

Buffering the Vampire Slayer
Episode 0.32: A Conversation with Juliet Landau

[CHIME]

Kristin: Hey there, everybody. Oh, wow, it's Kristin saying "hey there, everybody." How bizarre. How bizarre. Where is Jenny Owen Youngs, you might ask. Well, for this intro, you've just got me. Trusty Kristin. Because Jenny is, uh, today, driving across the United States of America, headed to move to the northeast. So you will have two hosts in the same time zone, very, very soon, before Halloween, as a matter of fact. I'm here today—speaking of Halloween—to introduce you into an interview that Jenny and I did with Juliet Landau. That's right, Drusilla herself.

We have the—I mean, literally the best conversation with Juliet. She is a delight. She talks to us, of course, all about her time on Buffy and on Angel. And about her movie release, which is happening in just a few days on October 29th. Juliet's film is called *A Place Among the Dead*, and you can go to the premiere of the movie online on October 29th. All of the information is found at modernfilms.com/aplaceamongthedeath. Modern Films, by the way, an all-women-run production company. So that's pretty freaking cool as well.

So there's a premiere on the 29th of *A Place Among the Dead*. It's a really, really powerful film and Juliet and her husband Dev put so much work into it. It features appearances by people you may have heard of, like Joss Whedon, Anne Rice, Gary Oldman, and so many others. And you'll hear us talk about it in the interview that you're about to listen to.

A couple of quick things before we go in to talking to Juliet. A slight delay on our next episode, Season 6, Episode 3, *After Life*. That was set to air on November 4th. We are holding it until November 9th, which is just the following Monday. So just a few more days you'll have to wait for that episode. That's the next time that you'll hear from us in this feed. And this Wednesday, of course, you're gonna get Season 3, Episode 2 of *Angel On Top, That Vision Thing*, a pretty Cordelia heavy and you may or may not get a little segment from me talking about Lilah playing golf. But listen. That's neither here nor there. Also, our live taping was unexpectedly rescheduled, so head's up. If November 22nd is a good day for you, that's a Sunday, you can come on over and see our live taping then. We will be taping... Season 6, Episode 5, *Life Serial*. All of the information, forever and ever, will be found at bufferingthevampireslayer.com.

Again, to learn how to grab tickets to Juliet's premiere event for *A Place Among the Dead*, go to modernfilms.com/aplaceamongthedeath. I am going to stop talking so

that you can hear Juliet tell us all about things like press-on nails, roleplaying as Spike, and why Julie Benz always knew that of course, there was romance between Dru and Darla. Let's get the hell into this episode.

[Buffering theme plays]

Kristin: Oh my gosh!

Jenny: Wow. We are so excited—so very, very excited—to be here today, speaking with the one and the only Juliet Landau. Juliet, thank you so much for taking the time to talk to us today.

Juliet: Absolutely. I'm super excited to be here.

Kristin: Ah! We're so excited to have you here!

Jenny: Yay!

Juliet: Yay!

Kristin: I feel like we've been waiting for this moment since—I don't even know. [Jenny laughs] When we first met you years ago, at this point.

Juliet: I know. I know, we've been wanting to do this forever and it's finally here, yay!

Kristin: Yes. And the timing is quite wonderful, for a lot of reasons. One, it's Halloween, or near to it. [laughs]

Juliet: Yes.

Kristin: And two, you have a movie coming out, like, now, right now.

Juliet: Yep. Yep. In—Halloween—it's actually—we're having the worldwide premiere October 29th. It's being sponsored by Mac Cosmetics and also by New York Comic Con. Then preview screening events Halloween weekend, and then the wide release, so super excited.

Kristin: Oh my gosh.

Jenny: Amazing.

Kristin: Do you have costume—are you dressing up for Halloween in a movie themed kind of way? [laughs]

Juliet: It's funny, because we were talking about that. We're gonna be doing this incredible event with Tomorrow's Ghosts and screening the movie and doing the Q&A, and then having all kinds of other panels. And I think I will be changing, at one point in the schedule of events. And I've dragged Dev, my husband, into it as well, so I think we're gonna dress up. What about you guys?

Jenny: [laughs] Excellent.

Kristin: Ah, yes, we are. We actually—we take Halloween very seriously now that we have a Buffy the Vampire Slayer podcast. We're in Season 6 now and so there's an episode—

Juliet: Congratulations on that, too. That's awesome. [Jenny and Kristin laugh]

Jenny: Thank you.

Kristin: Thanks. But we are—for the podcast, we are dressing up I believe this year as two employees of the Doublemeat Palace, [laughing] which is the fast food restaurant that Buffy works for.

Juliet: Yes, perfect.

Kristin: So, Juliet, we have—obviously, you know, we could stay on with you for about four years and not run out of things to talk about. But we wanna make sure that we get to talk to you both about your time on Buffy the Vampire Slayer as Drusilla. And also, the movie that you made. And I would imagine that there's probably even overlap between those two things. So...

Juliet: Great, great.

Kristin: How about we start at the begin—the very beginning, at least the very beginning as it pertains to Buffy. We would love to hear how you came to the show. Like, what's your origin story, Juliet, as Drusilla?

Juliet: Well, it was interesting. I actually didn't audition for the role. I had a creative meeting, and it was with Joss, David Greenwalt, Gail Berman and Marcia Shulman, who was the head of casting at Fox. And it was the most fun meeting. It was just incredible. We bounced ideas back and forth. Joss said that he thought that the character could be British or American. And I was saying, oh, I really think

she should be British. And he said, yes, if we can find a Spike that can do that or is English. And I did a little bit of Dru in the room. I think I started talking to the ceiling at one point and it was [laughter] really, really great.

And literally, before I got to my car—I was walking to my car and hadn't even made it from the room that we had been meeting in. And my phone rang and my agent called and said, they wanna hire you. And I said, well, I'm not even—I haven't left yet. And they said, yeah, no, they—they loved you. They thought it was great. And so—so it was amazing and such a creative experience right from the get-go. It's funny, 'cause sometimes you'll audition for something, you know, twelve times and not get it, or twenty times and you do get it. But it was one of those things. And I had a similar thing with Tim Burton on *Ed Wood* where it just felt like it was meant to be and sort of happened very easily.

Kristin: I feel like some of that, like, makes so much sense too. So many of our listeners wrote in asking, you know, what did Juliet bring—like, did Juliet have creative input on Drusilla as a character? And can you talk about that? And so many of the actors from the show who we have spoken with did not really get to have a lot of creative input. And it sounds like you did. It sounds like you really were—you were in the room, sort of helping to create this character.

Juliet: It was an incredibly collaborative experience. As far as the text and the writing, that was completely Joss and the team of brilliant writers, so all of the script was them. And then it was collaborative beyond that, in terms of Dru's mannerisms and the way she moved and her vocal quality and all of those aspects. And even, you know—James and I both come from a theater background. So we—at least Season 2, we would get the scripts about a week in advance. And so we would get together and rehearse on our own.

And we would come in with a lot of ideas for the blocking of the scenes, which is basically where you're moving in the scenes. And most of the time, they loved it and said that's great and it saved a lot of time for everyone, and we would be up and running. So it was really a joy. And even with things that you would do and you'd think, oh, well, maybe it got cut out of an episode, so maybe it wasn't—you know, they—Joss didn't like it or something. It would end up finding its way into scripts later, which was really exciting.

Kristin: That's amazing.

Jenny: Wow, that's—it makes sense too, because she has, like, this very rich interior world that's sort of like, overlaid, you know, over the actual world. She's

kind of like, existing in multiple realms at once. So it just feels like, there's so much more build that has to happen there, for you.

Juliet: Absolutely. And it was interesting, 'cause when I was first cast, I was cast and then they paired me with the final choices for Spike. And I had an incredibly wonderful meeting with Joss right at the beginning, where he told me all of the vampire lore and the history. And he said that he had had Spike and Dru running around in his mind for ten years, prior to that. So they definitely had, like, a rich history that he communicated to me.

Jenny: Oh, wow.

