

Buffering the Vampire Slayer
Episode 5.22: The Gift

[CHIME]

Jenny: Hey everybody! [pause; Kristin laughs] I... refuse to accept that we have arrived at this episode. Therefore, I refuse to introduce it!

Kristin: Yeah, me too! We're on strike.

Jenny: Ha! [Kristin laughs] If we just stand here with our hands planted firmly on our hips.

Kristin: Ughhh!

Jenny: We never have to finish Season 5.

Kristin: [singsong] We are here with The Gift for you so we can all cry together! But first we have to do an introduction! [speaking] Hey, so we're gonna talk about this episode, which will rip all of our beating hearts from our chests. Jenny and I are gonna talk to you about all the things, plus, we have a segment. Don't we, Jenny? We have a theology-based segment.

Jenny: Producer Alba joins us today for a segment on theology!

Kristin: Hell yeah.

Jenny: Very excited about that, a little later in the episode, it's gonna be tight.

Kristin: I'm very excited about that as well. And do you know what I'm fucking not excited about? Goddamnit it, everybody, is the goddamn results from our last Sexual Tension Award poll.

Jenny: Um... I have to say—[Kristin laughs] you know, these are some of the finest results I've ever beheld in the entire history of the Sexual Tension Awards. I can only think of one round of Sexual Tension Awards that was as good as these results. [Kristin laughs] And here's why. In fourth place, understandably, with 5% of the vote, it's Joel Grey and his own tongue. [makes tongue lolling sound, Kristin laughs] Then, in third place, we've got Ben and Glory. They took 14% of the vote. Very fair.

Kristin: Well, that's because 86% of the remaining voters probably couldn't remember that they had a connection.

Jenny: They have a connect—we do suspect [Kristin laughs] they have some kind of connection. But who can say what it is? Then, miraculously, bumped down into second place with a paltry 34% of the vote, relative to the first [mumbles]. It's Spike and Xander, and we love to see Spike and Xander getting a good chunk of the vote.

Kristin: Yeah. We do.

Jenny: But not as much as we love seeing, in first place, with 47% of the vote, nearly half of all participating voters, voted for... Jenny Owen Youngs! [Kristin laughs] Whoever that is. She sounds great. And Spike hot wiring Ben's car. Congratulations to me and Spike hot wiring Ben's car. This is a momentous occasion. This marks my second Sexual Tension Awards win. I'd like to thank the Academy—

Kristin: Okay.

Jenny: And I'd like to thank—

Kristin: Alright, where's that shepherd's crook?

Jenny: Spike for being so hot—

Kristin: [laughing] I need it.

Jenny: At hot wiring. And I'd like to thank my cohost for—[Kristin laughs] my cohost Kristin Noeline Russo, for allowing me to be entered into the Sexual Tension Awards again.

Kristin: Mmm.

Jenny: And despite her campaigning against me every step of the way—

Kristin: I think—I think as—I think perhaps as a result of me campaigning against you—[both laugh] I think I shot myself in the foot on that one. [laughs]

Jenny: Mm. Well, thank you all for your *succulent* votes. I knew from the beginning and yet here we are—

Kristin: I'm gonna fade out your voice [Jenny laughs] as the editor of this episode. I'm just gonna like, fade you out as though you're being dragged off stage. Hey, can I tell—

Jenny: Very fair.

Kristin: Everybody about an upcoming event this Saturday?

Jenny: Please.

Kristin: So, I have a book club. I may not have a Sexual Tension Award on my shelf yet, but I do have a hell of a lot of books. [laughs] And this month, our Patreon book club is reading N.K. Jemisin's *The City We Became*. It is... it's as though I lived in New York City for 20 years, give or take, for the sole purpose of getting to feel like I am in the embrace of the most beautiful fucking book I have ever read. It is stunning and amazing. Even if you're not part of the book club, fucking run, don't walk, go get this book. It's—especially if you're a New Yorker, man, because it is just, *whew!* So... it's so good. Anyway, Saturday, August 29th at 11AM Pacific, 2PM Eastern, book clubbers, join me. We Zoom together now. It's real cute. We all get on with our little faces and talk about our feelings and our thoughts on the book. And hey, you know, come on over to our Patreon if you'd like and join us because we'll be reading books every month.

Jenny: Also, hey, speaking of books. As many of you know by now, we began an antiracism reading and discussion group back in June and had our first facilitated sessions with Mack MacDade, who's an integral part of our team here in many ways, on Ijeoma Oluo's *So You Wanna Talk About Race*. Based on her time with the group so far and learning more about the Buffering community, Mack has chosen Mikki Kendall's *Hood Feminism* as the book we will be discussing this October. We encourage us to join us all and join Mack in our ongoing conversations and you can learn more at bufferingthevampireslayer.com/justkeepfighting. For those who can commit to more reading, Mack has chosen *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir* for August's read, and *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls* for September's.

Kristin: Yes. And if it's not up already, it will be up very soon, a picture of those three books on our socials so that you can find them. Also, just a gorgeous trilogy of books. Like, I have them, all three, sort of lined up and they're just three beautiful covers. Thank you, Mack, for all that you're doing here in this space. And for those of us who can join us in October, please do. And hey, you know, here's a thing about us, Jenny. Did anyone really think that we would be satisfied with *one* episode discussing the Season 5 finale, *The Gift*? Like, did anyone really—

Jenny: I think we thought so, briefly [Kristin laughs] but erroneously.

Kristin: [laughing] For a moment—for one fleeting moment, we thought—

Jenny: Uh-huh!

Kristin: Perhaps one would be enough, but no! No, of course not. Because, listen, we got all sorts of Kristin and Jenny up in this episode. But we want to ask you all to join us on perhaps a metaphorical couch, cry along with us—the tears will not be metaphorical—for a special episode that we're gonna be airing on September 9th. LaToya Ferguson, the new host of Season 3 of Angel On Top, is gonna be with us, talking about her feelings on this episode, a very important episode of Buffy for her. Mack MacDade is gonna join us to get out some *very* serious Spike thoughts and feelings. [Jenny laughs] And we also wanna bring your voices in to help guide us. Yeah, that's right, an interactive episode. You fucking heard it here first.

Jenny: Whaaaaaat!

Kristin: Mmhmm. Go on over—I made you a bit.ly. It's bit.ly/deathisyourgift, on theme. [both laugh] To send in your questions, your thoughts, your stories. It's a form where you can send us all of those things: questions, thoughts, stories. And we're gonna use as many of those as we can in that bonus episode. The phone number to leave a voicemail is also over there at that link, bit.ly/deathisyourgift, all lowercase. I will be jigsawing it all together for one masterpiece of a bonus episode on September the 9th.

Jenny: Bless you, Kristin. And hey! It looks we have a listener email that I'm going to read to you right now. It's pertinent to *my* interests—

Kristin: Mm.

Jenny: And hopefully yours as well.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: This person wrote, "I'm answering the call given out in regards to Ben's headbutting of Minion D'Hoffryn and listeners' experiences with headbutting/using our hard noggins to take someone out. [Kristin laughs] I myself have used such a tactic on many occasions. As the youngest of four and only girl raised in the heathen times of the early 90s as a latchkey kid, fights often broke out, and my only recourse against my big brothers was the headbutt. [Kristin laughs] My head is thick and it can and has sustained many soccer balls in my short-lived hopes of becoming a cool soccer player like the great Mia Ham, as well as falling off of things and tripping into things head-first. My brothers may have had the strength, but I was always able to get out of a scrap by simply slamming my head as hard as I could, forehead-first, into whichever brother was terrorizing me at any given time.

Worked like a charm. I also headbutted a kid in fourth grade because he was picking on my friend. Don't fuck with hardheaded, clumsy, aspirationally sporty girls who protect their friends at all costs. [Kristin laughs] Thanks for your time. Awwoooo to you both. Best, Lindsay."

Kristin: Oh!

Jenny: Lindsay!

Kristin: Lindsay.

Jenny: Thank you for this... this important piece of investigative journalism that is close to my heart.

Kristin: Yes!

Jenny: I'm so happy to have this info.

Kristin: Close to mine too, and Jenny, I'll let you know that when we get around to getting a mailbag episode out, which we'll be doing pretty soon, I'm sure. I have a few headbutting emails to share.

Jenny: Woooo!

Kristin: And one of them is, like, called something like, "headbutting and physics" and it's very long. And I am—

Jenny: I'm so excited.

Kristin: Very excited about it, so. [laughs] Lindsay, thank you.

Jenny: Ha!

Kristin: And may we all now hope that our heads are hard enough to slam directly into Season 5, Episode 22, The Gift.

Jenny: [singsong] Hell yeah!

[Buffering theme plays]

Jenny: Hello! And welcome. [quietly] To Buffering the Vampire Slayer, a podcast where we are—

Kristin: Where we *cry*.

Jenny: Watching and discussing—

Kristin: Where we cry, where we cry.

Jenny: Every episode of [both laugh] Buffy the Vampire Slayer, one by one, spoiler-free. It gets harder every day. I'm Jenny Owen Youngs!

Kristin: I'm Kristin fucking Russo. You know, I'm sorry, but I'm pissed, man! Nobody told me what I was signing up for. I know technically I'd seen the series once before, but like, fuck everybody! This week, we're talking about Season 5, [both laugh] Episode 22, The Gift. It is not a gift. It is not a gift! [Jenny laughs] Stay tuned at the end of this podcast every week for an original song, written by Jenny, that recaps the Buffy episode we are... [exhales] discussing.

Jenny: The Gift, which is a lot, [Kristin laugh] was written and directed by Joss Whedon and originally aired on May 22nd, 2001. Exactly six months after my 19th birthday [Kristin laughs] and six months before my 20th birthday.

Kristin: Wow. You're, I mean really, near to the exact age as Buffy, right? Near to exact.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Near to the numbers.

Jenny: Mmhmm!

Kristin: Normally I read you the IMDB description of the episode at this point in the episode, but like, fuck it. This is the one where we cry, where we cry some more. It's the one where, like, Tara and Willow make us cry. It's the one where Spike and Buffy make us cry. It's the one where Dawn and Buffy make us cry. It's the one where Joel Grey has that fucking knife in his hand and is creepy as fuck.

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: It's the one—I mean. Willow is—just shut up and listen. We're just—I can't.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Normally, *normally*, Jenny, I watch the episode at least—like, at least three hours before we tape. But as I talked about a little bit in *The Weight of the World*, I've been having, like, increasing emotional resistance to watching the episodes.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: And so I literally watched this moments ago. And so I'm—you're hearing me in the wake of sobbing. Like, I have puffy eyes—

Jenny: Freshly tenderized meat.

Kristin: [laughs] Yeah. So. Mmhmm.

Jenny: This is the 100th episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. And the fucking... [Kristin laughs] catty fucks at Warner Brothers—[Kristin bursts out laughing] I can't believe this shit. They promoted this episode as the series finale when I think it was already established that the show [Kristin gasps] did in fact get picked up—

Kristin: Stop it!

Jenny: By UPN. [laughs]

Kristin: Stop it!

Jenny: Can you believe it?

Kristin: What?! Oh my god, that is *rude*.

Jenny: The, like, industry—like, you know, inside baseball-y—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Behind the scenes stuff about this episode, it's very murky. So who can say? But that is a thing that I read. And... it seems about right.

Kristin: I mean, listen, at this point, we probably are in some ears that might have further answers. So if you know about scandalous goings-on in the year 2001— [laughs]

Jenny: Mm.

Kristin: Please email us at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com. It is the hundredth episode, Jenny, and I thought you were gonna say, how did the—

Jenny: Oh.

Kristin: How did the person who created this Previously On not become an Emmy-Oscar-Peabody award winner?

Jenny: God bless planet Earth. Did you know that this Previously On *literally contains* something from every episode of Buffy, up to this point?

Kristin: Yo. 99, yeah.

Jenny: Including Giles... Giles running as a monster. [laughter] Including the horseys. Uh, there's just like—it's got something for everyone.

