

Angel On Top
Episode 3.18: Double or Nothing

[CHIME]

LaToya: Welcome back to Angel On Top, a podcast where we watch and discuss every episode of Angel, one by one, and in tandem with our arch nemesis, those terrible women over at Buffering the Vampire Slayer.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Especially Jenny. [Morgan laughs] She's the worst of all of them. I'm your co-host, LaToya Ferguson, AKA the Cordelia Chase of the Buffering verse, AKA Bones, AKA one half of the Gunn Squad—bang, bang!—AKA Theodore K. Mullins, AKA Gilly, AKA [laughs] lover of long winded bits, like this one!

Morgan: And I'm your co-host, Morgan Lutich, AKA the Winifred Burkle of the Buffering verse, AKA also Bones, AKA the other half of the Gunn Squad—blap, blap! [LaToya snorts]—AKA Frank Scabopolis, AKA sorry! AKA also a lover of long winded bits, more specifically this one.

LaToya: And this week, we're watching Angel Season 3, Episode 18, Double or Nothing. Double or Nothing was written by David H. Goodman and directed by David Grossman. It aired on The WB on April 22nd, 2002.

Morgan: And this is the one where we reveal that Gunn sold his soul to a casino demon, and now that he's on the verge of giving it to Fred, the casino is going to collect.

[Angel On Top theme plays]

LaToya: Previously on Angel. Fred has Gunn's back. Gunn hunted vampires and demons since he was a kid, but he never had a Fred before. Wes is taking the baby away, for good! That Justine slits his throat and takes the baby away from him.

Morgan: Mmm.

LaToya: Wes's reason for taking Connor, "the father will kill the son," uh, so maybe Angel will forgive him. Not!

Morgan: [laughs] Psych!

LaToya: I will just say. We'll discuss this later when we have our Wes scene in the hospital, but a lot of Wes's scenes are a real "psych!" moment lately. [both laugh]

Morgan: All of them are so grim, I don't even know what to do about it. Like, all of the Wes scenes in my notes are like, one line of like, "Jesus." [laughs]

LaToya: "This is the saddest scene that's ever existed."

Morgan: *Grim* stuff, folks. [laughs]

LaToya: But you know what's not grim? Gunn and Fred, baby! And that's how we open the episode.

Morgan: Oh my god. I know we've said good things about Gunn. I know we've said good things about Fred. I know we've said good things about the two of them together. But dang are they lovely in this episode. They are so beautiful, so charming, so sweet. I would do anything for them, 10 out of 10.

LaToya: Couple goals, as they say. As the kids say.

Morgan: The kids are right to say it. Hashtag goals.

LaToya: For once, the kids are right.

Morgan: [laughs] We'll give the kids this one. So we see them, they're going through files of all these pending cases. You know, files that it seems like Wes had been handling and they're trying to work around talking about him and, like, cases he was supposed to handle. Meanwhile, Lorne is, like, worrying about Angel isolating himself. And Cordy returns!

LaToya: We start with, you know, it's fun! They're going through files. Not so fun, they're going through files because Wesley's not here to go through files or, you know, handle the cases with, you know, squatters in a demon lair.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Gunn's making comments about Wes stealing a baby and Fred's like, "Don't talk about that!"

Morgan: Mmhmm! [laughs]

LaToya: And it's just...Fred's very blunt to Lorne, where it's like—'cause Lorne's, you know, worried about Angel not leaving his room. But Fred's like, "You know, he lost the only child he'll ever have." That's very blunt to say. It's true, but very blunt.

Morgan: Yeah, but I mean, it is the truth. It's like, that's as good an excuse as any. But I do wanna say, when Cordy walks in, with her new haircut, which we should obviously discuss. I did have to note that Groo is in a Tommy Bahama-esque shirt, with like, big feathers on it. Which is kind of bird shirty, so I do wanna say that I do think Groo is the Winston Bishop of this season [laughs] of Angel.

LaToya: I mean, there is a moment in the episode where I just type in my notes, all caps, "himbo!"