Kristin: We obviously—I know that we both wanna talk to you more about your movement and the voice. But we are, like, in James territory, in Spike territory now. So in keeping with the flow of the conversation, can we go and talk about your chemistry with James? And you know, how that played out. I mean, the—I know, you know, you're both actors, you're very incredible actors. But the chemistry is really palpable and so I'm wondering if you can tell us about finding your Spike—you know, finding James and also like, your work together.

Juliet: Ah, thank you. You know, from the moment he came in to his audition, you know, it was interesting. A lot of the other actors came in and they were wonderful actors. But we just had an immediate acting chemistry. And all kinds of things happened in his audition that ended up making it into our first episode, the School Hard episode. It really was one of those things that they call moment-to-moment acting, where stuff just sort of surprises you and happens. So for instance, one of the scenes for his audition was with the Anointed One. And we had that moment where we were sort of looking at each other and our heads rested like we might kiss. And at a moment, we said, almost like, oh yeah, we're talking to someone else, the Anointed One—

Jenny: Oh, yeah. [Kristin laughs]

Juliet: And we turned out. And it was very cool. And that—not only did it make it into the episode, but it ended up being a whole promo thing that the network used. They used us, our heads resting, our heads turning out and then a voiceover that said, [deep voice] "Evil has a few new faces." [laughter] So it was nice.

Kristin: Gosh, I could like, hear The WB voice, you know? [laughter]

Juliet: [laughing] Yeah.

Kristin: So let's—before—because I have, you know, a lot of questions for you about vampires and how they love and if they can love. But before we get too carried away, 'cause it's so easy to get swept into all that is Spike and Dru. Let me take us back to your movement and your voice. Those are two things that obviously are just massive parts of Drusilla. We have—a host of our Angel podcast, Angel On Top, LaToya Ferguson, and she texted us, like, please, please, please ask Juliet how she came to the accent. Like, what was that process? So maybe let's start there.

Juliet: Okay. That's a great question, LaToya. I definitely based it on someone specific. But the cadence and the sort of singsong, wafty quality came really from the character choices. And so it was a combination of a person that I know from a specific region, and then got informed by Dru's own sort of personality. So that it ended up sounding the way that it did with those two elements blended together.

Kristin: And you have a background in dance, in ballet. That's correct, right?

Juliet: Oh, oh, yeah, absolutely. And you know, I found it's such a useful thing and definitely came into play with Drusilla. And the way that she sort of wafted and glided through space and moved, was definitely—you know, that ended up being a big component of her.

Jenny: Yeah, and like, what a great synthesis too of like, the meeting of the accent and like, the way that you speak in the role and stuff. And then the sort of fluidity of movement. It's just like, combining to make this perfect, fully formed, super, super memorable character. Just, like, brava! [laughter]

Juliet: Thank you!

Kristin: It's true. It's sort of like Drusilla just never stops moving. Like, she's just the most fluid vampire. And you know, is such a—as you know, better than anyone—is just such an iconic vampire in the Buffyverse. But I think overall, that Drusilla is an iconic contemporary vampire. And I wonder if you have thoughts on that. Like, what is it to occupy a character like Drusilla and to feel that, like, adoration and you know, have people idolize the character. Is that something that resonates with you?

Juliet: Well, it's amazing, in terms of—the response is incredible. I mean, when you're working on it, you know, you're sort of inside, inhabiting the character. And you're trying to make it—you know, even if you're working on a supernatural character, you're trying to flesh out and make as human as possible, as relatable as possible. It's just like, the same thing with playing a villain. You know, a person who does evil things doesn't necessarily think of themselves as evil, so you get into

the viewpoint of where they're coming from. And obviously from the outside, that looks very different than their own rationalizations. So it's incredible, because you're kind of—you're in this bubble of creativity. And then, to have people see what you're doing, echo the work that you're doing back to you. And in terms of how they're describing the character and what they're feeling from it, is wonderful, and really, a kind of bonus from the experience that you're having, being on the inside of it.

Kristin: Absolutely. And you—you talked about, you know, coming in, *School Hard*. That's your first episode as Drusilla. It's the first time we meet Drusilla. And having talked to, you know, various people from the show, we imagine you didn't know how long you were going to be Drusilla, how long Drusilla was going to be in the universe. And so I wonder if you could talk to us a little bit about how—like, the finding out of the extension of that character's run and how many times she was gonna reappear. And also, maybe learning more about her backstory as you went along. I don't know if you knew everything about Dru that there was to know when you began.

Juliet: Well, it was interesting because I *did* know—it's funny. James, I guess, didn't know as much as I knew, which I didn't know until later. [laughter] It turns out, I did know that we were gonna be running throughout Season 2. And then the characters were so popular that we—and Joss was creatively excited about the directions that the characters were going. And so we were kept on longer and longer. I knew a lot of the backstory because of that meeting with Joss where he told me what had been—the machinations that had been in his brain. But then along the way, there were certain things, like the threesome with the immortal on Angel. I had no idea. [laughter]

I mean, it was really [inaudible]. And I—I got the script, I remember calling Julie Benz and saying, like, I had no idea we did this. [laughter] And she said, oh, I knew, I always knew something like that. And then she actually cited—there's a still picture of us from the episode—I think it's the reunion episode, where the car—the whole car scene. And I'm sort of hugging Julie, and she circled it and sent it to me. And my hand is actually—one hand is holding her and hugging her. And the other hand is actually sort of cradling her butt.

Jenny: Ha!

Juliet: And she went, "see? [laughter] I always knew this was happening." [laughter] So there was some surprises along the way.

Kristin: Yeah. Well, I mean, you know, vampires—we talk about vampires in our podcast universe as fairly sexually fluid beings. But I would love to hear, you know, your take on that. You've been positioned, sort of—you know, maybe—maybe very pointedly in a throuple. But we—we just extrapolate and imagine that Angel, Spike and Drusilla were also a throuple at some point. So I wonder what your take is—you can correct me if I'm wrong, by the way, about that throuple. But—

Juliet: No. I think you're right. I think there was all kinda triangles going on there. [laughter]

Kristin: Right, and do you think that vampires are just inherently, um, sexually fluid...beings?

Juliet: Well, I mean, I think it sort of depends on the universe. But I think often—and I think, you know, you're also dealing with characters that have been alive for centuries and centuries and experience—and you know, may fall in love across gender lines. And so it definitely seems like that happens in a lot of the vampire lore and makes sense.

Kristin: Yeah. I mean, especially with the connection between, like, feeding—you know, like, feeding is—especially in the Buffyverse, but I think in a lot of lore—a lot of vampire lore. The feeding is made to seem sexual in nature and—

Juliet: Absolutely.

Kristin: Yeah.

Juliet: I mean, that's—even initially where the vampire lore came from and you look at Bram Stoker and you look at—all of that was sort of during time when you couldn't explicitly talk about sex. It was a way to have a sort of sexual act, penetration, connection, all of that, in this other way of dealing with it.

Jenny: Yeah. Okay. Speaking of love, before... penetration. [laughter] From just before. Do you—from your perspective, do you feel like Drusilla was in love with Spike? And broader question, do you think vampires are capable of love, within the universe?

Juliet: Well, yes, absolutely in terms of Dru and Spike. I think they had an epic love affair. And I think it was monumental—I mean, how many people can say that they've been in a relationship for—I mean, 200 years? [laughter] Sustained all of that. And I think there was—the thing that was lovely about it is, you know, clearly they had a sexual connection. But they also had a really sweet, loving side as well,

which I think was evident between them. And he often was taking care of Dru when she would have freak-outs—

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Juliet: And all that kind of stuff. And they really seemed to, you know, adore one another. It's funny 'cause my husband Dev and I, we ended up at one point watching all of Buffy and Angel again, sequentially, through. Because when I first had watched, I had watched it all but because of some of the way that the episodes and when I was doing episodes, it—I didn't watch everything in its order. I had watched everything, but not all together in that way. And there was a moment where we were on the couch and it was the story—the part of the storyline when Spike is going for Buffy. And I said, "ugh! I can't believe it!"