Kristin: It does. And like, I watched the Previously On a few times. The first time, I cried 'cause I forgot, and it, like, slapped me across the face. Just like—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Just so many people get slapped across the face, actually, in this episode. Including Kristin Russo. [both laugh] But first of all, the opening, right? The way that the Previously On opens, [Jenny sighs] Giles is standing up there on the top level of the library in the high school. "Into each generation," right? And then it cuts to Buffy being like, "Why don't we start with 'hi, I'm Buffy.'" "I'm Xander." "I'm Cordelia—" I'm gonna cry right now! "I'm Willow—"

Jenny: I know, I have full-body goosebumps just listening to you read it.

Kristin: I know, "I'm Giles." And Angel, "I'm Angel," is in there. That's the lineup that we get. And like, seeing Buffy's Season 1 little face and her little hairs—

Jenny: I know.

Kristin: I—

Jenny: I know.

Kristin: Like, you all thought maybe—'cause I was tweeting about crying. Like, maybe you thought, like, I was crying when, like, I spun through everything. No, I cried the minute I saw her tiny face, and then Xander was like, "I'm Xander." I was like—that was it for me, I was gone. [Jenny laughs] Fucking crying—just crying. I can't. 'Cause you know, at this point, I don't know. This show means so much to so many in just so many different ways. And I think continues—if you're a person who

watches the show again and again, like Jenny, you have been in your life historically—comes to mean different things, right? Like, every evolution is different.

But Jenny, for you and I, like, this journey. End of 2015 is when we started it, and so for us even, as like hosts of the podcast, it contains these like, marks of life. And so when you go back like this and you're rooted to 2015, when we were saying, "Hi, I'm Kristin and I'm Jenny. And this is a podcast we're making—" like, it's just—it's a lot, you guys! Whew! We just started. You should probably turn this off, don't listen to this episode. [laughs]

Jenny: I... am gonna go. A couple broad stroke notes—

Kristin: Mmhmm?

Jenny: About this episode.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: It looks, uh, beautiful.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: It looks nice, it looks rich and fancy and filmic. It looks better than any episode we've seen up to this point, I think.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: It looks... you know, purely cinematic.

Kristin: It does, it's stunning. And it's also—like, it's quite something—not to keep going back to the Previously On, but it is quite something to go through that evolution. And then arrive—in a very like, similar vibey scene, to the opening scene of the first season, first episode, right? Because—

Jenny: How good is this?! My notes for this episode are just like, literally every single piece of dialogue—

Kristin: Same!

Jenny: Because it's so tight and—and there's not a moment wasted, not a shot wasted. Everything is just like, juiced up to 11. [Kristin laughs] Maximum emotional

impact. You know, the funny shit is the funniest. The sad stuff is the saddest, obviously. It's just like—it's so much.

Kristin: It really is. And it's like—you know, we get—so this scene, right, this opening scene. Yes, visually. Like, take it, lay it over the opening scene of the first season, and like, that will give you a cue as to like how far we've come budget-wise, certainly, in the series. [both laugh] But also, this is like... the essence of Buffy distilled in this scene, right? Visually, clothing that she's wearing. She's got—like, and it's simplified. Black leather pants, simple. White tight shirt, simple. Her hair—

Jenny: Yeah, the shirt's cool.

Kristin: Pulled back, simple.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Like, it is just like, she is the Slayer. Like, you thought she was the Slayer in Season 1. You thought she was the Slayer Seasons 2, 3, 4. You thought she was the Slayer this season? No, now. Like, *now* she is the fucking Slayer. And it is so powerful.

Jenny: Yeah. And like, grade A quipping with the "biting off more you can chew" [sic] and "what about my—"

Kristin: [laughs] "Ow, my leg."

Jenny: [laughing] "Oh god, my leg, my leg." [Kristin laughs] And then...

Kristin: Oof.

Jenny: Are you kidding me with the fucking—

Kristin: No. I'm not.

Jenny: The way we get out of this scene, with this kid saying, like, "but you're just a girl" and Buffy saying, "that's what I keep saying."

Kristin: Oof.

Jenny: Come on!

Kristin: Seriously, come on! Like, and it's also—I would like to rewind it back a punch. Because it—he says, "how did you do that?" And she says, "It's what I do." Then he says—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: "But you're just a girl." And she says, "That's what I keep saying." This is... [Jenny sighs] the core of this episode is asking us, in four million ways, to look at what sets Buffy apart, what makes her different, and what doesn't. And like, what about her humanity is what places us all here with her—

Jenny: [muffled] Oh my fucking god!

Kristin: And what makes this, like, sort of unroll the way that it unrolls, right? It's here everywhere!

Jenny: Ahhhh!

Kristin: Every little piece of dialogue. If you unroll that little piece of dialogue, you get a fucking mile-long thesis on this core piece. Buffy is who she is because of her humanity and her humanity makes her vulnerable. I mean, we'll get into it. Because there's even like, a Shakespeare—there's Shakespeare in this episode that underlines this, with Henry V. Like, fuck you, everyone, with this episode! Okay. So great. We've made it through the Previously On. [both laugh]

Jenny: And the cold open!

Kristin: Okay, so out of the credits, we go into the Magic Box. And this is one of those episodes for me—you know, sometimes I can really note the difference of a format by the way I take notes. 'Cause normally, in an episode of Buffy, I take notes by location. You know, oh, Magic Box, this happens. Oh, we're here, this happens, oh, we're here, this happens. You could tell immediately—I could tell immediately as I started to take notes that like, oh yeah, this is a whole different situation. 'Cause we are basically in the Magic Box, or we're at the tower where Glory is. There's very few other locations that we are during the course of this episode. And the scenes just sort of, like, roll into each other.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: We're there. And the Scoobies are letting us know by their faces that, while this might be a fun drama sci fi show, that oh shit, the apocalypse actually sometimes is real and this is a grave situation. Like, we are not joking to get this

episode kicked off. We are all sitting in a room together. Buffy has just learned at the end of the last episode that the task before her is to kill her own sister.

Jenny: Uh, thoughts during this ritual being explained.

Kristin: Mm.

Jenny: The Key was living energy, needs to be poured into a specific spot to create a portal which brings the walls between dimensions down. Then when it's finished pouring, the walls come back up. Couple things. There's much that is made of—we—you know, it's like, once Dawn starts bleeding, she's gotta finish bleeding. And like, I *know* there's somebody listening right now who works at like a butcher shop or a Cadaver Zone. [Kristin laughs] And you know... you know all about bleeding a body.

Kristin: [quietly] Cadaver Zone.

Jenny: And what I would like to know—I'm just like, thinking... it can't—there can't be like a pure, clean—like, oh, I'm pouring this can—this bottle of Coke into a glass.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And now it's completely empty and now I'm done. It can't be that clean with like, bleeding a human body. So I take issue with this whole thing that everyone's just accepting as a given—

Kristin: Mmm.

Jenny: That like, this is exactly how it's gonna work. Also, it's clearly stated that the gates will close when the blood flows no more. How 'bout just getting some bandages? [Kristin laughs] How 'bout just, um, you know, a little...

Kristin: Yeah—

Jenny: Neosporin.

Kristin: Well also, like—right. I mean, this call—like, this calls back to so many things we've seen before in the series. Obviously, Angel is like, the most on the nose parallel here. Because Buffy had to kill Angel to close a portal and she did. And we'll get there to that discussion—

Jenny: Mmhmm. Fucking portals, man!

Kristin: Portals and blood, blood and portals. That's the subtitle to this podcast. [both laugh] But also, you know, with Faith and Angel, where Buffy was like, I'm gonna bring Faith over because he needs to drain—like, the cure was to drain a Slayer's blood completely or whatever. I just feel like there was some math that coulda been done—you might even call it...

[HELLMATH jingle plays]
Hellmath!

Kristin: That could have allowed us to lose half of Dawn's blood and half of Buffy's and been okay. [laughs]

Jenny: It's definitely like, metaphysical math that's being done. And I don't mean to poke holes in the drama. These are just some things I was thinking about while I was watching. Anyway.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: We hear the first in an ongoing refrain from Tara that she has places to be.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And then speaking of blood, wondering why it's gotta be like this. Spike has some answers.

Kristin: It's life, baby! It's what's keep—it's what keeps you going. It's what keeps you warm. It's what keeps you hard. Spike, just really going for it. Um, yeah—

Jenny: Sir?

Kristin: Jenny's making a cringe face.

Jenny: This is a family show. [Kristin laughs] Sir? Um. Can I tell you something really stupid? [both laugh] I think it's really stupid. On The Vampire Diaries—

Kristin: Uh-huh?

Jenny: A technique that the vampires use to, like, appear human is that they drink lots of coffee to warm up their blood! Can you believe that?

Kristin: Oh! My god. [laughs]

Jenny: Sorry, I was just thinking about blood and warmth and here we are.

Kristin: But this is—

Jenny: Spike is talking about his penis.

Kristin: Spike *is* talking about his penis, but Spike is also talking about blood being life. Like, right? Like, blood—

Jenny: Totally.

Kristin: That's—like, you know—

Jenny: Modern Spikes can have it all.

Kristin: Hey. [laughs] He's right, he's right. When he's right, he's right. And then, oh my god, holy shit. Dad gets... whew! Dad has an episode, doesn't he?

Jenny: Yo, this is...

Kristin: Yo.

Jenny: Whew!

Kristin: This might be—this might be the Giles of all Giles episodes of all time. I mean, this is insanity.

Jenny: It's so intense. It's like, he's at the—at once, he's both his dadliest and his Ripperiest—

Kristin: Mmhmm. Yes!

Jenny: That we have seen.

Kristin: Yes! Ugh.

Jenny: What a hot dichotomy. A di-*hot*-omy, if you will.

Kristin: Giles—somebody take the old Girls Gone Wild but take the "Girls"—it's so easy, it's like—you know, changing a license date with a pencil—I gotta go. [stammers, Jenny laughs] Can somebody make the Girls Gone Wild, Giles Gone Wild, please? 'Cause that's what this episode is.

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: Giles Gone Wild. He—

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: And this is, like—I'm—you know, we're laughing. But this is not funny at all, this moment. Essentially, Buffy says, "we are not talking about this." And Giles, like, stands up and full throated is like, "Yes, we bloody well are."

Jenny: Oof!

Kristin: And everyone is like [makes brake screech sound], what?

Jenny: Yeah. [both laugh]

Kristin: But Buffy doesn't waver. Like, Buffy doesn't miss a beat. She's made up her fucking mind. Like, she comes in—she left The Weight of the World knowing there was no—there's no talking to Buffy. She's drawn a boundary—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: And she's gonna fucking keep it there. "Tell me to kill my sister?" Giles says—ooh, ouch—"she's not your sister." And we know that like, Giles is pushing for—he's pushing for Buffy to do the thing that he feels needs to be done.

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: Like, her job is to save the world and like, that comes with rough choices. And this is one of them and it's hard but that's what we do. And she's like, yeah, no. Not anymore. And she gives us, like, the line to the end of the episode, of course, by saying, "She's not just my sister." Right? She is me. She's made of me, she's made from who I am and when I'm near her, when—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: She's with me, it is like, more powerful than anything that any of you could understand.

Jenny: Willow says—[Kristin groans happily] "hey, we're gonna solve this. Just don't have another coma, okay?"

Kristin: Mmhmm!

Jenny: [laughing] 'Cause that would really slow things down if Willow had to go back in.

Kristin: [laughs] Willow is just so Willowy, like old Willowy—Season 1, 2, 3 Willowy in this episode. Which is—is—you know, a little whiplash-y for all of us because we've gotten so dark magic with Willow moving to the end of this season. But this episode, she's just like, back to this place of... "it's gonna be okay." You know, "I don't wanna be the—[laughs] I don't wanna be the big gun! Can I just be, like, a cudgel? [both laugh] Or a pointy stick?"

Jenny: I'm like furiously Googling "cudgel."

Kristin: I know. [laughs] But it's just—I don't know, I—with your permission, Jenny, I would just really love to play Willow her jingle. Her original Willow jingle, because I feel like this episode really gives us some of that core of Willow, that we love.

Jenny: Please.