Morgan: [laughs] I also have a big "himbo" written with a bunch of hearts on it. I wonder if it'll be the same moment. [both laugh]

LaToya: It might be.

Morgan: Alright, well, that'll be a fun thing to keep track of.

LaToya: It's real Winnie the Bish energy, from the Groosalugg here.

Morgan: Absolutely. And Cordy sees all of their faces and asks, "What happened?" Ahh! [laughs] We cut to Angel's room. Cordy walks in and she says that she's sorry. And she just kinda holds him and my heart breaks into a million pieces.

LaToya: Is it because Angel has tears in his eyes? Most likely because he's obviously been just, you know, sitting, brooding in this room all this time. But probably from even just hearing Cordelia downstairs, he probably started crying because now he has to face her.

Morgan: Yeah, and I mean, it's that great thing that they dramatized in *Fredless*. The idea that sometimes things that happen to you don't feel real until you share them with someone who loves you. And you see, like, the pain that they experience alongside of you. Like, Cordy being someone—like, being the closest person in his life that he has, you know, now that Wes is gone. Like, Cordy, of all these people, is the person he knew the longest and probably cares about the most. No offense, rest of Team Angel. But, like, this is the worst person to see right now. Like, I mean, [laughing] unless it was Buffy who walked through and was like, "Hey. Heard your kid died. Eugh, you know?"

LaToya: [laughing] Oh my god! And she said it like that?

Morgan: Ah, she's quippy. [laughs]

LaToya: She's like, "Well, I was in hell. I'm sorry—I was in heaven. And they ripped me outta there, so." She's, like, trying to one-up him on trauma.

Morgan: [simultaneously] Yeah, so kind of, like, not so big a deal. [laughs] Wow, we've really—just because we're at war with Buffering doesn't mean we have to be at war with Buffy. [laughs]

LaToya: Yeah, we've demonized Buffy in general, Buffy Season 6. [both laugh]

Morgan: This is the—

LaToya: I mean, come over here, it's so much fun, Angel Season 3!

Morgan: Yeah, this episode is so much fun. [laughs] Except this episode is so much fun, except for the parts of it that are devastating. [laughs]

LaToya: [simultaneously] Yeah, you were just saying that. You were just talking about how fun this episode is, Morgan.

Morgan: It is. Speaking of fun, we head over to the casino. We have a big—

LaToya: Which...speaking of fun, we head over to the casino. I wrote in my notes "hard Angel cut" because what is that transition from the depression of Cordelia and Angel, to we're in the casino, baby! Ha-cha-cha! What is that?!

Morgan: It—for me, it's like, you're too sad to handle this. Here's fun! And I'm like, thank god. Like, I can't process any of this emotionally. I have to have casino fun with a bunch of spooky-looking monsters, all of whom I'm obsessed with.

LaToya: Of course.

Morgan: I think this is as good a time as any to mention that I have a little bit of extra insight that I'm gonna share at times in this episode. Because David Goodman, who wrote this episode, happens to work on the show that I'm working on right now. And he was kind enough to answer a couple questions for us, and I'll share some of his answers. The creature design in this episode is, like, stunning and phenomenal and rules. I was asking him about it and he was, like, an assistant on the show who got to write a freelance episode. So he didn't have a ton of, like,

creative control over creature design and things like that. But he was like, "I'm so impressed by it." He watched the episode for the first time in 19 years to answer my questions, which was very sweet. And I was like, "It holds up, right? It rules." [laughs] And he was like, yeah. So he mentioned the density of the monsters being so exciting, and I did wanna say that too. Like, it's one thing to have two demons who look awesome. Which, Blue Demon who is Repo Man and Spooky Scary Boss Demon who is Jenoff. That's one thing. But given how many background actors they have in, like, dope demon makeup, it just made me so happy. And that's so much money and so much care and I just was very stoked to see all of that, so I wanted to note that there.

LaToya: I just wanna know about Blue Demon. I was—I decided to call him Vinnie Statham. It's a cross of Vinnie Jones and Jason Statham. I did write in my notes, [British accent] "You talk like you're from London!"