Jenny: Ha! [laughter]

Juliet: I mean, I was still sort of in the Dru mindset [laughter] of like, after 200 years! Why is he going with that cheerleader?! [laughter] And Dev looked up at me and he was like, "Juliet? What's happening?" So I don't think you can inhabit a character for so long and sort of not still have that, you know, yeah. I definitely think that there was a deep love there.

Kristin: You—it's interesting too. We talk, at this point, in our conversation too—we've been talking a lot about Spike and Angel. And—or not Spike and Angel. I should say, Spike and Angelus and like, their distinct differences as vampires. And one of them is—our belief, you know—that Spike is capable of love in a way that Angelus wasn't. And since you had, you know, relationships—Drusilla had relationships with both of those vampires. I would love to hear your thoughts on sort of, the difference between the Angelus vampire and that love—or lust or neither. And Spike.

Juliet: Well, I think the Angelus love was a very complex and complicated—it was really incestuous. Because he was a father figure and a lover, and there was a lot of damage there. The way that the relationship was forged was in violence and madness. And so I think—I mean, if you're gonna characterize one vampire love story as healthier than the other. [laughter] You know, saying there are people, like—there are beings that go out and feed on people and things like that. I would say that the Spike relationship was a healthier give and take, and a support of one another and helping each other's needs. And the Angelus/Drusilla was a more damaged and dark connection.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Juliet: And unhealthy, really.

Jenny: Yeah. We actually—we had a question from a listener named Sandy who is a trauma therapist. And was curious to know—

Juliet: Mmhmm.

Jenny: What it was like for you playing a vampire with trauma and Sandy also said that you did an amazing job, depicting that trauma-bond with Angelus. And the support—the need for support from Spike, to kind of balance that out.

Juliet: Oh...well, thank you so much, Sandy. That's amazing to hear. I did a lot of research. I actually went to the Thelians Institute, which is part of Cedar-Sinai. And talked to a specialist in schizophrenia and all kinds of stuff that I did, in terms of researching the real elements of that. And I think, Sandy, that you will really respond to *A Place Among the Dead*. Because it's all about how trauma affects one's choices going forward, so I think that that's gonna be something that will really speak to you and the work that you do.

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Before we get to *A Place Among the Dead*, there's a couple of other questions. Some of them are fun. You know, if you have, perhaps—like, do you have a favorite scene from either series? You know, you span—Drusilla spans the arc of *Buffy* and *Angel*. So is there a favorite scene that you have, a memory that you have of filming something that just really sticks out from the pack?

Juliet: In terms of—I would say I have three favorite episodes. Not necessarily scenes, but the first episode, *School Hard*, because it was our introductory episode. And it was the first time working together and working on the set, and it was just such a wonderful experience. I would say *Surprise*, 'cause it's where Drusilla gets strong—

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: And in her full powers. And then, *Reunion* on *Angel*, because it was pretty amazing to get to wreak havoc and team up with Julie's character in Los Angeles. [Kristin laughs] And do all kinds of fun stuff—

Jenny: Yes!

Juliet: Like eating the lawyers and all of that. [laughter]

Jenny: Getting set on fire, eating the lawyers. [Kristin laughs] So much excitement.

Juliet: Although a funny thing about the fire thing, if you're wanting a behind the scenes story—so we were shooting the sequence where Dru has already been burned. And we were—it's the whole fire hydrant where the water comes—

Jenny: Yeah.

Juliet: Spraying. And we were shooting that downtown. It was one of the—LA doesn't usually get cold. But it was a very rare crazy cold night. We were shooting nights, of course. Vampires. [laughter] And so I think it was about, I don't know, 5 AM or something, and it was freezing. We were in parkas, in between the takes. We of course had to take them off. And we—Julie had an 104 fever. [Jenny gasps] She was sick. And I was boasting, like, I never get sick when I work.

Jenny: Oh, no.

Juliet: And of course I got sick. [laughs] And so we were all—we were sick, it was freezing. And we then had that thing where the water was supposed to come. And they said, oh, well, we're not gonna rehearse it because we basically want, you know—we're gonna have to change you when you're wet and go into other clothes to pick up the shot again. And so, we—they yell action, and they sort of showed us a test of the water, which was like a small amount coming. And then they said, okay. And I'm crying through the scene. I'm—you know, I forget the dialogue but I'm saying all this stuff. And I'm crying, I've got tears.

And they're like, okay, and action! And for whatever reason, they boosted the water. So it was like a torrent. [laughter] I mean, just—it pounds and pounds and pounds. And I'm trying to sit up straight, with the torrent of water, while weeping. And I'm so—you know, I have the dancer background, don't ruin the take, get through the take. So I'm going through the whole take and going, "oh!" and crying. And trying to just—and this water—and then they—we end the scene. They yell "cut," and everyone just bursts out laughing [laughter] because it was the most terrible thing to be like, trying to continue with this—and they're like, okay, sorry about that. We need to lower the water. [laughter] So.

Kristin: [laughing] Oh my gosh. The things you don't know.

Juliet: Yeah, yeah.

Kristin: We love behind the scenes stories, of course, of course. Knowing what's going on in the background is maybe one of the biggest joys of what we do. [laughs] Finding out the secrets.

Juliet: I can tell you another one that you guys might enjoy. When killing Kendra, we had the sequence of Dru and the confessional back in the 1800s scheduled to shoot right before the killing Kendra scene. And the nails, the Drusilla manicure, were very—was, you know, evident in the killing Kendra, since I'm slicing her throat with my nails. And obviously, the character cannot have that manicure back in 1853. [Kristin laughs] So Todd McIntosh said, okay, there's no time with the schedule. We'll do the, sort of, you know, press-on nails for you. And that way, they can be featured in the scene and we won't hold production up with having nail polish dry and all of that.

So we go through, we shoot the confessional scene. We come in, we've got the press-on nails. I've got the five-inch heels that I'm in. Bianca and I have worked out, with the stunt coordinator, all of the fight choreography. Everything's going [inaudible]. For whatever reason, she was supposed to kick me like—I'm holding my hands in a certain place and it's like, mid-stomach, kind of area. The minute they yell action, for some reason, she is getting—oh! Well, even before this. Let me go before this. Before this, we're doing the part of the fight before the kick. And every time we're doing it, my nails are literally going, bing! Bing! Bing! [laughter] Like, completely flying off. And everybody's freaked out, they're like, oh no, oh no! Back to one, we have to fix this. How do we get the nails—and we're going again. I'm trying to keep my nails on.

It's like—it's almost like a joke, because I'm holding my nails out and being like, okay, how do I do this with keeping these nails on? We go back, we're doing it. And then again, bing, bing, bing! They're flying. Then we get to the kick part, and for whatever reason, I guess in the moment of action, Bianca got excited, whatever happened. I see her boot. Instead of it coming to my mid-torso—where it's coming, I'm like, [in slow motion] ohh, nooo! It's coming toward my head!

Jenny: Oh, no!

Juliet: [laughing] You know how things go in slow motion. And I see her huge combat boot, and she clunks me—

Jenny: [laughing] Ohhh!

Juliet: So hard in the head. And I'm such a girly-girl, like, I've never been in a fight or anything like that. And so all of a sudden, I see those little speckles and I'm thinking to myself, ohh, you really do see stars!

Jenny: [laughing] Oh my god!

Kristin: [laughs] Oh my god!

Juliet: [laughs] And again, I'm thinking, okay, I'm not gonna ruin the take. So I'm gonna keep going. It made this huge sound and I'm thinking again to myself, I wonder if everybody heard that or if it's just loud—

Jenny: Wow.

Juliet: 'Cause it's my head. [laughter] And I grab her by the neck and I kinda looked in her eyes, very much like, do not do that again. Like, we have to focus here, right? And I back her into the wall. And it's actually the take that's used, because—because of the intensity of how I'm like, do not kick me—[laughing] and I actually—I had a concussion.

Jenny: [laughing] Oh my god.

Juliet: They had to drive me home that night and everything. But we got the take, it looked great. And it worked out well and luckily in that one, the nails weren't flying off, so.

