauma. So, Willow is like threatened, like heartbroken, threatened by this bitch—sorry [Kristin laughs]—and then has to watch her boyfriend kill someone.

**Kristin:** Right, which is like almost what you'd want, right? It's like in the mindset that you're in when your true love has gone and had sex with somebody else, and you've witnessed it, you want to see this person like just die, go away. But then, like, the visceralness of the scene of like, that's *actually* what happened is that he killed her, and Willow watched it. And so, Willow is, I mean, in shock for sure, and destroyed on a level that is probably not understandable by most people on this planet.

And we get this moment of Buffy holding Willow, which is really the same scene that we saw when Willow held Buffy after Angel left. That was in Buffy's bed, and now this is on the floor of a classroom, but it's very, very much the same scene. And the crying is very much the same of just devastation and them supporting each

other. And I mean, you know, in this moment it's Buffy supporting Willow, but we've seen this reversed, and it's really beautiful. It's just a really beautiful moment for their friendship and, of course, devastating at the same time.

**Joanna:** The episode underlines that, and then in the next scene, Buffy is giving Giles is like a commando download, but then she's like, you know, "I've never seen Willow like this," blah, blah. And he's like, "Well, you know, you went through something similar, and you were okay, so you know, let's have faith in Willow that she can get through this."

**Kristin:** Yeah. And, uh, it sets us up for the final scene, right? [Joanna groans] Nobody wants to talk about it. This is like, a good friend of mine watches *The Family Stone*, and she turns it off before the end. If you just stopped *The Family Stone* at the right moment, you get a happy movie. You don't, you just don't have to. And that's how I feel about this episode. It's just like, maybe we should just shut it off. I guess it wouldn't be happy movie anyway, for this episode. But this scene is...

**Joanna:** And then Oz is just gone, and you're like, I wonder where is? [both laugh]

**Kristin:** But this scene is just the realist in the worst way. Like, "I'm going," and then Willow saying, "Don't I get any say in this?" *Fucking hell*. She *doesn't*, and he says, "No, you don't. I have to..."

**Joanna:** He just simply says, "No." It's like, it's harsh, but it's true. And I like that Willow plays anger beat, but this sort of like a dismissive anger beat before where she goes, "*That's your solution?*" You know, like sort of like, fuck you, that's your solution. He's like, "No, it's my decision." You know? And it's just like, that exchange is really good. And once again, as we like alluded to before, I think Alyson Hannigan is bringing it 1000%, and I think Seth Green is bringing it as much as he can, but he can't meet her. He doesn't have quite the chops to do it, you know what I mean?

**Kristin:** Yeah, yeah, I agree. Because you know, when we work towards the end of this, we get the scene where her face is just *soaking wet*, and like you believe it too. It's not one of those things where you're like, oh I guess maybe they put like some water on her face. It's like, I believe that Alyson has just bawled her fucking eyes out to do that.

**Joanna:** She just leaked from her eyeballs. And then she says, and I like could hear this right now as I read the words off the paper, which is just "Oz, don't you love me?" It's just like the way she says it.

[Clip from episode plays]

**Willow:** Don't you love me?

**Oz:** My whole life, I never loved anything else.

**Joanna:** It's good writing. It's iconic, I think, *Buffy* writing. But as you say, then there's the shot of him getting into his van, and, like, he's just not delivering to me what I want from him in that scene. And I know that Oz is a stoic dude, but like I mean, I almost wonder, if they like tried some takes where he breaks down crying and, like, it just didn't land. And they're like, okay, let's just do this instead, you know?

**Kristin:** I agree. I feel like, yes. I mean, like I have to believe that what they wanted here was for him to lose it, because that's what the whole scene is setting us up for. He gets in that car, he goes to start the fucking ignition, he can't start the ignition. And I think we all know that what we're supposed to be seeing is like him losing it. Yeah, I would love to know that too. If anybody knows; if anybody's got the inside scoop. I would love to know if they did some takes where they attempted that. But yeah, Oz is off because he doesn't know where the wolf in him ends and the person in him begins, and he just needs to go out in the forest or whatever and like figure it out.

**Joanna:** Kind of a worldwide epidemic. And this is what I want to say, you know, like I've been very pro-Oz and pro-Seth Green this entire podcast, so I don't want any of your listeners to take this the wrong way, but I just, I do think that there's a difference between, you know, a charismatic, appealing performer, which is what Seth Green is. He's like very appealing in other things like *Can't Hardly Wait*. So like that, and then like, you know, an actor with a tremendous amount of range. And just because he's not the second, doesn't mean I don't still think he's the first. I do. And I'm devastated that he left the show. In my heart, Oz never should have left the show. You know, like, yeah, keep him as a recurring character. I don't like that explanation that Joss didn't think that he could be recurring—why the ef not? Anyway.

**Kristin:** I agree. But, I wonder where we shall go. You know where we should go, before we wrap this episode, actually, Joanna—is we should cut real quick to Jenny, who will hopefully bring us some levity with a Sexual Tension Award. We'll announce the winners from "Beer Bad" and get us some new nominees for this episode.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]

Sexual tension award!



**Jenny:** Hello, friends. It's me, your pal, Jenny Owen Youngs, with this episode's Sexual Tension Awards. Before we get into "Wild at Heart," let's talk about "Beer Bad" for a second.