Morgan: [laughs] [British accent] He does talk like he's from London! [normal] I—yeah, I was obsessed. I realized I did not know Blue Demon's name and I looked it up and in the script, and in the script he's Repo Man. But I am fine with Vinnie Statham. [both laugh] And I—

LaToya: Vinnie Statham, he looks like Ivan Ooze.

Morgan: I was obsessed. And he wears these little sunglasses, which are so great. So he talks to Jenoff in the tux, and he spies a cheater. And Jenoff's like, "Take his left hand. We can still make money off the right one." So this is a shady place. And David mentioned, like, this being their chance to do kind of their own Star Wars cantina, like, kind of vibe, with the casino. And that vibe is definitely there. Jenoff's design rules. The, like, temple spikes and his pointy ears and his skin is very "The Master-y."

LaToya: And you know, everyone loves The Master's skin. [both laugh]

Morgan: Well, it's so gross! Like...I just—I love it.

LaToya: You're such a little freak. [both laugh]

Morgan: I know. I was like, ahhh, gross guys! Yeah, this was my favorite. So Vinnie Statham is like, "Hey. This guy's marker's up. We gotta go collect the soul." And he holds up an Angel Investigations business card. A rectangle, if you will. [both laugh]

LaToya: So yeah. Basically, the implication is that, you know, Angel's pretty low right now. You know what could make it worse? If someone collected his soul, 'cause it's a little trick. They're trying to trick ya.

Morgan: Yeah, they got us. And I'm like, I know they all have business cards with their actual names on it. Because of Carpe Noctem.

LaToya: Yeah, it's clearly covering Gunn's name, too, when he's holding it. [both laugh]

Morgan: Love it. Then we go to titles. Then we are back in Angel's room. He is just lying on a bed that is covered in rubble.

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: And that is—that is grim. Cordy shows up with a book to keep him company and it's just like, I can truly only handle 15 seconds of this story at a time. So I'm so glad that all the scenes are really brief. [laughs]

LaToya: Yeah. It's like they're in their own bottle episode, Boreanaz and Carpenter, honestly.

Morgan: Yeah, and it's a great way to put her back into, like, the context of the show. Like, having her gone for so long, like, it's a really lovely return because Angel needs her. And it's this very intense story just between the two of them. I think that's perfect.

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: Then [laughs] we have a Lorne and Groo scene. Groo says that this house is thick with sadness. [laughs] Buddy.

LaToya: Oof.

Morgan: And they are packing up Wes's tea set, which was very painful to look at. I think that they've kind of, like, had—they've had cuts to that, as like, this reminder of Wes's absence. And like, the idea that that's getting shoved away made me really bummed.

LaToya: Yeah, the emotional range this show's getting out of a tea set is absurd.

Morgan: And yet, I see that tea set and I feel a lump in my throat. [laughs] Like, they've got me. Over in the Hyperion in the office—which I had to write "office" because it's no longer Wes's office. Gunn and Fred are talking to the Frzylckas. Who are another set of creatures that I was obsessed with. [laughs]

LaToya: This is you and Michael.

Morgan: I—ugh. I mean, god willing. After a while together in the same lair—after quarantine, this is me and Michael [LaToya laughs] now that we've been stuck in our lair for so long. Their big smushy faces are so funny. They're asking for Wes because they had been, like, hanging with him before. There's a Skench demon in their lair that's getting his phlegm everywhere.

LaToya: You know how they do. You know how those Skench demons do.

Morgan: They do always be doing that. The—they've been married for 300 years, ever since the mitosis. [laughs] Gunn's like, "Yeah, you just lop that thing's head off, right? I'll do that today. Byeeee!" [both laugh] And as they leave, Fred loves the way they finish each other's insults. Gunn is like, "Yeah, it's pretty beautiful." And I'm goo.

LaToya: Goo, kinda like the Skench demon's phlegm.

Morgan: A lot like it. [laughs]

LaToya: Lorne's hiding Wes's stuff.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: And he's bailing, basically. He's doing house call readings because he just—he can't be there right now with what's happening with Angel.