Kristin: Oh my gosh! Oh my gosh, little did Kendra know that all she had to do was flick one of your stick-on nails off and she could have—[laughs]

Juliet: Right. And she would have escaped, right?

Kristin: [laughing] She would have lived!

Juliet: Exactly. She would have lived. [laughs]

Kristin: Well, that is a perfect, perfect segue to a question from our listener, Havana. And really, I have this question, too. We're just dying to know—you know, you're—Drusilla has iconic manicures. But there's two, specifically. There's black with white tips and red with white tips. So which one do you like more? What is your favorite of those two manicures for Drusilla?

Juliet: Well, you know, it's interesting. There's actually one episode where there's a third manicure which is blue—

Jenny: Ooh!

Juliet: With white tips. In the episode with the Chaos demon. [Kristin laughs]

Jenny: Nice.

Juliet: Where he's all slimy behind James and I—

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Bless his soul. [laughter]

Juliet: In that episode, Dru actually has blue with white tips. But you know, I really loved both of those manicures. It was interesting, 'cause the black with white tips is when Dru is weak and dying and not doing well. And then the red comes in when she regains her strength.

Kristin: Wow.

Juliet: And so, there—it was—that's one of the things that was so great about working on Buffy, is, you know, all those little details feed the actual character arc, as well. So I guess I would say potentially the red with white tips, since it's strong Dru. Although I like the black with white tips and I enjoyed the initial Dru too. So it's hard for me to pick. What do you guys think?

Kristin: I'm partial to the re—I mean, it's very hard to choose. But I'm partial to the red, and I didn't even realize why. But perhaps it is because it's a symbol of Dru's strength.

Juliet: Mmhmm.

Kristin: But I just love the red. [laughs]

Juliet: Have you ever worn it?

Kristin: No, I have not done the Dru manicure. Yet. There's no way that I will make it till the end of this podcast without having at least one Dru manicure, though. [laughs]

Jenny: Yes! Next Halloween. This is an oddball—this is, like, a wild question to contemplate from the outside, anyway. Because you know, you so fully and completely embody the character of Drusilla. But we were wondering, if you had to play a different character within the Buffy or Angelverse, if there was a character that you felt drawn to or interested in exploring?

Juliet: You know, I wouldn't trade Dru, just because I found her delicious to play. And you know, it's rare, also—especially on television—to have such a complex and dimensional character. But I guess if I had to pick another one, I would probably—I would probably go for Buffy. I mean, the show is called Buffy the Vampire Slayer. [laughter] So the actress in me would like that.

Jenny: [laughs] Yeah.

Juliet: You know, so I think I'd go with Buffy.

Kristin: It's true. I don't know that there's any character really, like, juicier than Dru. Like, there's just so much happening in Drusilla that it makes sense that you wouldn't wanna trade her for anybody else. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah, absolutely.

Juliet: Yeah. It was fun. I mean, she literally almost had sort of Shakespearean qualities. And you—it's—you don't get that. Unless you're doing Shakespeare. And so, you know, there's an element of Ophelia or, you know, there's—so yeah. It was pretty, pretty great.

Kristin: Yeah, Drusilla's lines are so iconic. There's so many of them that I know that we would love to ask you about, but a listener did write in and I had the same question. Wondering, you know, there's a scene—I don't remember the episode. It's at the very beginning of Dru. She's looking up at the ceiling in the warehouse and she says...

[Clip plays]

Drusilla: I'm naming all the stars...

Spike: You can't see the stars, love. That's the ceiling. Also it's day.

Drusilla: I can see them. But I've named them all the same name, and there's terrible confusion.

Kristin: I'm sure that you've been asked this question before, but do you know what Drusilla named all of the stars?

Juliet: I think—I'm trying to remember. I have my scripts and notes, and I'm sure I had something. But I think it was something like "Genevieve."

Jenny: Nice. [laughter]

Juliet: Like, I just named them all "Genevieve."

Kristin: Oh, I love it.

Juliet: And you know, it got a bit confusing. [laughter]

Kristin: Yeah. [laughs] Did you, um—Juliet, did you get to keep anything from a set, from either of the shows? You know, you had—obviously Drusilla is known for her dolls and Miss Edith especially. But I wonder if you got to keep any clothing or the dolls or anything like that.

Juliet: It's funny, I was offered all this stuff. I didn't take—I'm not a collector person, so I didn't take it, which Dev is always saying, why? [Jenny and Kristin laugh] Why didn't you—why didn't you take it? I do have a few things. I had been—there were a set of vampire teeth that I had been given to work with at home, just because they're hard to work with. So I actually have those and I have the hundred—like, the hundred episode—they actually gave us a stake that they engrave—like, an engraved, wood stake.

Kristin: Ahh.

Juliet: And so I have that. And I didn't keep Miss Edith. What was interesting with Miss Edith is that they had her scripted on—as, you know, the earlier episodes. And then later, on some of the episodes that she reappeared, I actually had asked for her, 'cause she wasn't in the script. And I know in one of the Angel episodes—and they actually didn't have Miss Edith anymore. So they had to recreate Miss Edith, which they did perfectly, 'cause she looked identical.

Jenny: Wow.

Juliet: And then I had my dolly back to stab her eyes out [laughter] and do all my various activities and stuff. But I actually have a funny story also about the vampire teeth. So when I was home working on them and talking and doing dialogue, at the time of the show. And I—it was like, two in the morning, and I thought, oh okay,

you know, I'm gonna take the garbage out and nobody's gonna be around. It doesn't matter, I don't have to take the teeth out. What's gonna happen? [laughter] So I went out to the garbage. And I'm literally putting the thing in the bin, and I hear this, "hi! Oh my gosh, I'm your new neighbor! I just wanted to come and say hi."

And I was completely panicked, 'cause I thought, oh my god, I'm gonna scare this woman to death if I start talking and open my mouth. [laughter] So I literally put my hand up to my mouth and said [muffled] "It's really nice to meet you." [laughter] And I ran up to the house. And then I later told her, and she thought it was quite funny. But she said, thank you so much, I would have actually had a heart attack if, in the middle of the night at 2 AM, I, you know, met you—

Jenny: [laughing] Yeah!

Juliet: And you had your teeth. [laughter]

Kristin: Oh my gosh. Lovely to meet the new neighbors—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: They only come out at night. [laughter]

Juliet: Exactly! [laughs]

Kristin: We have what I think is a fun question from our listener, Fred, who wanted to know if Drusilla—so. You know, we have vampires with souls, with chips. We got vampires with all sorts of things in these universes, but Drusilla—if Drusilla was given a soul, akin to our Angelus/Angel, do you think that there would be somebody in particular from the Buffyverse or the Angelverse who she would be drawn to, who she would most want to be friends with?

Juliet: Yeah. I think as a friend, probably Xander. [Kristin laughs] I think Xander and Dru—I mean, she—we did have that Halloween episode. I know everybody was going after Xander in that episode. [laughter] But Dru and Xander would be—you know, he could make his quick quips and she could make her slow non sequiturs. [laughter] And it would be a really weird, great conversation. [laughter]

Kristin: Oh my god. [laughs] Somebody give that to us, please.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: If you're a writer and you hear this, please. Give us a little Dru plus Xander being best friends chat. [laughs] Did you—Juliet, you know, and maybe this is a question that will span past your work on Buffy. But did you stay in character? Was Drusilla a character that you needed to stay in, or did you just kind of snap in and out of it as the takes were going?

Juliet: Um, definitely did not stay in character. I think that would be pretty wild and scare everybody [laughter] in the crew. I did, often, actually unintentionally to some degree—James and I would find that we would stay in our dialects and in our accents and just stay kind of speaking that way, almost unbeknownst—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Juliet: To ourselves. I remember Brian Thompson, who plays the big blue guy in the Surprise episode, was saying—when we saw him, I think somewhere a month or two later from our shoot date, was really surprised at how we spoke. And said, oh my god, wait, wait, wait, I'm—this is weird. [laughter] I talked to you, like, 16 hours a day for, you know, the whole shoot and had no idea.