Coming in, tied in last place, we have Xander and his lighter, and mmm frat boys and the sound of their own voices. Yes, yes, yes. Coming in at second place with 17% of the vote, we have Buffy and foamy, foamy, *foamy* beer. And coming way in first place with 57% of the vote, we have Willow and feminism. Hell yeah. You'll note that in the Twitter poll, Kristin used the emoji of the girl floofing her hair and then a middle finger for this pairing of Willow and feminism. You're welcome.

Now, for the episode at hand. "Wild at Heart" is a rough episode, especially for sexual attention, but don't worry. I dug deep, and I found some solid pairings for you to vote on.

First up, we've got Veruca and her microphone. Gosh, she gets so intimate with that piece of metal. Next up, we've got Willow and Buffy's academic excellence. She's really into it. Also, how about at the very beginning of the cold open: Spike and villainous monologuing from afar? He seems really, really happy—happier than I can remember seeing him, while he is going off about how Buffy had better watch her back right before he, of course, gets electrocuted. And last but not least, we've got Xander paired up with thrift. He is in a landlord-tenant dispute with his mom. He's not paying rent, and he's really into saving that money.

So, please cast your votes, make your voice heard in this beautiful democracy of ours. We will be posting the poll on Twitter. We are @bufferingcast. I have been and shall continue to be Jenny Owen Youngs. Thanks for joining me for this segment of the Sexual Tension Awards.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]  
Sexual tension award!

**Kristin:** Okay. So, uh, what—do we have any, are we all just heartbroken? Did Jenny save us with the Sexual Tension Award nominees?

**Joanna:** I feel better. I love that she said the word "foamy." I feel happier.

**Kristin:** I'm certain, I'm certain that she did. Yeah, this is a really, really heartbreaking episode, and I think beautifully done in many ways. I'm glad that we had Marti Noxon for this episode. I think she delivered for us, as she does. All right, Joanna, thank you so much for walking us through this heartbreak together. I was

happy to have you here as we journeyed through Willow losing Oz. And will you tell all of the good people where they can find you?

**Joanna:** Well, listen, if you love the writing of Marti Noxon on this episode, then you *might* want to try watching one of the new show she has going right now over an HBO called *Sharp Objects*. And if you do that,

**Kristin:** Fuck yeah.

**Joanna:** It's very good. And if you do that, then you might wanna listen to a podcast I'm doing that's running with *Sharp Objects* called *Still Watching: Sharp Objects* that I'm doing through *Vanity Fair* with great Richard Lawson. We had an interview with Gillian Flynn, who wrote *Gone Girl* and the book *Sharp Objects* on the podcast just last week. Oh no, this will have been weeks ago.

So yeah, check it out. It's a really good show on HBO. A lot of good dark, twisty like trademark Noxon stuff going on there. You can hear me talking about it there, otherwise you'd find me on Twitter @jowrotethis or on my other podcast, *Storm of Spoilers*.

**Kristin:** God, Marti Noxon, just like doing all the good shit forever, you know? Like she's just always got her hands in the good pots.

**Joanna:** She like has a lot to say about women and their dark places.

**Kristin:** Hell yes. Hell yes. And as you know, I am Kristin Russo. You can find out all of the things that I'm doing when I'm not speaking to Joanna Robinson or Jenny Owen Youngs about *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* at kristinnoeline.com, that's K-R-I-S-T-I-N N-O-E-L-I-N-E. And, Joanna, not to take you by surprise, but I have a jingle for my name now, so I'm just gonna play the jingle cause I think it's going to be the first time that we play it for everybody right now.

[KRISTIN NOELINE jingle plays]

Kristin with an I  
N-O-E-L-I-N-E

**Kristin:** Thank you so much, Jenny for making me the song that I've always been due. You can learn about my work with LGBTQ communities over there and obviously that spelling, which you'll never forget now that it's memorialized in a jingle, can also get you to my Twitter and my Instagram handles. And you can, of course, send us all of your feedback over at bufferingthevampireslayeratgmail.com. You can follow us @bufferingcast on Twitter, on Instagram, and also on Facebook.

And, of course, you can support what we're doing here over on Patreon. You can go to our website, [bufferingthevampireslayer.com](http://bufferingthevampireslayer.com), and you can find out about Patreon. You can also review and rate the podcast on iTunes, or you can just like go on over to our store, also found via our website, and get yourself some sweet new merchandise that like smashes the patriarchy and does all sorts of other fun *Buffy*-related things. Uh, I think I did it. I think I said all the things, Joanna. So now, I'm going to say the line that will get us to our howl. Are you ready?

**Joanna:** Uh-huh!

**Kristin:** Until next time...

**Together:** Awooooooo!

**Kristin:** So, so appropriate this week. Like I felt like, you know, it's truly the wolfiest week we've had.

**Joanna:** *Oz is a werewolf* [singing].

**Kristin:** Amazing! [laughing]

[Bess Rogers performing "Wild at Heart" off the album "Songs from Season Four" by Buffering the Vampire Slayer]

How can you leave me  
How can you go  
What were we, even?  
I used to know

My heart, my center, oh it cannot hold  
Was it ever real? Where will I go?

How can you leave me  
How can you go  
What were we, even?  
Did I ever know?

I was your lighthouse here to guide you home  
Without your north star, now where will you go?

I thought you'd hold me, keep me safe from harm  
But now I'm broken and you feel so far  
I thought you'd hold me, keep me safe from harm

But now I'm broken

How can you leave me  
How can you go  
What were we, even?  
Did I ever know?

How can you leave me  
How can you go  
What were we, even?  
I'll never know