[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

Kristin: Did you find out what a cudgel is? [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah, I just wanted to let you all know I've completed my Googling. And while a cudgel is sometimes just a stick, it's also sometimes something that looks a bit more like a hybrid between like a beefy stick and a mace. [Kristin laughs] Sometimes it has, like, pointy, scary, ridged things at the end. I wouldn't—I wouldn't think, like, I don't wanna be a gun, I'd rather be something less scary and violent, like a cudgel. [laughs] You know?

Kristin: I'm just thrilled for the listenership that they got to hear you say "beefy stick." [both laugh]

Jenny: Oh yeah!

Kristin: Um. So this scene ends with Buffy basically saying, hey, then the last thing that Dawn will see—like, if the world is ending?

Jenny: Ugh!

Kristin: The last thing she's gonna see is me defending her. And she says "I'm sorry" to everybody in the room. I say the end of this scene, but it's actually just like, the end of the—the world is ending and we're all gonna cry. Because then we move—thank god. Something that Joss is very good at, is—

Jenny: Balance!

Kristin: Yes! Knowing when we need a minute. And life is like that.

Jenny: Yeah, man.

Kristin: Life is like that, right? Like, even if you're—if you're—

Jenny: Yeah, it can't be all one thing.

Kristin: No. And when you're all just in a room, knowing that the apocalypse is around the corner, it's pretty human to make a joke about it. Because what the fuck else are you gonna do?

Jenny: Anya's like, polling for ideas. [Kristin laughs] Spike's like, would you say you love us *all*? [Kristin laughs] Giles and Xander are like, shut up! Anya's like, maybe Willow could turn Glory into a hoppy toad and we could hit her with a hammer! Tara is so excited that somebody said "hoppy toad." Xander—maybe having his best idea ever—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Is like, "What if we just kill Ben?"

Kristin: [laughs] Yeah! Yeah. And the room—rude—room responds as though [Jenny laughs] this is a horrific idea. Meanwhile, Giles always has it in his back fucking pocket the whole time! Way to let Xander take the fall.

Jenny: And—and Giles just was like, "Hey, we might have to kill Dawn." [both laugh] Like—

Kristin: Right!

Jenny: Essentially. He didn't say that out loud, but like—it's a little different for us as the viewers 'cause we've already seen Ben make a deal with Glory and—

Kristin: Yes. Yes.

Jenny: Be shitty.

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: So... once they realize collectively that they only need to distract Glory till the ritual window has closed, they don't need to kill her. You know, like, she only has a finite amount of time to accomplish this task, otherwise she's shit out of luck. Anya's like, yo, we gotta keep brainstorming. And everyone's getting pissed and Giles is so mean. And he's like, "besides your completely un-infectious enthusiasm, [Kristin laughs] what do *you* have to contribute?" Anya's like, "the Dagon Sphere." We're all like, oh my god! [Kristin laughs] The what? I completely forgot!

Then she fucking Vanna White's over at Olaf's fucking troll hammer. [Kristin laughs] And is like, what about this fucking tra—this hammer. It's a weapon of the gods so you can use—Spike is across the room, "uh, no, that's too heavy—" and Buffy just picks it up like it's a fucking... Slim Jim. And he's like, "oh, uh, good. [both laugh] Good."

Kristin: Oh, yeah, yeah—

Jenny: But then Anya just fucking coming out with all the fucking hot ideas, after they were just like, what do *you* have to offer—

Kristin: Yeah!

Jenny: Besides a love of money?

Kristin: Yeah. Anya's got a lot to offer. Play her fucking jingle!

[ANYA jingle plays]
[cash register rings]
She spent one millennium, demonically vengeancein'
Speaks her mind and then some, you know
She's partial to the finer things
And down with double boyfriends, oh yeah
Exchanging cash for goods and also services
She'd love to hold the money for ya (she'll hold that cash)
Just keep the bunnies far from... Anya!

Kristin: Yo. Seriously. And they—and this lays out the blueprint for the plan. This *is* the plan!

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: Instead of a hoppy toad, they throw the fucking Orb of Thesulah Part Deux at her. You know what I mean? Like, this is—this is what they do.

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: They weaken her. They hammer her. And they fucking kill Ben. So! [laughs] The fuck? Anyway. Tara is also key to the episode, because she knows where the ritual is gonna take place. A little—like, you know, a bit of a nod here—and I think we're gonna talk about this a little bit more in Season 6, without spoiling too much. But like, mental health is used as a plot device in this entire season, probably most so in this episode with Tara. There's sort of just like, a generic Glory sucks, you know, human's brain, human behaves in these ways. And those things then give us, you know, the line to get to where we go. But there's no exploration of mental health. There's no—there's, like, no depth to the conversation that is for sure, like, required, I think. And I say we're gonna talk about it in Season 6 more, not necessarily 'cause we'll, like, get super back into Season 5. But because I think that mental health may be a large part of Season 6. It's just a hunch I have.

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: So putting a pin in that here, and saying like, yeah. Wish that Tara was—like, wish that Tara's mental state wasn't used as a plot device—vehicle, if you will, without any depth to it.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Cool, so Ben and Dawn. Dawn and Ben—yo, Dawn... bless her. Bless her fucking heart, because she really—I identify with Dawn a lot in this exchange that she has, where she, like, summons Glory back. And she's like, you know what, Ben is a fucking monster but at least you're upfront about it. There's a lot to say there, don't you think, Jenny?

Jenny: Yeah—wait, are you suggesting there's a connection? [Kristin laughs]
Between Ben and Glory?

[BEN IS GLORY jingle plays]
Ben is Glory! Glory is Ben!
Ben is Glory! Glory is Ben!
In case you forget, I'll say it again

Ben is Glory and Glory is Ben!

Jenny: No, absolutely, I think it makes... you know, loads of sense, that in your final hours... you'd want something a little more straightforward.

Kristin: So Glory is like, yo, Dawnie, I know you think that your big sister's coming for you. But head's up, she probably learned that the way to end this all is to kill you. So probably she's not gonna show up.

Jenny: I have two qualms with this episode. [Kristin laughs] This is the first. Smacking down on the grate—we've got, like, up through the grate shot happening. And she's like [weakly] "Buffy..." Dawn, I know. I know you're in a bad spot [laughs] but this is... a little... over the top.

Kristin: Oh, I like it! I'm gonna disagree with you, it happens so infrequently—

Jenny: Okay.

Kristin: Now that we've gotten rid of Riley. But I—actually, this was very moving to me. I thought it was—I just thought it was... I think that a lot of the scenes with Dawn are very effective at showing how terrified she is and how much she needs her sister to be there with her, to help her.

Jenny: Mm, mmhmm.

Kristin: And so I—you know, write into us, bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com. What do you think? Team—

Jenny: Oh my god, who's right? Jenny or Kristin?

Kristin: [laughing] #TeamKristin or #TeamJenny.

Jenny: What the hell. [Kristin laughs] I just felt like Michelle Trachtenberg was accomplishing what needed to be accomplished without saying "Buffy." That's all. Like, I felt like we were getting *plenty*.

Kristin: Well, you know what, Jenny, talk to me when your big sister is a vampire Slayer, you've been a mystical Key, you have a hell god that's about to drain your blood slowly over a portal opening up all the hell dimensions. And like, then let me know, like, will you say Buffy's name out—

Jenny: Okay, so next—next week? Do you have an opening next week?

Kristin: [laughs] Yeah, yeah, next week.

Jenny: Okay.

Kristin: Could you just check in with me? [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: So Buffy's punching the punching bag across the room.

Jenny: She punches it off its chain! [Kristin laughs] Buffy, you're gonna need all that energy, what are you doing?

Kristin: No. She correctly is like—'cause Giles is like, are you gonna tire yourself out? She's like, nope. And you—I fully believe her. I'm like, she could punch that punching bag from now until next Tuesday and still have all the energy she needs—

Jenny: Mm.

Kristin: For this battle.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: She's full of it. Because it's like, hyper-drive, right? Like, she knows that she could die, that her sister could die and that she doesn't give a fuck anymore. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: And so, like, I just feel like that's a different kinda energy.

Jenny: I love the juxtaposition that we get here of Giles coming in and saying, like, I have to do what I have to do. I have to—because of oaths that I have sworn to this world, I have to say things and do things that other people can't—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: And shouldn't have to?

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: I feel like there is mutual respect, while also, like, nobody's giving up ground.

Kristin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jenny: Which I really, really like. I like to see them both kind of coming at it with their own personal convictions.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And knowing that, like, they each believe what they believe for the reasons that they believe it. I don't know, it's nice.

Kristin: Yeah. And it's a line, right? It's like, that's technically also Buffy's station in life. But Giles gives us this line at the end of the episode, talking about her as a hero. And that she couldn't do this thing and—there's just—there's so many layers in this exchange that, like, play out through the rest of the episode. But I agree. Neither one of them is saying, like, "fuck you." They're just saying like, I'm gonna do what I have to do and you're gonna do what you have to do. And like, also, I love you. So. They sit down on this squeaky leather couch. Pleather, probably. And... [Jenny laughs] I think it's Buffy who's like, "so how many apocalypses is this for us now?" Giles says at least six. I'm pulling from a little factoid blurb on IMDB here: Becoming Part Two, The Zeppo, Graduation Day Part Two, Doomed, and Primeval are the six that we know of. So this is actually—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Accurate or near to accurate numbers. And then there's a fun little Easter egg in there when he says, "Feels like a hundred." Um, be—well, first of all, because, damn. Doesn't one apocalypse feel like a hundred? But also—

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: This is the hundredth episode.

Jenny: Yeah, so sick.

Kristin: Yeah. And so we've been thinking it the whole time, right. Wow, this is so similar to this other time when Buffy had to kill a thing she loved more than anything in the world to close a portal, which is Angel, and she brings it up. And she says—I'm actually gonna play this sound clip. I'm gonna play a couple of sound clips in this episode, mostly with the intentionality of making you cry as much as we've had to cry. You're welcome.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

[Clip from episode plays]

Buffy: I don't understand. I don't know how to live in this world if these are the choices. If everything just gets stripped away. I don't see the point. I just wish that... [long pause] I just wish my mom was here.

Jenny: Relatable content!

Kristin: Oof.

Jenny: Buffy!

Kristin: Oof, oof, oof, oof, oof, right? And this—like, we've been on this journey with Buffy for awhile. Even like, I'm thinking of Lie to Me. I remember our discussion of Lie to Me and sort of like, digging into the end of that episode, specifically, I think, where she's starting to realize that like, oh, it's not just that like, demons are bad and Slayers are good. It's not just that, like, this over here is good and this over here is bad. The lines are really blurry and it's really confusing. And Buffy has lasted longer than I think we are to believe most Slayers have. And I think part of what we're seeing here too is that, like, being a Slayer and carrying the weight of the world has a shelf life. Because it gets more and more confusing the more you do. And the more you, like, think you knew what was right and you knew what was wrong, but then you do what you thought was right but actually wasn't? And it's just very confusing.

Jenny: Sounds like life.

Kristin: I hate it. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah. Unsubscribe!

Kristin: Unsubscribe! Why are you listening to this podcast? Get out of here! We've asked you so many times. [both laugh]

Jenny: Buffy also mentions that... death is her gift. And says that she guesses that means a Slayer really is just a killer after all.

Kristin: Mmm.

Jenny: And then she tells Giles that if Dawn dies, she's quitting.

Kristin: Yeah. Yeah. Well, she won't have to do that, will she?

Jenny: Not exactly. [laughs]

Kristin: And you know, there's just—there's a lot. And we're gonna get to the—unfortunately, we're gonna get to the scene with Spike and Buffy in a little bit. But like, there's a lot there too, right, that Buffy's saying like, I guess all I am is a killer. And then like, how does that overlay with Spike saying, like, "I know I'm a monster. But you treat me like a man." Like—

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: And Faith saying, like, you're bad, you're—or you're—not even bad, but like, you're—this is what you are. This—like, this darkness is what you are. And you know—

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: That question just, like, springs eternal for Buffy. She cannot figure out where her humanity ends and her, like, darkness begins. Which is like, just a lot to unpack. [Jenny exhales] And I'm gonna just, like, put it back in the suitcase, because I don't wanna unpack it right now. So fuck everyone.