[AD BREAK]

Kristin: So, Jenny—Jenny does not like when we get to this part of the interview, where we say—Jenny wrote a jingle for Drusilla's character. She likes to hide under the desk, away from the attention. But we don't know if you got a chance to hear it. I would love to know what your thoughts are on the Drusilla jingle in the Buffering the Vampire Slayer universe.

Jenny: We make—oh, god. [laughs]

Juliet: I love it. So much. [laughter] It's *fantastic*. It is really, really phenomenal.

Jenny: Uh, thank you so much. We just—we really love to honor characters that really, really resonate with us, so that every time they do something we really love while we're talking about it within the episode, we can just trigger a jingle to be like, yes! Drusilla!

[DRUSILLA jingle plays]

Dru... silla

You... fill up

My heart with dread

And still I'm led

Right back to you

Juliet: It's perfect! It's perfect, perfect, perfect for Dru. [Jenny laughs]

Kristin: Yeah, Dru—somebody wrote in—somebody wrote in and said, Jenny, that they think Drusilla's jingle is the most on.

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: Like, the most spot-on for the character, which—

Jenny: [laughing] Thanks.

Juliet: Woo-hoo! Yay!

Kristin: Yeah. [laughter]

Juliet: Yeah, you definitely nailed it. For sure.

Jenny: Thank you so much.

Juliet: You put the nail in the coffin. [laughter] [inaudible]

Jenny: Our listener Annie wrote in to ask if you think that your character was a Potential Slayer before being sired? Given that she was having prophetic visions, which is a precursor to being chosen, a lot of the time.

Juliet: You know, it's interesting. I didn't have that viewpoint when I was playing it. But I think that it could make a lot of sense. What do you guys think about that?

Kristin: I think we both had a similar experience with the question. We had not thought of it either, but as soon as I read it, I was like, whoa—actually, you know, the comment came through on Instagram. And you know, you can like people's comments. And the comment of that question had, like, upwards of 30 people—

Jenny: Being like, wow!

Kristin: Just like, yes, oh my god, I never thought of this, holy shit! [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah.

Juliet: Yeah.

Jenny: And he also said perhaps that's why Angel and Spike were both kind of, like, drawn to Drusilla in the first place.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Which makes a lot of sense too!

Juliet: Yeah. It all would make sense. Now I need to check that with Joss.
[laughter]

Kristin: Right? He'll probably have the same response as all of us. Like, I didn't think of it, but yeah! [laughter]

Juliet: That makes sense.

Kristin: [laughs] Yeah. Sometimes the story writes itself, you know? [laughter]

Juliet: Yeah, that's very true.

Kristin: Juliet, before we move to talking about your movie, something that I would really love to hear about from you is your interaction with the Buffy fandom. You know, I think so many people from the show have done so many cons and interacted—are just wonderful with the fandom overall and have such a great relationship. But I feel that yours is really so powerful. You know, we see you interacting with people one on one. You're just so engaged, and I just would love to hear about that experience for you. And maybe how it's changed over time, too.

Juliet: Well, the—Buffy fans are the best. I mean, seriously, *the* best. Everybody's so smart and interesting and fun. And you know, the other thing that's awesome is how everybody follows you from project to project. Once they like your work from Buffy, they are there for you. And the conversations that you get to have—it's—are really fascinating. I mean, it's just—you couldn't have a better group of people.

And I've been really touched by how many people I've met and how many people have said that Buffy's gotten them through really hard times or been really influential or instrumental in their lives. I have a dear friend, someone who's become a really dear friend, who became a therapist because of Buffy and because the character of Drusilla intrigued her. And you know, there's all kinds of things—that you hope to have an impact when you're doing work. That, you know, I've been able to see and have people talk to me about, that is just incredibly powerful.

Kristin: And I think—I don't know. It does seem, the more we talk to people who were involved in the making of the show, that it is a product of, like, this symbiosis that happens. Because—

Juliet: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Everyone who we've spoken to from the show also has this wonderful, open, kind nature. And yeah, it just sort of seems like it has its own energy.

Jenny: Yeah.

Juliet: Well, the show wouldn't have been what it was without the community. And it is like we're all connected in that. And so—and—you know, as an artist, you do stuff that you hope speaks to people. And if you have that and you get to interact, it's just really amazing.

Kristin: Thank you for giving us Drusilla.

Jenny: Yeah!

Kristin: Truly—

Jenny: A gift.

Kristin: I can't—I mean, I think—yeah. Drusilla changed the landscape. [Jenny laughs] Really changed the game for the vamps out there. [laughs]

Juliet: [laughs] Very cool. I—you know, I like to say sometimes that it was obscenely fun to play Dru. [Jenny laughs] 'Cause it was. Going to work every day, you know, it was incredibly creative and all of the people were so wonderful. And you know, it's not a bad day's work when you're kissing James and kissing David. [laughter] [sarcastically] Like, oh my god, my job is just so, so hard. [laughs] You know? So...

Kristin: Yeah, did you ever get, like, injured from those cheekbones of James', you know? [laughter] Did they ever... [laughs]

Juliet: It's funny you say that because we did—we actually did, um, a thing once at Whedoncon where they had us do a sort of improv where I was Spike and he was Dru.

Jenny: Oh my god! [laughter]

Juliet: And what was funny is I took it—so James is totally—he's in the green room. And he's totally laidback and just like, oh yeah, I'm gonna wing it. And I was Googling and looking up clips [laughter] of Spike. Because obviously, I'd always been inside the scenes from Dru's perspective. So I'm like, let me—let me look at Spike and—so I can nail his mannerisms. And so I was doing the Spike walk, and I was doing his—like, everything. And the way he stands and I was doing—I kept sort of referring to my cheekbones. [laughter] And making—like, sucking in my cheeks and doing his accent, saying "the cheekbones." And it was just really—like, it was very fun, everybody was laughing. And James was like, mirroring me with his cheekbones.

Jenny: Oh my god.

Juliet: [laughing] And so...

Kristin: Oh my god. Is there footage of this anywhere?

Jenny: [simultaneously] Yeah, we have to find video. That'd be amazing.

Kristin: I would pay good money to see this role reversal improv. Holy shit.

Juliet: I don't think so. It was funny too 'cause at one point, we actually sat down on—there was a couch. And then we realized there was a window there and we were like, ahhh! 'Cause there was sunlight. [laughter] So it was just... it was actually a fun and fluid experience. But I don't think there's any film of it. But he was—he kept trying—he was like, "I don't think I captured Dru as well." And I was like, "well, you weren't studying in the green room!" [laughter]

Kristin: Yeah! He should know by now. He's worked with you long enough to know that he's gotta do his research to step up. [laughs]

Juliet: Well, it's funny you say that, 'cause when we—we were doing an interview for TV Guide. And it was James, myself and David. And they were asking about me on set and David said, oh, you know, she brings—'cause I sometimes bring—at that point, it was not an iPod yet. It was a Walkman. [laughter] Right?

Kristin: Yeah.

Juliet: And so, I brought my music and would sometimes, you know—'cause I like to create a soundtrack for each character.

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: Mm!

Juliet: And so, he started sort of moving around—you guys can't see me, but sort of moving around in a Dru-like way, saying to the reporter, [softly] "this is Juliet on set. Can we run lines? Can we rehearse? [laughter] Can we run lines? Can we rehearse? Can we run lines, can we rehearse? Can we rehearse, can we rehearse, can we rehearse, can we rehearse?" So they printed that. [laughter]

Kristin: Is the existence of Drusilla's playlist—is that public—on public record? Is that something that we can find somewhere?

Juliet: No, I always—it's interesting. I do it for every character and it's—when I'm working on a character, I put music together. When I was just on Bosch playing Rita Tedesco, I had her soundtrack. Right now, I'm actually going back to do a recurring role on Claws, which I started just before quarantine and we're now picking back up again.

Kristin: Amazing.

Juliet: And so every character has a separate soundtrack. And Dru's—you know, I know what it is. But it hasn't been published anywhere.

Kristin: Love it. I love it.