Morgan: Yeah, and he's doing them very far away. It was—it's like, Topanga Canyon or—

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: Or Canoga Hills or something. I'm like, that is, like...an hour and a half drive. Probably two in traffic. That's—[crosstalk]

LaToya: But you know this show and geography. They're always going—they're going to, like, Sun Valley. It's like, what are you doing? [Morgan laughs] They're in

Santa Monica way too often for—they're on the east side! Why are they always in Santa Monica?

Morgan: And again, I know I've said it before, but Cordy living in Silver Lake? I don't buy it. That's a Culver City bitch if I've ever seen one.

LaToya: Do you think her initial apartment—the one with, like, roaches—was that on the west side?

Morgan: Yeah, maybe she was, like, trying to live on the west side and did in, like, a way-too-expensive apartment. Yeah, I buy that.

LaToya: Okay, we figured it out. [both laugh] Sorry, guys, we didn't get to talk about this in the first two seasons—

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: So now we're talking about it now.

Morgan: Gotta catch up on all that stuff. So then, we cut to Wes's hospital room, and we have a Fred and Wes scene. Wes still can't talk, because of the throat-slitting. But Fred has brought his stuff and she kind of explains, like, what she knows about, like, the prophecies and his kind of thought process, and that she understands. And Wes kind of brightens, just like...so—it's so infinitesimal. Like, it's barely there. But he kind of like—

LaToya: And then the scene says, psych.

Morgan: Yep.

[Clip from episode plays]

Fred: But he was right to blame you, Wesley. You should have come to us. You should have trusted us instead of going to Holtz behind our back. You were supposed to be our friend and you didn't even—[pause] if Angel sees you again, he'll kill you, Wesley. This time for real. Don't come back to the hotel. Ever. [pause] The prophecy was false. Angel was never gonna hurt Connor. It was all for nothing.

LaToya: Wesley, for all of this, maybe could still say that he did the right thing in a way, until he finds out that the prophecy was false. And then he has no hope whatsoever. Again, this scene's saying "psych" to him, just like Justine slitting his

throat was a psych scene. [Morgan laughs] Just like Angel smothering him was a psych scene. This—it's just horrible. And also, at the top of the scene, Fred notes that it's not permanent, him not being able to speak. 'Cause there is a world in which Wesley never speaks again on this show.

Morgan: Oh no! That would—

LaToya: But—

Morgan: To never hear his dulcet British tones. [laughs]

LaToya: Alexis Denisof is doing very good work, not speaking. So he could pull it off. But I mean, I wanna hear—

Morgan: Absolutely. Yeah.

LaToya: I wanna hear that voice, baby!

Morgan: Yeah, I mean, I love that voice. I wanted to note that it's really interesting that even Fred, who is, like, likely the most lenient—the person who, like, kind of has seemed to make the most excuses for Wes around Team Angel and all of that stuff. Even she has so much anger at him that boils over after just, like, two seconds of being around him. And I really appreciate that, 'cause I think it's really real. The idea that, like, maybe she's the one who, you know, is...is thinking the nicest about him and is, you know, willing to go back and turn in his stuff. But she's not forgiving and forgetting. Like, she's still really pissed. And I thought that was a really nice, like—I liked the emotion of that. She is the person I wanted to see speak to Wes the most. And Cordelia is next on that list, I would like to see that conversation now, please. I'm sure it won't hurt me at all. [laughs]

LaToya: [simultaneously] And part of me thinks maybe she's the only one who could tell him never to come back to the hotel. But I think Cordelia wouldn't want to say that, like—and I think even Gunn would probably buckle and not say that either.

Morgan: Mmhmm. Fred is also being compassionate by telling him don't come back. It's like, for your safety, do not come back here 'cause Angel will kill you. Like, that is—she's, to a certain extent, doing a kindness by hurting him. [laughs]

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: One of those, you know? So that—after that made me so fucking upset, we go back to the Hyperion and we have a scene with Groo and Vinnie Statham. I write in my notes that Vinnie Statham sounds like Eliza fucking Doolittle. [both laugh]

LaToya: I wrote that I wish that Kate Beckinsale was doing a cockney accent for Jolt, because [Morgan laughs] that's the only way Jolt could be even better.