Jenny: Mmhmm. You know what really got me? Dawn folding up her clothes so neatly and sliding her little shoes under the chair.

Kristin: This is... gutting. It's gutting.

Jenny: [laughing] It's messed up.

Kristin: The, like, little detail of her tiny self, going off to be bled out. And still folding... her clothes!

Jenny: Yep. And then Glory orders the minions to take her up to that rickety-ass tower. I don't know, this just has a real strong, like, Mad Max-y, kind of like—

Kristin: Mmm.

Jenny: I don't believe it's guaranteed to stay upright. I know they only need it—

Kristin: Well like—yeah—

Jenny: For like, five minutes.

Kristin: Right. Do you think that there was a—a height that it had to be? Like, is there...

Jenny: There definitely—there definitely is a height that it had to be because once we get to the end, you'll see the blood drip into a very specific spot.

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: Vertically.

Kristin: It's like in Mario Brothers when you'd just be like, running along and it just looks like a sky, but actually, if you jump up at the right moment, you like, hit one of those—

Jenny: [laughing] Exactly!

Kristin: Hidden little fucking things. That's where, like—that's the portal. [laughs]

Jenny: Yes! Yes.

Kristin: [sings Mario theme]

Jenny: Precisely.

Kristin: Anyway. Yes, it's when we see the tower for the first time. And then we go to the basement, where obviously, people are fucking. I am so surprised that more people are not fucking in this episode. They all think the world is ending.

Jenny: Dude—

Kristin: Isn't that what—I mean, Jenny. You think the world is ending. You're downstairs, in a basement. Are you going to or not going to have sex, with your partner or there—anyone else that happens to be down there? [laughs]

Jenny: Well, they're kind of like the only coupling—[laughs] "or anyone else."

Kristin: No, but that's what I'm saying!

Jenny: Yeah. I mean, this makes a lot of sense. We saw Willow and Oz do it awhile back.

Kristin: Oh yeah!

Jenny: I just, like, love this Giles calling down into the basement. [Kristin laughs] And Xander and Anya furiously re-dressing and re-zipping and re-buttoning. "Oh, not yet! Let's, uh, look over there where we haven't, uh, yet looked! Indeed!" [clears throat]

Kristin: [laughs] Also—maybe my favorite Xander/Anya moment to date is when Xander's like, "pervert," and she goes, "other pervert." Or the other way— [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah, their pet names for each other. And this is—this comes about because Xander pulls a sheet off something that's just, like, resting in the basement. And oh god, it's the Buffybot!

Kristin: Yeah!

Jenny: And he's like, why didn't they melt it down? And Anya's like, maybe Willow wanted it. And Xander was like, "uhh, I don't think—uhh, according to—" like, trying to say out loud that like, he doesn't think that—while he furiously creates a scenario in his mind that's like, "Slayer and mega-witch. Have a blast in the cemetery good times, 1080P HD." [both laugh] Like...

Kristin: I'm so mad—somebody who needs a project, please fucking smash together the amount of fucking times Jenny has said 1080—whatever you say. [laughs]

Jenny: 1080P, pixels. HD.

Kristin: [slowly] 1080P—

Jenny: Hi-def.

Kristin: HD. Whatever.

Jenny: If—actually. If you're—as long as you're going in and making a supercut, don't just get the specs, get the title of all the porn I've created. Thank you. [both laugh]

Kristin: Yeah, fair. Very fair. Okay, so. I don't really—like, I wish that anyone could just say "orgasm" in their exchange. But they instead say "arrived" and "pleasure moment." [laughs] So fine. I mean, don't yuck their yum. [Jenny sighs] It is what it is.

Jenny: Yeah, it's fine.

Kristin: But yeah, the Buffybot is revealed. You probably know the minute you see the Buffybot that the Buffybot's gonna be used somewhere in the episode, right? Why else would we—why else would we have that moment? And then, in what is maybe one of the best Anya moments we have to date, uh, she screams in horror!

Jenny: Mm!

Kristin: In abject horror.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: And pulls out a stuffed pink bunny. "Who would leave this here?!" [both laugh]

Jenny: So indignant.

Kristin: But she correctly says, I think this is an omen. I mean. The episode doesn't end well, so. Hey. Then something happens, doesn't it?

Jenny: Yeah. She's talking about how usually when there's an apocalypse, she's—runs away. But now she loves stupid Xander so much that here she is, [Kristin sighs] brainstorming and trying to fight a god and like, la la la. And then Xander's like, hey. Wanna get married?

Kristin: It's really sweet. And like, it makes sense to me—like, Anya's response makes sense to me. [laughs] It's very Anya, first of all. But second of all, you know, like, oh sure, the dude's gonna propose to you, like, right before he thinks he's gonna die. 'Cause then he gets, like, the fucking brownie points for doing it—

Jenny: The points, yeah.

Kristin: [laughs] Yeah. But he doesn't have to like, follow through it. But Xander's really sweet and is like, no, like, I know the world isn't going to end and that's why I'm asking you.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Very, very sweet. So Anya says yes, then she retracts [laughing] and says no. [Jenny laughs] And says, I will answer you at the end—if the world—if the world is still here, then I will—then I will say yes. So, very sweet, Anya and Xander. We love to see it. Well, I shouldn't say "we," but I love to see it at the very least.

Jenny: It's nice. I would like to see Anya with somebody else. Like, me for example. [both laugh] But... if it has to be somebody in-universe, I guess Xander is around. Eh, fine.

Kristin: [laughs] Aww!

Jenny: No, they're—it's cute! It's very cute.

Kristin: Aww, come on!

Jenny: It's very cute.

Kristin: I know. I know that we're known for our distaste of Xander, but Xander's okay right now. He's doing—he's doing a decent job, which is a lot, for Xander.

Jenny: He's doing a good job.

Kristin: Okay, so we talked about Willow and her not wanting to be the big gun. This is that scene now we get. It's actually really, I think, important—you know, that Buffy is pointing out to Willow what we've been pointing out on the podcast for several episodes now, which is, uh, dude, do you realize how fucking powerful you are? [laughs] Uh, because—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: You're the only one who has hurt Glory, of any of us. You're the only one and we need you.

Jenny: Yep! Yep! And... Willow says she's been spending the last couple days mostly looking for ways to help Tara. Ahh! But she says, oh my gosh, breakthrough, maybe.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: She thinks if she can get close enough, that she might be able to reverse what Glory did to Tara *and* the bonus side effect of that reversal might weaken Glory or might make her, like, woozy or it might make all their heads explode. Fingers crossed it's not the third one. And Buffy's like, cool, keep working. And then... Tara slaps Willow across the face.

Kristin: [groans] I don't know how much I've talked about, uh... parents aging on this podcast. But a very good friend of mine is going through, you know, her mother having very advanced dementia. My dad has been in the beginning stages

of losing memory and going through some, like, mental health experiences that are specifically connected to aging. And I used the word "abject" before, which always makes me think of being a grad student [laughs] in gender studies. That like, there's this abject-ness to human—being human. That we—like, our whole economy, like, capitalism is built around hiding it, right? Like, we're made of blood and pus [laughs] and like, all this shit that like, we can't stand to know or look at because it shows us our mortality. And so we market things like nice haircuts and makeup and lotions and creams and pretty clothes and whatever. And like, all of it is just like, this grand distraction from... life. Like, the truth of life.

And I don't know if I'll be able to connect this fully for you, but hey, maybe my job as a podcaster is to give you all the ingredients and you can make of it what you will. I just feel like this moment is a moment that echoes in a lot of our experiences with aging parents, for sure. But I think in a lot of ways, outside of that, where you're face-to-face with the, like, blood and guts of life and where you are in that moment. And Willow has to like, look at Tara and see where they really are in that moment, and love her in that moment, and it's a lot.

Jenny: Right, like, over the past bunch of episodes, Willow has had to deal with a sudden shift in her reality which... magical or real, the core of it is that suddenly, her partner is farther away from her.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Than she was.

Kristin: Mmhmm. Yeah, thank you so much, everyone, for this episode. And also, no thank you.

Jenny: [laughing] Yeah, fuck you.

Kristin: So we get another—and again, here's Joss, right? Like, knows that he's making us look at something that feels hard, really hard to take in. And so then he gives us Xander being like, "I'd like to take the broadsword!" and Spike's like, don't swing it at me, man! No homo! [laughs] Essentially.

Jenny: [laughs] Oh my god, "keep your great big sword away from me, Xander."
[both laugh]

Kristin: And then Spike sets us up for later, by being like, "you're a glorified bricklayer." And what I love is that Xander's like, touche. Like, he like, doesn't really kick it back. He's like, yeah, and then Anya's like, [laughing] hey, he's also a

really good—but no, he says, "I'm also a really good bowler." And Anya's like, "yeah, he even has shoes." [both laugh]

Jenny: Like, what?

Kristin: Ohh. And Spike says, "the gods themselves, they tremble." And we laugh. We get a moment of levity, because oh no! We're gonna get plunged head first into misery in the next scene!

Jenny: We see that Buffy's been having a conversation with the squad while Tara and Willow had that brief exchange. And she's like, whoa! That's huge. Huge if true. You know, and they're like kind of having half a conversation to keep us out of the loop, where she's like, "well, I'm gonna have to go pick up—is there time? Okay. Spike, come with me." And they go to the Summers' residence. [Kristin groans] To get weapons and something else that we don't know about yet. [Kristin laughs] Buffy walks through the door but Spike cannot.

Kristin: [sighs] This, um... quote—this moment. I always forget it's coming in this episode. Like, I—'cause there's so—there's just—there's a lot? Like, you think like, oh, this is the episode where I'm gonna cry because of these three things. And then you're watching the episode and you're like, wait a minute, there's 75 things and I forgot they were all in here.

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: Spike's face—uh, James Marsters and Sarah Michelle Gellar. [Jenny exhales] In this scene are *stunning* to watch. The way that he looks—I'm gonna cry. The way that he looks at her when she takes down the ward to keep out is... so much. It is so much. [stammers] I mean, it's unbelievable what he does in that one look that just takes your heart and rips it directly out of your chest. He is so thankful and he gives voice to essentially what he's feeling, when he says to her, later in the scene...

[Clip from episode plays]

Spike: I know you'll never love me. I know that I'm a monster, but you treat me like a man. And that's... [pause] get your stuff, I'll be here.

Kristin: Yeah, fuck this. [laughs]

Jenny: Fuck this. Counterpoint, though. [both laugh] Just to play devil's advocate for a moment in time.

Kristin: Sure, sure, sure.

Jenny: The woman you love. Her sister is in incredible peril. Time is of the essence, tensions are high. Is now the time you opt to say this line? Yes, of course it is, because it's the 100th episode, the season finale. You might not get a chance to say it later. Yeah.

Kristin: That's why, that's why. You just answered your own question.

Jenny: Alright.

Kristin: That *is* why you say it now.

Jenny: Well, you know, sometimes you just gotta talk it out until you get there. So, fine.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Also, Buffy says—

Kristin: Mmm.

Jenny: "We're not all gonna make it and I'm counting on you to protect her." And Spike says, "To the end of the world. [Kristin makes blubbering noise] Even if that happens to be tonight." [shakes self, clears throat]

Kristin: I can't believe that television wasn't outlawed after this episode of television.

Jenny: [laughing] I know!

Kristin: [laughs] Okay, so Dawn is tied—

Jenny: I know.

Kristin: To the platform. Dawn's big toes are so much bigger than the rest of her toes. [laughs]

Jenny: I... can't—

Kristin: I don't mean to foot shame, I just—an observation.

Jenny: I just... do you think they're really Michelle Trachtenberg's feet and—

Kristin: I would like to know.

Jenny: Or are they foot doubles? I think they're really her feet.

Kristin: I think so too. But—

Jenny: Neither here nor there, but I was thinking about it.

Kristin: [simultaneously] I can't—I cannot wait to get an interview with Michelle Trachtenberg and to be like, so, Michelle. Can you show us your feet?

Jenny: [simultaneously] Tell us about your feet. [both laugh] Yeah.

[AD BREAK]

Jenny: Okay! Back at the Magic Box, shit's coming together. We don't know what it is yet, but it's on schedule.