Jenny: You gotta keep some secrets. Yeah.

Kristin: You know, like an Italian grandma, you gotta keep the—yeah, you gotta keep that recipe secret.

Juliet: It's a recipe. [laughter] Absolutely. Yeah, it is like that. It's funny, because—you know, and everything's different. Like, a particular character can be a—you know, can be classical music.

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: From all different kinds of music and whatever speaks to me for that character, I sort of put together as a thing. And what's great about it is then you're on set, and you—when you just hear it, you're automatically back in character.

Jenny: Mmm.

Juliet: It's funny, 'cause I passed that on in the rehearsal process for our film to a lot of the actors. And so on my set, it was funny 'cause a lot of the actors had their earphones in and were doing—I was, oh my god—

Jenny: Ah!

Juliet: I've created these Frankensteins, you know? [laughter] So—but it's really a wonderful thing. And the funny thing is, to this day, when I hear any pieces that are [inaudible] Drusilla thing, I all of a sudden feel like, wait, I'm supposed to start talking like Dru. [laughter] So I have to be careful if I'm in public and one of the pieces of music comes on, that I don't, you know, start talking to anybody else in Drusilla speak.

Kristin: Ugh, okay. So, listen. You have created a movie called *A Place Among the Dead*. And I would love to start with you at the beginning of that project. Because there are so many layers to the project.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: And I just would love to know where this began. Like, where—like, what was the moment when you knew you had to make this film?

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: When you knew you wanted to make this film?

Juliet: Well, I wanted to make a movie about the repercussions of growing up under the sway of narcissism and evil. And my husband Dev and I both come from this background, and we wanted to make a movie that we had never seen before and talk about something that we haven't seen in films before. And actually, that isn't really talked about in society as a whole. I wanted to use genre to make an entertaining movie, but also, to lull the audience into a sense of safety to explore unsafe ideas.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Juliet: You know, it's interesting because narcissism and evil are obviously abound in our society. Things seem to be escalating and escalating right now—

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Juliet: The thing that's interesting is if you Google "narcissism," there are 9,120,000 Youtube videos. There are 70,400,000 Google results.

Kristin: Wow.

Juliet: If you look at psychological abuse, there's 188 million Google results. So obviously people are searching for it, are wanting to talk about it, are needing to talk about it. And so that really was the inception of the process.

Kristin: Did you know at the outset—because the film—and you know, I know that a lot of our listeners are gonna watch it. So I won't spoil anything too deeply, but there is sort of like a format shift in the film. And did you know that you were going to do that from the jump? Or was that part of the creation? Did that come to you during the making of it?

Juliet: Yes. We actually knew all along—it's—you know, decided to sort of make the movie as—it's completely scripted. Entirely scripted, even the interviews—

Jenny: Ahh.

Kristin: Mm,.

Juliet: Are scripted. Which is cool, that you guys didn't [inaudible] [laughter]

Kristin: No, not at all. Not at all.

Jenny: Very effective.

Juliet: Yay! And we wanted to do a meld of fact, fiction and the fantastical, and blur the lines of reality, and use that to make the movie as experiential as possible.

Kristin: Mm.

Jenny: Yeah, it's like, very immersive. And like you said—

Juliet: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Like, all of these interview segments that are sort of like, cut in throughout the duration of the film, I totally thought—I 100% had no idea those were scripted. And it's so cool to be hearing from folks like Joss, Anne Rice, like, talk about a genre luminary, Gary Oldman, who of course played Dracula in the 1992 adaptation—

Juliet: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Film adaptation. Amazing to see all of these—oh, Charlaine Harris, who created the books that—

Juliet: Mmhmm.

Jenny: True Blood ultimately was based on. I mean, you really—[laughs] you really got quite an incredible roundup.

Juliet: Every person has a tie to the vampire genre. And they all play alter-ego versions of themselves. And so, you know, in scripting them, we really captured the views of each person and worked with them on it, when we were doing—when we were doing that.

Jenny: So cool. So that process even was collaborative to a point.

Juliet: Yes, absolutely. And what was interesting about the movie is, you know, it uses the first person and the third person. What I was saying sort of about it being experiential and what you were talking about it being immersive is, you know, I wanted the viewer to experience it—like, be, a lot of the time, in my alter ego's perspective.

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: In Juliet's perspective. And to feel—you know, it was interesting. Dev and I talked about the fact that we'd never heard a voiceover in a movie that sounded remotely like the thoughts running through our minds.

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: And so—and, you know, we really wanted to look at where those thoughts come from and how so much of the messaging from when you're young becomes these voices that inform your choices going forward and can lead to very destructive choices.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Yeah, I thought those—the voiceover, the sort of like, stream of consciousness, repetitive, invasive thoughts. All of those sections were really—I mean, intense and like—and like, unlike—I think there's one other place where I've

experienced something in the same sort of general ballpark, which is an episode of Bojack Horseman called Stupid Piece of Shit. Which is all—it's also based on sort of invasive, repetitive thoughts.

Juliet: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And like, this man who is like, a depressed alcoholic, talking himself through his own negative cycle. Bojack is, like, an incredible show and that episode is one of the best. It's like a beautiful piece of art. So to like, see something really similar here was very cool and also like, very effective. Because who among us doesn't have those thoughts, like, echoing in our heads from whoever said them—

Juliet: Everybody.

Jenny: Or eventually they just turn into your voice, like, over time, you know.

Juliet: Exactly. Exactly. And that's the thing. And it becomes unrelenting and it's interesting with that. Because we did, you know, sneak peeks just before lockdown when we finished the movie. And the response was so beautiful and powerful from the entire audience—every time, not only stayed afterwards to talk about the movie, but they stayed for like, two hours.

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: Then sharing intensely personal stories. I mean, one of the things that is interesting when we were doing some research on this is it turns out that 80% of the thoughts in everybody's minds, even if you come from the most healthy upbringing ever—

Jenny: Whoa!

Juliet: Are negative. And that's a pretty interesting statistic—

Kristin: Holy crap.

Juliet: Yeah, how we all talk to ourselves. And then, you know, how—you know—and the whole point of the movie is, you know, we might—you might—we all come from varying degrees of things. But it's that—you can keep going on that path and making destructive choices. Which, you know, my alter ego seems to be doing in the movie. [laughter] Or, you know, as an adult, you can make a different choice and you can make a different life for yourself. And that's really, you know, what we're talking about with the film.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: You start the film—you know, we're talking—we've now dipped our toes into things like upbringing. And you begin the film very pointedly with photos of yourself as a child and of your parents. And so I wonder if you wanna talk about that, specifically, the choice to use those images and how that folded into the film.

Juliet: Yes. I mean, I chose to make the movie exceptionally personal. As they say, the more personal, the more universal.

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: I really used the parents as a device, because I want the viewer to do the same. I want the person watching to become a participant and I want to give voice to what has affected many. And the whole purpose of the film, besides being an entertaining movie, is to open up a dialogue—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Juliet: And to provoke conversation. You know, what I think is interesting is that the parents appear for 44 seconds in the entire 76-minute movie. But the metaphor of that is that they're a small part of one's life. Like, you spend some years in your—during when you're being raised, right? And then you spend all these other years of the rest of your life, succumbing to some of that, unless you make a decision and make some changes in sort of letting that operate you.

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: That's incredibly powerful, also because 46 seconds—you know, I would have thought that they were more present in the film. So the immersive element of that was very effective, as a viewer. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah, yeah.

Juliet: It's interesting 'cause—you know, and I did—it's funny that you're talking about it. 'Cause I really wanted the movie—you know, that thing—I don't know about with you guys. But—you know, what your thoughts are like. But you know, when you're on a negative spin, it isn't relenting. Like, I didn't wanna put music under it—

Jenny: Yeah.

Juliet: I didn't wanna put sound effects, 'cause it's like there *is* nothing else, when you're having those kind of negative thoughts. There is—you know, you're not hearing and seeing and in the world in its full proper glory. You're kind of in this one section of really your false self and this, you know, false identity and these negative things. And so it was interesting, 'cause I played with different elements of that. And you guys would know, actually, in terms of the—Harry Groener who played the mayor in Buffy? He and his wife Dawn are the parents' voiceover in the movie.