Kristin: Yeah. So Tara, obviously being a bit omnipotent—is that what you call it when somebody—om—om... is it?

Jenny: Um, omniscient.

Kristin: Yes!

Jenny: Omnipotent is all powerful—

Kristin: Ooh.

Jenny: Omniscient is all knowing. Omnipresent is everywhere.

Kristin: [laughs] And omm is what we say to center ourselves. Tara looks at Giles and says, "You're a killer," foreshadowing what will happen at the end of the episode. [Jenny makes horror movie sound effect] And Buffy makes it clear in her speech. [laughs] "Anyone comes near Dawn and I'll kill them." And that's where we get this Henry V reference, because Spike says, well, that was, uh—not quite as—quite as, uh, intense as the St. Crispin's Day Speech. And then Giles, picking right up on that Shakespeare reference, says, "We few, we happy few." And the Shakespeare line is, "We band of brothers." [laughs] Spike changes it on the fly to: "We band of buggered." We're fucked, essentially, is what he's saying. [both laugh] And so I—

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: I thought, you know, like, knowing—knowing that Joss Whedon is a big Shakespeare dude. There was a lot of Shakespeare—there's a lot of Shakespeare, like, braided into a lot of Joss Whedon's stuff. And so I thought, like, he didn't just... he didn't just pop this fucking Henry V line in here. There's gotta be a reason. And I'm not super well versed—[laughing] no pun intended—in Shakespeare. Like, I don't know sort of like the cornerstone characters and like, their lessons and all that stuff. I have to look it up, so I looked it up. Do you know what Henry V's deal is, Jenny?

Jenny: I don't. Tell me everything.

Kristin: Well, I'm not gonna tell you everything, but I will tell you is that from what I could glean, and please of course always write in to bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com. But from what I could glean, Hen—and this is—I'm pulling this from a, like, SparkNotes summary. "Henry V's predominant concern—" the play, not Henry V himself, but the play's predominant concern is "the nature of leadership and its relationship to morality. The play proposes that the qualities that define a good ruler are not necessarily the same qualities that define a good person." So...

Jenny: Mm. Wow.

Kristin: Yeah. So like, that's it, isn't it?

Jenny: Whew! [shakes self]

Kristin: Isn't it? And you just know—like, you have to know that it's there. You have to trust. Like, this is A plus writing. And I think in, like, A plus writing, like, this episode gives us—any time you're like, hmm, I wonder if. Yep. The answer's yep. There it is for ya.

Jenny: Man! Whew.

Kristin: Do you think, Jenny, that to be a good leader, you need to have different qualities than you need to have to be a good person?

Jenny: That seems like an easy conclusion to draw. But I might say... that that might be something we've been brainwashed—

Kristin: Mm.

Jenny: Into thinking.

Kristin: Mmhmm. Yeah, I think there's a lot to, like, unpack there. I think that—I think that to be a lead—I mean, even being a leader is a complicated concept, right? Like, a leader of what? Like, why do you—why does a leader have—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: More power than those being led? Like, what are we talking about? But I do think that if you are—if we're talking in, not terms of like, I am a ruler of these humans. But more in terms of like, maybe I'm—like, you and I are, right? We are like public figures and so when we speak, often more people are listening to us than would otherwise if we were not public figures. So like, I think the way we do work in public spaces is very different than the way we do work in personal spaces. That's what I'm trying to get at.

Jenny: Mm.

Kristin: And so that's what that brings up for me, right? That like, do you need—you know, leader or whatever these words are, are complicated. And I think to your point, Jenny, overlaid with things like capitalism and white supremacy and all manner of power dynamics.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: We can even play the Patriarchy jingle right here.

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

Kristin: But I do think that some of this question of, like, morality, questions of making difficult choices, can really open up some big conversations, when it comes to our responsibility to our friends versus our responsibility to communities. Right? Like, that—those—

Jenny: Mm.

Kristin: Those spaces are navigated in different ways. And so, I don't know, you know? It's just—again, I'm—this is—my whole mission in this podcast is to give you no answers. [laughing] It's simply to sprinkle big thoughts on your brain—

Jenny: Mm!

Kristin: And then run away. [laughing] And be like, good luck! Okay.

Jenny: Big day!

Kristin: Big day! Big day.

Jenny: Big day. Uh, yeah. Everybody's following Tara towards her big day. And Willow says she could use some courage. [Kristin laughs] And Spike valiantly offers her some.

Kristin: It's really sweet!

Jenny: What a gentleman.

Kristin: Their exchange is so sweet.

Jenny: It is.

Kristin: It's sweet that Spike offers it and it's also sweet that Willow's like, no, I meant the real kind. And then she's like, but thank you. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah! Yeah, it's cute. Yo, Tara just like straight-up wanders into the ritual site. And Glory immediately finds her, what luck, and is like, what are *you* doing here? And Willow's like, she's with me! And then it's fucking brain fingers bazingo, kaboom. [Kristin laughs] Fucking...

Kristin: The—[laughs]

Jenny: Willow [sic] is restored to her former state. Glory is all fucked up and is like, "big day, got places to be, big day, need a brain!" This is pretty wild stuff.

Kristin: [still laughing] I'm sorry, I've heard nothing since "brain fingers bazingo." There's a Twitter account that—it's out of context Buffering—I don't even know if that's the exact—you can find it. But it's basically just quotes taken totally out of context from the podcast that the person who runs that Twitter runs [laughing] and I just, like, immediately saw "brain fingers bazingo" on that Twitter feed. So anyway!

Jenny: Mmm. Yes.

Kristin: Yeah, so Willow makes a hole—

Jenny: One of my—another one of my timeless quotes. [both laugh]

Kristin: Willow makes a hole in Glory's brain. And...

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: Yeah. And in busts Buffy. And she's like, well, I got a hole in my brain, I suppose I could use yours. And Buffy says, okay then. Come and get it. Hot, hot, hot, hot, hot, hot, hot.

Jenny: [laughing] *Really*. So, wow. Glory is feeling the effects of something. She's straight-up woozy! She's trying to tell her minions to go guard the girl, but she can't even find the words "diversionary tactic" [Kristin laughs] in her mind. She's so messed up, and Buffy whips out the Dagon Sphere! And is like, maybe it's this! And she's like... it's—I hear it repels you, so you probably shouldn't touch it, and throws it at her. And Glory catches it in front of her own face and then she holds onto it. And you're like, why are you holding onto that thing that's making you so sick?

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And then she crushes it in her well-manicured hand!

Kristin: Hell yeah. Hell yeah! Do you think that they have, like, a—in like the Hogwarts version of Slayer school—which Buffy never went to, but prob—but like, Kendra did, right? Do you think that there was like a whole lesson on how to tell a Dagon Sphere apart from an Orb of Thesulah?

Jenny: Well, I believe the Orb of Thesulah was rather small. Smaller than the—

Kristin: You think?

Jenny: Dagon Sphere, no?

Kristin: I don't know, I feel like they were both palm-able.

Jenny: I think so. Mm, palm-able but like—it was like a—almost like a baseball/softball... differentiation.

Kristin: Okay. Okay, I'll give you baseball/softball, yes. I'll give you baseball/softball, maybe that's the way. And also, I think that the Orb of Thesulah is a bit more translucent than the... Dagon Sphere.

Jenny: Yeah. And silvery and then the—

Kristin: Dagon Sphere's more gold-ish. Yep.

Jenny: Whereas the Dagon Sphere is gold. So Glory's like, "you're gonna wish—" but then she doesn't finish her sentence. Because she gets punched in the face!

Kristin: Yeah! Keeping on theme with the slap and punch in the face episode, and probably more in this episode than any other.

Jenny: A lot of face damage happening. [both laugh] In this 45 minutes. And then it's "charge!" for the Scoobies. And Anya holding a baseball bat from the fucking middle!

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Madam!

Kristin: This is so—this is so Graduation Day Part Two. Right? Like, this is such hardcore—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Graduation Day Part Two vibes. Like, everyone is throwing themselves in the battle with all their weapons. You want to see Cordelia jump in here, if you're me. You wanna see it, you know? But I think there were baseball bats in the Graduation Day fight, right?

Jenny: Uh, I just remember a lot of medieval weapons. But you could be very right.

Kristin: I don't know. Yeah, maybe—it's all blending together. I know there were fire arrows at Graduation Day, but.

Jenny: Maybe there were—maybe you're confusing baseball bats with cudgels. [Kristin laughs] And other beefy sticks. [both laugh]

Kristin: Maybe. So, okay. We're like, oh yeah, battle, a battle, a battle! Maybe we're done crying. No. No, you're not. No, you're fucking not. Because now we go to, like, the little garbage heap—

Jenny: Oh no.

Kristin: Where Tara lays. And Willow comes over and she's like, "Tara?" And Tara's like, "Willow?"

Jenny: [emotional] And Tara says "I got so lost" and Willow says "I found you, I will always find you." And then you'll have to *excuse me* [Kristin exhales] because I... have everything in my eye!

Kristin: Literally everything in my eye. I... can't. "I got—

Jenny: How dare.

Kristin: So lost," she says. "I will always find you." I can't. It's like—

Jenny: How fucking—

Kristin: The two of them, their love is special. The other day—[Kristin laughs] people were tweeting out—Slayerfest98 did—does a great job, a great job on social media, giving us all the Buffy content we could ever desire. And they tweeted out sort of like, what's the thing about you that makes you lose your Buffy card, right? Like, your opinion?

Jenny: Mm. Mmhmm.

Kristin: And Ira Madison III, I'm calling you out, was like, [laughing] "I think Tara is boring! I think—or no, I think Willow and Tara—[Jenny laughs] it was something about Willow and Tara being boring. And we had an online argument about it, it was a lot of fun. So—

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: Yeah, how can you—Ira, please, write into us at [laughing] bufferingthevampireslayer—[dissolves in laughter]

Jenny: Oh, I'm sorry, is moving a vending machine with your brain boring? Actually, kind of? Like, in the grand scheme of magical things that happen on the show, it is kind of boring. But—

Kristin: [laughs] Well, I said—

Jenny: Still.

Kristin: I said, their love—it must have been about their love, I think. 'Cause I said, their love moved a vending machine. And Ira said, I actually think that was magic. [both laugh] Fucking rude, Ira!

Jenny: Solid point.

Kristin: Rude. Anyway. Moving along from this in—this war I'm beginning. Do not—do not contact Ira and tell him that he should support Willow and Tara. Please, leave Ira alone. He's made it very clear. [both laugh] He'd like to be left alone.

Jenny: He wishes—please respect his privacy now and always.

Kristin: [laughs] Okay. So, um, right—we wipe the final tears out of our eyes. 'Cause we certainly won't cry again in this episode of television.

Jenny: Yeah, we're done.

Kristin: And we get another little laugh moment, where, you know, Glory is battling Buffy and knocks her head off. [laughing] And it's very like, Glory-Ben connection, kind of, in its humor, where she's like, "Did everyone else know that the Slayer was a robot?" [laughs]

Jenny: Yes! Yes, Glory! Some like it bot!

Kristin: [laughs] Wow.

Jenny: But then the real Buffy just rolls up with the troll hammer and is like, kabloom!

Kristin: Woof, yeah.

Jenny: And then Dawn is like, looking down at bodies that must be about the size of ants in her perception and is like, [fake-screams] "Buffy!" [both laugh] The screaming!

Kristin: Oh, and then—

Jenny: The screaming and Buffy just fucking... she's like, um... fucking—I'm making Kristin watch me—

Kristin: She's just—[laughs]

Jenny: Mime running. Across Zoom right now. [laughs]

Kristin: She's been mime-running for like, seven minutes. [laughs] Looking at me like, "you know!"

Jenny: I'm trying to think of the appropriate... thing. She's like... not a Peloton, you know, 'cause that's a bike. But she's like, on a... freaking...

Kristin: Like a StairMaster? Elliptical—[laughs]

Jenny: Elliptical! Or yeah, StairMaster or something. She's just like [makes stomping noises]. Tosses one minion out of the way. And then kind of begins fighting Glory all the way up this tower. And here's where I'd like to say—

Kristin: Mm.

Jenny: That Sarah's new stunt double—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Has been kicking ass all season. We've been seeing it—and Sophia Crawford, fucking amazing, did an incredible job for four seasons. The new stunt double, Michele Waitman, is just a much better body match.

Kristin: Mm, mmhmm.

Jenny: Like a better body double to Sarah. This was highlighted for me over on Xena Warrior Podcast, if you're looking for a Xena Warrior Princess podcast to listen to, I can't recommend it enough. But they were talking about—they were talking about, you know, Lucy's double—once Zoe Bell comes on board. And then they were talking about how much of a difference it made in Season 5 of Buffy once—

Kristin: Wow.

Jenny: Once things shifted over. And like, it's really true. Like, it's a lot harder to pick out the visual markers that indicate, oh, this is definitely a stunt double.

Kristin: Yeah and like, the choreography is incredible. You know, this scene, fighting up the tower... is—

Jenny: Oh my god. So sick!

Kristin: It's so memorable, you know? Like, you just—you're like, Season 5—I feel like you think, Season 5. And one of the things you think about is these two fighting up the tower. Let's talk about—Glory says, when Buffy drops her hammer, "you lost your hammer, sweet cheeks!" Thank you.

Jenny: Wow! That's a choice.

Kristin: And then! Buffy's dropped her hammer, oh no, what possibly can happen next?

["Wrecking Ball" by Miley Cyrus plays]
I came in like a wrecking ball
I never hit so hard in love
All I wanted was to break your walls
All you ever did was wreck me

Kristin: Sorry, I had to do it. I asked for permission. I asked—I got consent from Jenny Owen Youngs before—[laughs]

Jenny: I don't think there's any—there was any other reasonable choice you could have made—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Than to do exactly what you did.

Kristin: Thank you. [laughs]

Jenny: Xander announces, "The glorified bricklayer picks up a spare."

Kristin: Basically, down below, everyone's like, listen, as long as Buffy can keep Glory down here for a few more minutes, we'll be okay. Except fucking no, you won't!

Jenny: How—how is this band of fucking raggedy-ass minions and civilians keeping the Scoobies at bay? Is it because the Scoobies are trying not to hurt the civilians—

Kristin: Oh.

Jenny: And only kill minions?

Kristin: Maybe.

Jenny: 'Cause this is ridiculous.

Kristin: Yeah. I mean, they should be—

Jenny: Otherwise.

Kristin: Right, they should be up there. But I'm glad that they're not because we get Willow talking to Spike through the ether.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Joel... motherfucking Grey. Joel. Motherfucking Grey! Joel Grey is one of these actors that can have three fucking lines and do to you with them what another actor would need a monologue for. Like, he literally is like, "hey kid. Wanna see a trick?" and then holds up a knife by his face. If I did that, you'd be like, what's that silly lady doing with a knife? But when Joel Grey does it, you're like, dear god, it is truly now Armageddon.

Jenny: Yeah. His selectively employed whisper—

Kristin: Mmm.

Jenny: Is so terrifying. So terrifying.

Kristin: So. [laughs]

Jenny: Okay.

Kristin: Willow picks up—

Jenny: Back on the ground.

Kristin: Willow picks up her tin can, and is like, calling Spike! [laughs]

Jenny: [laughs] [makes repeated beeping noise like Morse code]

Kristin: She talks to Spike through her mind, and Spike's—James Marsters, again, like, great with the comedic timing. He's like, looking at like, the pieces of trash that are by his head and he's like, [both laugh] is she talking to me through this thing? What's going on?

Jenny: Yeah, yeah.

Kristin: And she's like, go now. And he's like, uh... and then, testament to him, like, he trusts her.

Jenny: Yeah, he trusts her. Willow grabs Tara's hand and parts the sea of the tower's defenders as if they were so many small meat-based vending machines! Floosh, they part like the Red Sea!

Kristin: Meat. Based. Vending machines.

Jenny: That's right.

Kristin: Spike gets up to the top of the tower. Another delightful dialogue exchange, where—

Jenny: Oh, god.

Kristin: Spike says, "Doesn't a fella stay dead when you kill him?" and Joel Grey is like, "Look who's talking." It's just so nice! I just like—give me—I would love—

Jenny: Yeah, it's really, really great.

Kristin: I wish we got more James Marsters and Joel Grey. 'Cause what a duo.

Jenny: Yeah. Doc moves real fast and stabs Spike rather deeply. Then he says he doesn't smell a soul on Spike and is like, why are you—

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: Doing this? Like, what are you doing?

Kristin: Made a promise to a lady.

Jenny: And then Doc—oh my god. [gags] My goosebumps. Doc says he'll send the lady Spike's regrets.

Kristin: Mm!

Jenny: And has Spike's arm, I think—kinda has his arms like, twisted behind him. And Spike can't do anything and like, makes this really... really gutting eye contact with Dawn before he is unceremoniously tossed off the tower.

Kristin: Yeah. Again, just incredible—like, no lines there, but you just see it. Jenny was doing—Jenny was looking at me with those eyes. [laughs] When she was talking about it. [both laugh] And you know, meanwhile, we're sort of in—in this point in the episode, we're going back and forth between up at the top of the tower and then Glory and Buffy down at the bottom of the tower. This is *fucking brutal* what is happening at the bottom of the tower. First of all, Glory is bloodied up. I don't think we have seen Glory bloodied up at any point in the season—

Jenny: No. No.

Kristin: So it's very jarring.

Jenny: Buffy's just going to town!

Kristin: Yeah, and Glory—

Jenny: Going to Hammer Town!

Kristin: [laughs] But Buffy can touch this? Sorry, I'm sorry. I gotta go. I'm that dad. I'm that dad!

Jenny: Oh my god! I am that very dad. [both laugh]

Kristin: So—but Glory says, "you're just a mortal. You couldn't understand my pain." And that really got me, that line, of like, you're—you're—you know, obviously Glory is trying to like, open up hell portals, whatever. Like, there is an argument to be made that probably we should keep those closed. But I always think that it's very interesting when any show—but especially Buffy since it's the one that we live inside of these days—makes this case of like, here is a god telling you that you can't understand what she is fighting for and what she is after. And there is a truth to that.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Buffy cannot understand the end game of Glory. And Buffy only has the ability to understand her experience as a human, mortal, Slayer. So just, you know, another thing to chew on. I mean, I'm glad that like, the hell dimensions are closed eventually, mostly because—what happens to that dragon, by the way? Not to jump too far ahead. But like, what... what happens to that dragon?

Jenny: Let's take a look at that in just a few minutes.

Kristin: Okay, okay. [laughing] Okay.

Jenny: So a bloodied Glory turns into an even more bloodied Ben with a ripped-up face. And Buffy's all, [dramatically] "Tell Glory it's over." And Ben's like, [weakly] "I guess we're stuck with each other, huh, baby?" And Giles rolls up and is like, "can you move?" And Ben's like, "need a minute." And then, some terrifying shit happens.

Kristin: Yo. They have this exchange. Also, the use of—Tony Head and the use of Tony Head—of Giles's glasses are, uh, also fucking award-winning in this scene. 'Cause we have seen Giles—to quote your song, "take them off and put them back on again," many times. But Ben says, "she could have killed me." And Giles says, "no, she couldn't. Never." And then he puts his glasses on. He puts. His glasses. On. To then say, "she's a hero, you see. She's not like us." And then with his bare hand—a move we have seen only one other time, I think, in the series, which was the mayor on Buffy.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: With his bare hand, he kills Ben. He holds his nose and his mouth and kills him. Um, what? This is a moment. And this is—like, this is the Henry V—like, this is that question again. This is that, do you have to be able to do things that other people can't do in order to save the world? Or is your idea of saving the world not correct? Is Buffy's—

Jenny: Ever having to resort to—

Kristin: To—yeah.

Jenny: Right. Well, also—I mean, let's not forget that we're watching a television show. And there's sort of like—

Kristin: [laughing] I don't know what you mean.

Jenny: Two sides to this scale. We can't take everything so literally, because it is a television show. And like, rooting for someone who's bad to die is not the same as rooting for, like, a real person in real life to die. Okay. But then also, the whole point of this show is to make—not the *whole* point. But a large part of this show and shows like it is all about encouraging us to think about these choices and their implications.

Kristin: Mmhmm. Right.

Jenny: So there's no—there's no two ways about it. Giles did what needed to be done. He's not wrong.

Kristin: But I—

Jenny: Glory would eventually come back—

Kristin: No, I disagree—I disagree with that—

Jenny: Through that body vessel.

Kristin: Actually. Because I think that, like—[sighs] and I'm not—I'm not damning Giles for the choice he made. But I think that the very question that the show poses over and over again is: is there one thing? Is there only one path? And like, in this episode, we are directly seeing Buffy say to Giles, there is not only one path. There is more than one path, and I am choosing the path where I do not kill a person. Maybe Glory would have come back, but Buffy's choice is, I'm not killing a person. I will deal with that when it passes. And so I really think that there is not—I think there's not one choice. And I think—but I think that's to your television show point. Like, that *is* the point, is to make us question that, to make us really look into our probably gut feeling of—well, you know, Giles had to do that. Did he? Buffy says no.

Jenny: Hmm.

Kristin: Ha! Like to make you think.

Jenny: Well, Buffy actually doesn't say no. Buffy just says, don't try to kill Dawn. Don't try to kill my sister, or I will hurt you.

Kristin: No, I know, but—

Jenny: She doesn't say—

Kristin: Buffy know—you think Buffy is on any kind of plane where she thinks, like, letting Ben—that Ben's just gonna not—like, that that's just gonna resolve itself?

Jenny: Mm, I think that because Buffy has Giles, she has the luxury of being able to stay in her space. There is no Buffy without Giles, otherwise the world is out of balance, right?

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Like, in this realm, there isn't somebody holding—you know, wearing a white hat and trying to make the virtuous call all the time. And then somebody behind the scenes, taking care of stuff so that she doesn't have to—I don't know, it's kind of like a fatherly thing too. He's—like he says earlier, he's sworn to protect the world and that means sometimes doing things that other people shouldn't have to.

Kristin: Yeah. No, I mean, like—

Jenny: What does it all mean?

Kristin: I follow—I follow your logic and your argument fully. I just—I don't agree with it because I think that Buffy's stance is one of saying, fuck your rules. Like, fuck your—and I'm not saying—like, Giles doesn't play by the rules either. Like, this isn't to—you can't say, like, Buffy is A and Giles is B. Right? This whole show complicates every character to the point where like, they all have elements of the other in them. But I just think that Buffy's whole thing here is, like—I mean, it's complicated also because Buffy literally just killed an actual person a couple of episodes ago. So I wish that wasn't [laughing] part of our reality. When she killed the Knight of Byzantium.

But that aside, and some of her other questionable human life choices aside. I think her choice not to kill Ben is rooted in the fact that she doesn't—she doesn't believe that she should need to exist in a reality where, in order for everyone to be okay, one person must die. And like, that's—that's the whole point, right, that she does not agree that Dawn, an innocent person, should have to die on behalf of the rest of the world, to make them better. And so I think that that's why she doesn't kill Ben either, is that she does not believe that. She believes that she—like, she obviously—you know, spoiler alert. Uh, fucking Buffy jumps off the thing at the end. But she says, this is my job. This is—like, this life being lost is something I can reconcile. It wasn't Ben's job. Ben didn't have, you know—well, I mean, I guess Buffy didn't have a choice either. God, get us outta here. [laughs]

Okay. We're getting, like, really deep and confused and complicated, which is exactly the point of this episode of television. So you know, on a lighter note, producer Alba Daza said to us, you know, I have a lot of thoughts about sort of like, Buffy as a Christ figure in this episode. Which, I mean, you can kinda draw some of those parallels for yourself. But Alba, why don't we have you come on in and tell us a little bit about what you know about, like, Christ figures and their origins and also like, how we see many, many, many of those qualities in Buffy, in this episode and in past episodes. Jenny, did you happen to, like, mm, I don't know, have some little musical way to... bring Alba in? [Jenny takes a deep breath]

[PRODUCER ALBA jingle plays]
Producer Alba!