Jenny: Whoa!

Kristin: You know, I—yeah, I saw—I saw Harry—I didn't see Dawn's name. But I saw Harry's name in the credits. So it was after I had watched it, and was like, [gasps] holy shit! [laughter]

Jenny: Amazing.

Kristin: So incredible. [laughs]

Juliet: It was really great, and it was funny when we were recording that stuff. Because we recorded probably—I'd say, maybe like two and a half hours straight, of these all different sort of thoughts that we had scripted. And afterwards, we all were sitting there for a minute and everybody was quiet [laughing] and it was sort of very dark. And Harry was like, "do you have any booze?" [laughter] And we were like, yes, let's—let's crack it open and have—let's have some positive talk right now. [laughter]

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Well, it's like—

Kristin: Ohh, a precursor to 2020. [laughter]

Jenny: So, touching on—touching on like, parent-child relationships I think is gonna be charged in one of any number of ways for just about everybody. Like, we all have either relationships to our parents or relationships to, you know, the idea of parentage and like, what those relationships can be like and last—you know, how they might go on to affect you over the course of your entire life.

Juliet: Mmhmm.

Jenny: On the sort of like flipside of that coin, in terms of like, important relationships, you worked on this film with your partner Dev. And we were kind of wondering, you know, is this the first time you two have worked on a project like this together? What was that like? He also appears in the film. My guess would be that it would be, like, awesome to have your partner there to—for you guys to sort of like, be leaning against each other at the same time, over the course of making this.

Juliet: It's not the first time. We've actually—we did two short subjects. We did something called Take Flight, which was all about Gary Oldman's creative process. And then we did a short documentary called Dream Out Loud that—where we interviewed Guillermo del Toro and Rian Johnson—

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: Who directed Star Wars: The Last Jedi and—

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Juliet: Knives Out, recently. And then also, Joseph Gordon Levitt was in that. I mean, we absolutely love collaborating together. We have very different strengths. Dev is a cinematographer and a stills photographer and so he has a very strong visual background. And I'm, as a performer, have a very strong sort of acting and emotional background. And even in life, we sometimes make a joke and say, we make one terrific person. [laughter] So it's pretty great.

And also, you know, with this project, we were essentially almost on a mission. We wanted to have this creative venture—we wanted to make it really to open up a dialogue. And so—and it's interesting because the response that we've gotten, in terms of what people are saying, is that it's, you know, a genre-bending art film. And that it—what you were saying, sort of, in terms of the immersive aspect of it. And so I think, for both of us, it—you know, we compiled both of our experiences for some of the elements that are the factual elements in the film. And it's been a real journey, in terms of everything that we've learned and the process together.

And you know, just in general, he's the best partner ever. And he's—you know, we both feel so fortunate to have discovered what love really is. And that love is having someone's back and them having yours and what that *really* means when someone wants the best for you—was a discovery for us. And I think that's present in the film.

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: And sometimes it almost seems miraculous in a non-religious sense, that, you know, we were able to have this kind of relationship, not having been shown it in any way. So it's great.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Juliet: I mean, it's just—you know, the workload has been insane.

Jenny: Sure. [Kristin laughs]

Juliet: We basically don't have a house. You know, and while sleeping, I'll roll over and say, "I have this idea." [laughter] Which I'm sure doesn't happen with other partnerships, 'cause people restrain themselves from calling someone at, you know, 5 in the morning or 4 in the morning.

Kristin: Yes.

Juliet: So it has all of that aspect. But it's—we really do bolster up each other's strengths in a, you know, exceptional way, I think.

Kristin: That's so powerful, to be able to, you know, not only have that support within a relationship, but then to be able to use that to create together.

Jenny: You just made me think of this Greek myth. It's sort of a creation myth. It's about, like, how in the beginning, humans had two heads and four legs and then the gods were like, this is too good. They've—one human has it all and we can't abide that. So the gods split all the people into two-legged, one-headed humans, thus kind of like, cursing them to be forever seeking their soulmate, in order to find, like, that perfect partner who makes them whole.

Juliet: Aww.

Jenny: Which is just kind of what you made me think about while you were talking about Dev, which is very sweet. You make one really great person together—

Juliet: Oh, I love that.

Jenny: And we should all be so lucky. [laughter]

Juliet: Well, we say that and we actually sometimes wonder, is that not a good [inaudible, laughter] for both of us to make? You know. But even—so, for instance,

Dev is dyslexic, so—and I am—so he thinks very outside of the box. And I'm very sort of org—so we sort of pool it together and it ends up working.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Juliet: But that myth is amazing. I've actually never heard that, and it's—it's quite a moving myth.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Yeah. Tying together a bit of Buffy and this movie, this film, A Place Among the Dead. A lot of the film is set in Santa Barbara. And we have many listeners in Santa Barbara. The former mayor of Santa Barbara—

Juliet: Oh, yay!

Kristin: Who gave us a tour of the city and said, this is Sunnydale. Santa Barbara is Sunnydale, right? And obviously, you know, in the series, we get a lot of B-roll of Santa Barbara. So I'm wondering if there was like a conscious, connective tissue there, or if a lot of people just live in Santa Barbara. [laughs]

Juliet: No, you know what? They didn't live there. We set it there not because of that, but—and not with its tie to Buffy. But it's an added bonus, because in terms of the meld of the fact and the fiction and the fantastical, it's another layer of the sort of blurring of the lines and the crossover that actually is really interesting, that—now I'll say, "oh yes, that was totally—" [inaudible] [laughter]

Kristin: [laughing] Totally intentional.

Juliet: "That's just amazing!" [laughter]

Kristin: Well, and there's another moment in the film—I mean, obviously, I think that the film is threaded through your previous work and characters—

Juliet: Yes.

Kristin: And things in many ways. But there was one moment that came to mind when we were just talking where the mother of one of the victims says to you, like, how could you do th—how could you play—like, Juliet. How could you play these characters—

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: That bring like, death and sort of like, make this—

Juliet: Glamorize it.

Kristin: Glamorize it, exactly. And so I would love to hear you talk about that—like, including that and what you think about that. 'Cause you—you are the Juliet who has played those characters. [laughs]

Juliet: It's an interesting thing. And it's something actually, in terms of—that I first thought about. And it's one of the reasons we included it in the film and I thought about it—when I was shooting Buffy, I remember a friend of mine saying, "oh gosh, I really love the work that you're doing. And when I see—like, Spike and Dru, they're so *cool*. Like, I really wanna spend time with them." And I was like, well, you wouldn't 'cause you're human. [laughter] You know, like—but she said, like—we had a whole discussion about the nature of that. And how—you know, what is that, in terms of, are we—and then—but the thing with, also, fantastical characters is certainly, you know, they're not real. Vampires are not real. Sorry anyone who thinks they are. [laughter] In my perspective—[laughter]

Kristin: Sorry to vampires, and also...[laughter]

Juliet: Sorry to the vampires, to the vampires listening. But you know, and so you are dealing with a fantasy world. And you know, in our film, the character—there's a character that you're not sure if he indeed is a vampire or he's a serial killer. Either way, the same sort of traits apply. I mean, for me, the idea was the metaphor. You know, the vampire's the perfect metaphor for the ultimate narcissist, draining you completely for its—

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: [inaudible] And so, you know, so we're not glamorizing it in the movie. But—and you know, if you're playing, often, you know, a villain or something, you're not glamorizing it. In terms of Buffy, you know, you are dealing with a fantasy universe.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Juliet: So it is something that is—isn't threatening in that way. It isn't encouraging, you know, real bad acts. One of the reasons Joss said he made the vampires have the vamp face when they were feeding and when Buffy—so that to be really clear

that these are demons. 'Cause he didn't want a high school girl going around and killing—even if it looked like humans.