Alba: Hey, everybody. Did you know that Buffy is a Christ figure? Yeah, I didn't know either, until really recently when I took a theology and film class and I learned what a Christ figure was, and my mind exploded. That class is actually what inspired me as a storyteller to pursue a minor in theology so that I could learn and understand the origins of our Western narratives.

So you might be wondering what constitutes a Christ figure. Wikipedia describes that a Christ figure, also known as a Christ image, is a literary technique that the author uses to draw allusions between their characters and the biblical Jesus. A lot of mythology surrounding Jesus predates Christianity, but because of colonization and hellenization, if you know anything about that, the biblical Jesus has become the primary archetype. Another deity with very similar traits is the Egyptian god Horus. Don't believe me? Go look it up.

In this segment, I'm gonna list one-for-one ways that Buffy fits the quality of a Christ figure, so you can choose your fighter! Christ means anointed one in Greek, and anointed mean chosen. Buffy is literally the chosen Slayer to protect the world. She is an anointed being. Christ figures are often foretold and prophesized to arrive. Giles knew that Buffy would be arriving, plus all of those prophecies that were written about her, especially in Season 1. The girl had a lot of things written about her before she came into existence. Christ figures have a group of followers. Buffy has the Scoobies, Giles, Willow, Xander, Cordelia, Angel, Oz, Anya, Tara, Spike, Riley, Dawn. The list goes on forever.

Christ figures also have marks of wounding. So Buffy was bitten twice by the Master and by Angel. Christ figures also pretty much always endure suffering. Buffy endures the suffering of her duty, she suffers pain when she jumps into the portal at the end of this episode. But really, over the course of her whole life in the show as we see it, she suffers because she doesn't get to be a regular person. She's always sacrificing her life for the salvation of humanity.

Christ figures, the big one, die and are resurrected. At the end of Season 1 in Prophecy Girl, Buffy dies, she's bitten by the Master, and she, you know, drowns or is unconscious. Like, who—like, what really happened to her? Do we—like, does anybody actually know? But you know, okay, let's just say she drowns. And then Xander gives her CPR and she's revived. Classic Christ figure move. Classic Jesus. At the end of this episode, she sacrifices herself in the form of a cross. Her body is in the shape of a cross as she jumps into the portal, breaking all of our hearts into one thousand and one pieces, because... ugh!

There are a lot of other things that make up a Christ figure that Buffy doesn't fit into. You know, often they're men. Buffy is obviously not a man. Usually they're in their 30s, which is like the golden age and Buffy is obviously not in her 30s. But in my opinion, these other things still make her fit into a Christ figure archetype. Some other cool Christ figures that exist in popular culture that maybe you didn't know about are: Harry Potter, Randy Robinson in The Wrestler, Neo Anderson from The Matrix. Neo Anderson literally means "new son of god." Did you know that, because that blew my frickin' mind. Jake Sully in Avatar, Aang in Avatar the Last

Airbender, I mean, the list goes on forever. I'm sure, like, you're sitting there being like, oh my god, there's like six characters I can think of off the top of my head who also fit these qualities. Yeah, that's what happened to me in class.

So basically the moral of the story is that Christ figures permeate our culture, our forms of storytelling, our narratives, and like, it's cool to just know that that's what's up. You know? Just wanted to share so we're all on the same page. Buffy is a Christ figure. Thank you for coming to my Ted Talk. Also wanna give a shout out to our listener Tyler Brinkman, who I had a lovely conversation about how Buffy is a Christ figure and all the other aspects in which theology fits into the show. So shout out to Tyler Brinkman. Thank you.

[CHIME]

Kristin: Okay, wow. This episode has everything! It has minions, it has vampires with chips in their head, it has girlfriends falling in love all over again. It has hell gods, it has Christ figures. Did I already say Christ figures? [laughs]

Jenny: No. That was the first time.

Kristin: Oh my god, okay. Let us please—I—I mean, nobody wants to be done with the episode. But everybody wants to be done with the episode. Giles killed a man, Buffy is Jesus, whatever! Um. Shallow cuts. Shallow cuts. Shallow cuts.

Jenny: Blegh! Dawn is bleeding. Buffy gets to the top of the tower. Doc is like, this should be interesting. Buffy tosses him off the tower without a single thought, without breaking her stride—

Kristin: It's incredible.

Jenny: It's so good. This—it could only be that way. But unfortunately, the portal, which is way up in the sky! Has already begun—

Kristin: [sings Mario theme]

Jenny: To open. [Kristin laughs] Yeah, exactly.

Kristin: Yeah, so—

Jenny: And—

Kristin: The blood is dripping and now we are suddenly in the movie Aliens.

Jenny: Here is my second qualm with the episode. [Kristin laughs] Everything about this episode is like, beautiful [Kristin laughs harder] and so well put together and incredible and funny and just devastating. And then there's this sequence. Then there's this very unfortunate sequence. We've got lightning ripping holes in the streets of Sunnydale. We've got buildings frying and then getting filled up with fucking Xenomorphs. We've got a fucking dragon!

Kristin: A dragon!

Jenny: Just flying out of that portal! What?!

Kristin: A dragon! A dragon, a dragon, a dragon! [laughs]

Jenny: Everything looks—I'm so sorry, but everything looks so bad and dated and goofy. I mean, I'm here for it, of course.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: But it is the one spot in the episode that's just like, ooh. Yikes.

Kristin: Yeah. I mean, I agree—I agree with you. I—I have a deep love for it, because—like, the—to me, the—I think you agree with this too. But like, the power of the episode far supersedes, like, the—some of the goofiness of the alien heads and the dragon. [laughs] So like, I—it's just like a nice little, like, LOL a dragon. And I beg to ask you, please, what is—what happens with the dragon?

Jenny: Oh, that dragon opened up a little tavern outside of town.

Kristin: Aww. That's so sweet. So...

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Right. So Dawn—first of all. Dawn is gonna jump. Dawn is...

Jenny: I know!

Kristin: I mean, like, Dawn is made of Buffy, right? Like, this is—this is—these two as sisters—

Jenny: Yeah. It only makes sense.

Kristin: Are... you know, they are willing to do whatever needs doing, if it's the right thing. And that, for Dawn—little Dawn—is, I know. She told me about the

ritual, and I'm—I mean, she woulda walked right off the edge of that fucking thing. She wouldn't have even flinched. And that is—you know, to all you Dawn dislikers out there, I would ask you to really sit with yourself and think about this moment. [Jenny laughs] I love—I love when TV shows and movies do this. I actually—I think, like, *Lost*—I mean, *Lost* really dragged it out. But I love where we see a conversation between two people, and we don't hear it. And I prefer it in this format, where then that conversation is overlaid over the end of the show. I think it's just done absolutely stunningly here. And—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: You know, I guess the question is, Jenny, should we play what Buffy says to Dawn before the Sexual Tension Awards? Or should we do it after?

Jenny: [laughing] Oh my god.

Kristin: What—how do we give them the relief they need? Probably—I think we would play it, then do the Sexual Tension Awards so we can all end... not thinking about the world.

Jenny: Yeah. Let's do it.

[Clip from episode plays]

Buffy: Tell Giles that... tell Giles I figured it out and I'm okay. And give my love to my friends. You have to take care of them now. You have to take care of each other. You have to be strong. Dawn, the hardest thing in this world is to live in it. Be brave. Live. For me.

Jenny: We've got the sun very slowly rising, way off the diving board of the tower.

Kristin: Mm! Mm!

Jenny: The drama! What is the sun, Angel? [Kristin laughs] Fucking... we've got everyone—we've got Xander carrying Anya, who was un—who, like, fell under some debris—

Kristin: Uh, uh, um—

Jenny: We've got everybody looking at—

Kristin: I'm gonna pause you there. Anya did not "fall under some debris." Anya saved Xander.

Jenny: Sorry.

Kristin: And put herself under that pile of rubble. That was a—it's a—I think it's a very important moment, that she saved Xander.

Jenny: My horrific mistake, excuse me. [Kristin laughs] Anya fucking took a hit saving Xander's sorry ass. [Kristin laughs] And... what else do we have? Spike, weeping bitterly. Giles, utterly devastated.

Kristin: Oh my god.

Jenny: Dawn—

Kristin: The tableau—

Jenny: Feeling everything.

Kristin: Well, hold on though. Because Buffy jumps off the platform.

Jenny: Oh yeah.

Kristin: 'Cause—because—

Jenny: Oh yeah, let's not forget that that's what happens before this little speech. Or I guess—

Kristin: 'Cause it's—

Jenny: After the speech happens, but before we hear it. [laughs]

Kristin: Before we hear it, exactly. And so—because the things that you're saying, especially—like, the order of things is that the—the moments we see while we are in the silence, before we hear the speech, are: Xander being pushed out of the way by Anya. And like, these fighting moments that are happening down below. But then Buffy jumps, and Buffy closes the portal, right? Because she's figured out—I mean, we don't need to tell you this. You're listening to this podcast, you're a fan of the show. Her blood is Dawn's blood. Blood is blood is blood. And she goes, she—

Jenny: Death is her gift.

Kristin: Death is her gift. And this is what the message meant. This is—her death can save everyone else. And so she's jumped. We see her body down below, and

that now, Jenny, is when we see Spike weeping—this tableau of faces that like, you just wanna look away from. You, like, cannot stand to take it in—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Them looking at... the unbelievable thing. The thing that... you know, we said like, oh, Joyce was the loss that like, we didn't think would ever *really* happen. We didn't think the show would do that to us. This is truly the, like, pinnacle of that. Like, Buffy died.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: We see her headstone at the end. Very infamous quote on the headstone. "She saved the world a lot."

Jenny: She did. This is one isolated headstone! They got a very private grave area.

Kristin: You think there's like a Slayer—

Jenny: This is like, the backyard.

Kristin: You think there's like a Slayer... specific plot?

Jenny: A Slayer plot in like, Cambridge or something?

Kristin: Yeah. [laughs]

Jenny: Or Oxford. Just to—can't overstate it. I mean, she goes into the portal, she jumps into the portal in that Jesus Christ pose.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: With her arms out, you know, kind of, her body in the shape of a cross. And then she's held—

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: In that white light and it kind of looks like she's just, like, getting like, mega-electrocuted. Did you happen to read, as I did, that an earlier edition—who knows how much earlier—of this script had Dawn successfully jumping into the portal and Dawn being held in the light and dying to save everybody?

Kristin: No. That's a horrible thing for me not to have known, as the cohost of a Buffy podcast.

Jenny: I mean, I didn't know it until I was just doing a little Googling today. And I don't have a cited source and I'm so sorry to, you know, be mucking about. I also read that in an earlier edition of the season, Xander was going to fulfill the role of Ben. [Kristin gasps] Xander was going to—I know!

Kristin: Oh my god!

Jenny: I know!

Kristin: I got, like, full body chills, in like, realizing all of the things that that would mean!

Jenny: Yeah. You know who would be into it? Anya. [both laugh]

Kristin: I like that, like, where I went first was, oh my god, Giles would have killed *Xander*. And where you went first was, Anya would have loved sleeping with Glory! [laughs]

Jenny: We all like what we like.

Kristin: Oh, wow! Jenny, that was quite a thing to save till the end of the fucking episode. My whole head just exploded. [Jenny laughs] Holy shit, that would have changed *everything*. They could *not* have had Giles kill Xander!

Jenny: I know, that would have been—I don't know what they would have done to get out of it.

Kristin: Wow.

Jenny: But, um—

Kristin: Wow. Wow.

Jenny: So Buffy's dead. Buffy has died, saving the world, again.

Kristin: The second time, man. It's the second time that she died, but you know, the first time, we saw her come back to life before the end of the episode. And, uh, bye! We end on her fucking headstone. [trying not to laugh] Somebody tweeted at me—

Jenny: So intense.

Kristin: When I was tweeting about watching the—like, not—I was jokingly, but was I joking? Saying like, I'm quitting the show because I'm not—I don't wanna watch this episode today! Like, I don't wanna do it, you know? [laughing] And somebody replied to me on Twitter and was like, the first day—the first time I ever missed a day of school was because I was in elementary school and I watched The Gift before going to school. And I cried so hard that I couldn't go into school. [laughs]

Jenny: [laughing] Oh my god!

Kristin: Which is like, yeah. Imagine watching this in real fucking time. Especially if you're like, a kid. I mean, if you're anybody. But like, I can't imagine being like a kid. Like, it's over? That's how it's over? Wow. Holy shit.

Jenny: Woof!

Kristin: What a show. What a show!

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Wow. Let's fucking do some Sexual Tension Awards, because I think that would be great. And then we'll come back and we'll talk about our feelings—

Jenny: Shake it off.

Kristin: A little bit more.

Jenny: Yeah!

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Jenny: Well! Here we are, the final Sexual Tension Award nominees for Season 5. Good gravy! In slot 1, for The Gift, your option—if you choose to select it—is Anya and Xander, because they have sex in this episode.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Oh, and then they kind of get engaged and it's very cute. [Kristin laughs] In slot #2, it's Spike and blood. You heard him.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: We don't have to tell you why. [Kristin laughs] In the third slot, we've got an option for you that is, uh, both sapphic and also like, inter-existent. I don't know what the right word for a relationship between a god and a mortal—slight—even a slightly enhanced mortal would be.

Kristin: Mmm.

Jenny: But, um, it's Glory and Buffy!

Kristin: Hell yeah! Sweet cheeks!

Jenny: Pounding away at each other. [both laugh] Sweet cheeks, yeah, exactly. And then your fourth option... aw, it's Buffy and Spike because that was pretty sweet.

Kristin: Yo. Yo! Is all I'll say. [laughs]

Jenny: I know. Vote for your pick on our Twitter poll, @BufferingCast. The poll will be up for a week and then, if I'm not mistaken, probably in the seasonal break, we'll have Sexual Tension Award brackets running on Twitter.

Kristin: Yeah! Emily McLongstreet is ready for it. We will—if you're new, if you're—

Jenny: Oh yeah!

Kristin: If you're new to the podcast or how this all works, we now vote every episode. And Emily McLongstreet, our resident Sexual Tension Award... uh...

Jenny: Aficionado!

Kristin: Aficionado—

Jenny: Czar.

Kristin: Czar—oh wow.

Jenny: Uh, master of ceremonies. Mistress of ceremony—commander of ceremonies. [Kristin laughs] Boss—the bracket boss.

Kristin: Bracket boss, Emily McLongstreet, will take all of the winners through this season, bracket them up, and we will vote on them for a grand winner of Season 5.

Now, if you really wanna get excited, at the end of seven seasons, we'll do the master of all brackets.

Jenny: Ow, ow, ow!

Kristin: And see who is the top #1 winner of the Sexual Tension Awards. Also, fuck everybody for voting for Jenny last week. Jenny now has *two*—

Jenny: Did I win?! I won!

Kristin: Two! Two.

Jenny: Two trophies. Both still in the mail.

Kristin: You know how many trophies I have on my goddamn shelf? Zero! What the fuck.

Jenny: Well! Life is not to just be measured in trophies. Unless you're me, [Kristin laughs] then you can measure it in trophies.

Kristin: Anyhow. That has been your Sexual Tension Awards. We will be back in your ears—we will be back in your ears several times before we come back with Season 6. And we will let you know more about how to vote in the brackets, and also, who won.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Kristin: Alright, well, um.

Jenny: Woof.

Kristin: Hey, buddy.

Jenny: I guess the podcast is over. Buffy died.

Kristin: Yeah, I guess—I guess it is. You know—you know how like, you never know what life is gonna bring you until you're halfway into it and you're like, oh, so *this* is what it really is? Like, you can imagine—you can imagine. Kristin and Jenny in 2015 could imagine what it would be like to make a podcast about Buffy the Vampire Slayer. But then, like, now here we are, and I'm like, first of all. I did not think that it would feel this feelings-y in here. I did not think that I would be this emotional about... this show, these characters, our community, the work we're

doing—just, there's a lot. I'm very, very, very excited to move into Season 6, but I have to say, I'm feeling a deep sense of loss over—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Not being in Season 5 anymore. I feel very, very attached to this season in a way that, like, it feels different from other seasons.

Jenny: Yeah, man. Something has happened. I mean, it's like, seasons 1-3, high school.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Developing, but high school. Season 4, we're at college, we're trying to figure out, like, what the show is after it's "high school is hell."

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Finding our way, finding our way. Season 5, way found.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Stakes raised.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Intensity kicked the fuck up.

Kristin: Mmhmm. Can I get real, too, about us and our journey?

Jenny: By all means!

Kristin: Because I also feel like, hearing you say that, like, I was thinking about—you know, when you create a thing, you're like, following the journey of that thing, which is the show. But you're also on your own journey. And it's like, for us, like, we started the podcast, we were married, seasons 1-3. And so like, that was a particular—[Jenny laughs] that was a particular place. It was a particular way to talk about a show. We were in the same house, we were popping into the studio. We were—you know, it was just like, a different thing. Season 4 was like, [laughing] will we make it through this season?!

Jenny: This unknown clawing—

Kristin: Just clawing our way through Season 4, like—you know, how will we ever do this? This is so hard. And you know, I think that Season 5—it's just like, we got to—especially like, by now, we got to this place where I feel like we're finding our relationship in this space now as these two people. And so for the first time, it's like, oh no! Like, we finished this season. Like, I don't wanna be done with talking to Jenny about Season 5. Like, I'm—I'm like—I think I'm more—

Jenny: Yeah!

Kristin: Present in the now than maybe I have been in seasons past. [laughs] Certainly than I was in Season 4, but you know, in any of the seasons. So I don't know. You know? It's the end of the season and I'm full of feelings, so I like to bring them all to the table.

Jenny: Yeah. Plus, you've probably watched more, like, genre films—

Kristin: Mm.

Jenny: In the last like—

Kristin: That's true.

Jenny: Five months than you have in your whole life previously. So all that stuff is like, funneling into your understanding of Buffy also.

Kristin: You're right, Jenny. I think that, like... deeper and deeper we go, is what I will say. You know? On this journey.

Jenny: Straight up.

Kristin: And we're gonna be back. You know, we're gonna be—we have mailbag, we have some conversations to have here. We're coming back at the end of September with Season 6, so there's gonna be a lot in the feed. There's a lot of changes happening in the universe. There's so many things going on. But right now, in this moment, we have finished talking about Season 5. And... thank you for going on this seasonal journey with us.

Jenny: Yeah. Hell yeah.

Kristin: Do you have something in your eye again?

Jenny: Wow. [pause] No? [both laugh] Yeah, I kinda feel like—it feels kind of like graduation or something.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Like, actual graduation, not like, the episode.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: But also kind of the episode. I just feel kind of like, wow. What... now? That like, weird emptiness—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Of like... but...

Kristin: I know.

Jenny: [laughs] Thank god there's another season ahead!

Kristin: Oh, thank god. Yeah, don't talk to us at Season 7, man. I'll tell you what, I don't know what it's gonna—I don't know what's gonna happen.

Jenny: Mm-mm. Mm-mm.

Kristin: But we don't wanna look there. We don't wanna think about that yet. We have time.

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

Kristin: Time, time, time. Before we get there. Um, Jenny.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Who are you? I somehow have gone this whole two hours without knowing.

Jenny: I'm here to tell you that I'm Jenny Owen Youngs! And when I'm not making this podcast that I love so dearly, I'm writing and recording songs. You can learn more about me at jennyowenyoungs.com. You can find me on socials, across all socials, @JennyOwenYoungs. I'm gonna be releasing some music during the break and after the break, so if you want to get first listens at that, please follow me around.

Kristin: [laughs] Like, just like, physical—like, literally follow you around?

Jenny: [simultaneously] And also you can listen to me—

Kristin: Tiptoe behind you?

Jenny: Yeah. Just keep a six-foot—[both laugh] as Buffy said. Stay close but don't crowd me. [both laugh] You can also listen to me and my wonderful friend Helen Zaltzman talk about another petite, blond protagonist over on Veronica Mars Investigations. That's my other podcast. Yeah.

Kristin: Hell yeah. I am Kristin Russo. Doing all manner of things, related of course to Buffy. But also, I do a lot of work with queer community. You can learn about the projects that I have worked on in the past and that I currently work on on my website, which is kristinnoeline.com. That is K-R-I-S-T-I-N N-O-E-L-I-N-E. And you can use that spelling to also find me on Twitter and on Instagram. I do a Patreon-only podcast with the wonderful Joanna Robinson. And I have to tell you something very fun. So we just finished going through Terminator. It's where I watch movies I've never seen for the first time. Guess what we're doing in a week or two—or who knows what time is. But guess what we're doing next, Jenny.

Jenny: [takes deep breath] What are you doing next?

Kristin: We're switching the roles. And I am taking Joanna [Jenny gasps] on a gay adventure! [Jenny gasps]

Jenny: [laughing] Oh my god!

Kristin: Oh yeah, baby!

Jenny: Please tell me—please tell me your first—your first project is a Angelina Jolie [Kristin laughs] triple feature of Fox Fire, Gia and Girl Interrupted. Please say it's true.

Kristin: No, it's not, but like, the possibilities are endless. And I hope to—like, my goal is to both have a great time and also ensure that Joanna is queer by the end of the journey.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Our—

Jenny: Otherwise you've failed, of course.

Kristin: Otherwise I've failed. So someone suggested that we watch Jennifer's Body, and that's what gave us the idea—

Jenny: Ooh!

Kristin: To depart on this gay journey. So we're watching the first trio—'cause I do think that there will be many, and noted, on your Angelina Jolie trilogy. Our first trio is Jennifer's Body, But I'm a Cheerleader—which Joanna has never seen.

Jenny: Ooh! Oh my god.

Kristin: And a Kristin Russo classic, Lost and Delirious. Because...

Jenny: Oh. I mean...

Kristin: You gotta—you have to—listen. I don't wanna get too far into talking about this here, in our outro. [Jenny laughs] But it just—gay falcons are, you know, important.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: I'll leave you with that. Anyhow, that's a Patreon-only podcast, so you can access it on our Patreon or over on The Storm's Patreon. That is Joanna Robinson's Lost rewatch podcast. And who the hell are we?

Jenny: Well! Buffering the Vampire Slayer is on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, @BufferingCast. Or drop us an email at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com. You can also leave us a voicemail—aww!—at 216-30-BUFFY.

Kristin: Hell yes. You can support us in a variety of ways. You can become a part of our Patreon family. You can also get some merch. We've got Why Are Men t-shirts, we've got Smash the Demon Lizard Patriarchy shirts and hoodies. We have lots of fun things over there in the store. All of that, you can access over at bufferingthevampireslayer.com. Many links for you. Please, please, please go on over to our website and click on Just Keep Fighting to learn about the antiracism work that we're doing here in the podcast space. We brought on some wonderful new voices. Alba Daza, who you know and have heard in the podcast. Mackenzie, who you will hear more of in the podcast and who you know if you're part of our antiracism reading and discussion group. LaToya Ferguson, who is going to be—

Jenny: Ow-oww!

Kristin: Coming over here into the feed to talk Angel, next season.

Jenny: [singsong] Hell yeah!

Kristin: We're really, really excited to be doing a lot of the work that we're doing, and we're excited to be doing it with you. And Jenny, oh my god!

Jenny: Oh yes.

Kristin: Is it time?

Jenny: It's... time. It's so hard to say. Till next time...

Both: Awwwwooooooooooooooooo!

["The Gift" plays off the album Songs from Season 5 by Buffering the Vampire Slayer]

I gave what I had to give
I gave you my only gift
The easiest thing that I ever did
Was let it go so you could live

No prophecy
Could undo what has to be
You and me
Built from our blood
All these memories
Without you then who make more

I gave what I had to give
Became what the world needed
But the times before never felt quite like this
Let go of your hand so you could live

No prophecy
Could undo what has to be
You and me
Built from our blood
All these memories
I need you to stay and make more

You won't miss graduation

I won't have to miss my mom
Just let me do this thing
Let me move on

To close up the dark 'til it's gone
To close up the night before —