Jenny: Mm.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Juliet: You know, and so he wanted to make it distinctive, like, these are demons and she is doing—you know, she's fighting on the side of good. And she's not doing something, you know, that is evil.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Mmhmm, mmhmm. You know, we've had so many conversations and I know, as we begin Season 6, we're going to be having oh so many more, about that. About the idealization of, you know, Spike, Dru, Angelus. And you know, Spike specifically as a character that we know, having talked to James, you know, was like, why do you still like this guy?! Like, what does he have to do to make you understand that, like, at the end of the day, he is a vampire?

Juliet: Yeah. I mean, it's funny. Obviously, I'm still in that—somewhat of that connection to Dru. 'Cause I'm like, yes, but that's why Dru and Spike have such—more of a healthy relationship than Buffy and Spike. [laughter] 'Cause I'm still championing for that, right? [laughter]

Kristin: Yeah, yeah. [laughter]

Juliet: 'Cause two demons being together is much better than a demon and a human. [laughter]

Kristin: I mean, I think you have a solid point. Although I'm not sure where the metaphor will land us.

Juliet: [laughing] Right.

Kristin: But it makes sense to me on paper. [laughs]

Juliet: Right. [laughs]

Kristin: So a listener wrote in to us to ask about A Place Among the *Undead*." Because the name of the film is A Place Among the Dead and—can you talk to us about the various projects that you're working on?

Juliet: Yes. Yes, absolutely. So this, *A Place Among the Dead*, is our scripted feature film. And I know it's confusing 'cause at one point, we actually were calling our other project *A Place Among the Undead*. Which was the least smart idea we've ever had. [laughter] And we thought, like, oh, it's cool, there's an overlap! And it was like, no. [laughter] So it has now evolved to become a series, and it's called *The Undead Series*.

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: And it is a completely different project. It has a lot of the same talent—came to work with us again, plus Tim Burton and Willem Dafoe. It's all documentary, it's all unscripted, and that is *The Undead Series*. And this is *A Place Among the Dead*, which is a scripted narrative film and stars myself and has Gary Oldman, Ron Perlman, Robert Patrick, Lance Henriksen, Joss Whedon and Anne Rice appearing for the first time ever in a movie. And by the way, actually, we also have Kay Oldman, who is Gary's mom, appearing in a movie for the first time. She has always wanted to be an actress—

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: Ah!

Juliet: She's amazing. She plays the nun—

Jenny: Oh, wow!

Juliet: The nun in the movie.

Kristin: She was so good!

Jenny: Yeah, she rocked. The nun rocks.

Juliet: Yes, she's *phenomenal*.

Kristin: Yo, the nun was like, one of my favorite characters in the whole movie! [laughs]

Juliet: Yep. And so, it was so cute because basically, she sort of—she had always wanted—she sadly has passed away.

Kristin: Ugh!

Juliet: It's—this is actually her last sort of thing. And she got to do it on screen and she was so amazing. And it was so cute because Gary lobbied for her to do the part, saying, she's always wanted to be an actress. She was incredible. He drove her to set, he was running lines with her.

Kristin: Oh my god!

Juliet: It was adorable. And she didn't—she was so cute because I would say, "and... action!" And she would go... [British accent] "are we gonna have a go?" [laughter] And then I would say, yes, okay, every time that I say action, we're gonna have a go. And then I'd go, "and... action!" She'd go, [British accent] "now? Are we gonna have a go now?" [laughter] I'd be like, yes, yes, every time I say action, we're gonna have a go right then. And... action! [British accent] "So... so we're gonna have a go now?"

Jenny: Oh my god.

Juliet: [laughs] So it was very cute.

Kristin: She was marvelous.

Juliet: Yeah.

Kristin: Truly, she was so wonderful. That's incredible. You know, I think that there are so many things that we could talk about about the film. But I'm wondering if there's anything that you wanna talk about specifically that we haven't brought up, that we haven't asked, that you want people to know before they go in to watching the film.

Juliet: Well, I just—I'm really excited about Modern Films, which is a female-based distribution company.

Jenny: Cool.

Kristin: Mmm.

Juliet: And they are doing their first worldwide release with us. They usually are UK and Ireland. They have incredible taste in movies. They just released Werner

Herzog's new film. Werner Herzog directed Rescue Dawn with Christian Bale, among many other brilliant movies. And they're releasing Viggo Mortensen's—

Jenny: Whoa.

Juliet: Directorial debut.

Kristin: Wow.

Juliet: And they are really excited about this movie. And we've crafted a release plan that is traditional, and we're doing all the traditional press and all of that stuff. But we're also doing these incredible events where we get to talk to people directly, which is what we want with this film. And so on October 29th, we have the worldwide virtual premiere. It's being sponsored by Mac Cosmetics and New York Comic Con. And the cast will be attending. And then on October 30th, we have Halloween Among the Dead, which is a virtual preview screening event. It's very Buffy-centric. It's Starfury—

Jenny: Oh, cool!

Juliet: That we're doing it with.

Kristin: Oh, yeah.

Juliet: And has [inaudible]. So Harry Groener will be there, as well as myself. On October 31st, Tomorrow's Ghosts is having a preview screening event. It's very music and goth-centric and it's an expansive Halloween-themed program. And then on October 30th, we have our premium video on demand run, at US Laemmle Theaters all across the US and in practical theaters wherever is possible.

Kristin: Right.

Juliet: And then starting November 9th, the film will be hosted on the Modern Films website and in virtual theaters across the world. So starting October 29th, virtually, everybody can come and see the movie. And I would love to give you the link for tickets, if that works.

Kristin: Yes, absolutely, we'll put the link in our show notes here and share it on social media as well so that everybody can find it and get to it. 'Cause I know—

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: That they're going to want to. [laughs]

Juliet: Perfect. So the website—it's modernfilms.com/aplaceamongthedead.

Kristin: Great.

Juliet: That's where the tickets for all of the above are available.

Jenny: Awesome.

Kristin: Ugh, incredible. Incredible! Juliet, before we end this wonderful conversation that we of course never want to end, we thought that, with Halloween right around the corner, with you having a movie release right around the bend, that we would ask you if you have a favorite scary movie.

Juliet: Ooh. I think I might have to go with some classics. I think *The Shining*—

Kristin: Ooh.

Juliet: I think—there's a movie called *Don't Look Now*, with Donald Sutherland and Julie Christie, and is really, really scary. Again, kind of more psychologically scary. And then, you know, our movie has been likened to *Donnie Darko*.

Jenny: Ahh.

Juliet: *Eraserhead*, *Black Swan*. Somebody said—it's described as a David Lynch home movie or *Black Swan* with a message. [laughter] And those are all incredible movies that I love as well. So it's hard to pick one, but those are some goodies.

Kristin: Yes, well—and I feel like the type of scary movie is very clear, based on your choices. There's a lot of psychological thrilling happening, yeah. [laughs]

Juliet: Yeah, that's what I usually—yeah, am drawn to. [laughter] You know, it's one of the things that's interesting with genre, that you can—again, like with *Buffy*, high school is a nightmare. You can talk about things in a way that isn't hitting—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Juliet: People over the head, that isn't going so directly at something. And I think that that's a wonderful way to get to talk about things and use art and entertainment to talk about things.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Yeah. Ugh, Juliet, thank you so much. Good luck with the next few weeks of prepping for all that is to come. And of course, if you're listening, we'll put all of the things you need to know in the show notes so that you can watch the film and follow Juliet and all that you do. Because I know that this is one among many projects and I'm sure you have many more to come. [laughs]

Juliet: Oh, well, thank you. It's been so much fun hanging out with you guys today. I've just really enjoyed this conversation so, so much.

Kristin: Thank you, thank you for being here with us. And thank you for bringing us Drusilla and this film.

Jenny: Yes, thank you so much!

Juliet: Aww. Absolutely. And look forward to our next chat.

Jenny: Right on.

Kristin: Yes, same. [laughs]

Jenny: Alright.

Juliet: Alright.

Jenny: Take care.

Juliet: Bye-bye!

Kristin: Bye!

[DRUSILLA jingle plays]

Dru... silla

You... fill up

My heart with dread

And still I'm led

Right back to you