Morgan: Oh god, can't wait to watch Jolt. Crank high voltage for girls. But yeah, god, he gives a business card to Groo and is asking after Gunn. And he thinks Groo is Angel.

LaToya: It's like, are we doing another "guys will be guys" situation? We're not.

Morgan: We're not. But it'd be fun to do it. Then he's like, "Where's Gunn?" Gunn's in the sewer. [laughs] There's not a welcome mat to the lair. It's just written on the cement. "Gurfong, bless our home," of the lair. Frzylckas, I love you. Gunn goes in, he fights the Skench. There's so much goo. He also is—this guy also is, like, a jacked Men in Black alien. I was obsessed with him.

LaToya: He is so big. And I guess it also goes to show, again, how strong Sahjhan was.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Because remember, like, he took Gunn down with just one punch each time.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: But Gunn takes this big guy out pretty easily here.

Morgan: Oh, yeah, it's—yeah. Sahjhan truly must be so dang strong, because Gunn's tough as hell. And he wins the fight and he goes, "Must be my lucky day." And then Vinnie Statham pokes his little blue face in there and says, [British accent] "Wanna bet?" [LaToya laughs] Then we have a flashback. LaToya, what—I didn't recognize that song. What was that song that was playing?

[tune of Gangsta's Paradise starts playing; fades to background music as LaToya starts talking]

LaToya: I know you're white, Morgan, but—

Morgan: Yeah, yeah, I'm white. [laughs]

LaToya: Have you ever heard of a rapper named Coolio?

Morgan: I've heard Coolio's around. [both laugh]

LaToya: Coolio's around!

Morgan: Coolio's around!

[music gets louder]

'Cause I've been blatin' and laughin' so long

That even my momma thinks that my mind is gone...

[music fades out]

LaToya: But yes, this was Gangsta's Paradise? You know, the Coolio song from the Michelle Pfeiffer-led Dangerous Minds? Maybe you've heard of it.

Morgan: Mmm. Mm, is that where she teaches kids that poetry's just another way to rap?

LaToya: It is, it is.

Morgan: Great.

LaToya: She turns that seat around, A.C. Slater style.

Morgan: There we go. When I watched this episode for the first time, a little bit ago, with Michael Chasin. We both screamed so loudly at the Gangsta's Paradise needle drop. And both stood off of our couch and started, like—I started jumping up and down. I was thrilled. Michael said—'cause I can quote him, 'cause I didn't say it. "Is this the only time there's been a cool song on one of these shows?" [both laugh] So do with that what you will.

LaToya: And this is where—is that where I brought up Michelle Branch? And I was told that Michelle Branch is not cool, apparently?

Morgan: I was like—yeah, that was immediately what I said to him. I was like, excuse me, Goodbye to You? [LaToya laughs] But I get it. This rules. I checked the script that I could find online, and per the script, it just says, like, John King—who I assume is their music supervisor—let's find some 1995 music that could be coming

from a, like, passing or parked car. And when I asked David about this needle drop, I was like, "Were you excited?" and he was like, "So excited. It rules." And Gunn goes into the casino. And it's seven years ago, and he's not looking too happy about it. We go inside and he talks to Vinnie Statham. He's checked for weapons. Vinnie Statham calls him "bro." I don't care for that.

LaToya: At least he doesn't call him "G."

Morgan: Yeah, better than that. [both laugh] Doesn't say—what, oh—

LaToya: [simultaneously] "Good one, G."

Morgan: [simultaneously] Doesn't say he's "tripping out." [both laugh]

LaToya: [laughing] He's tripping out. The things...[Morgan sighs] that they have made David Boreanaz say to this man, in this season of television.

Morgan: [laughing] Unreal. So he says he has business with Jenoff, so Gunn—he approaches Jenoff. He wants something and Jenoff's like, "I work in needs." Alright. I get it. [LaToya laughs] You're spooky. And Gunn is like, "Well, this is what I need." And he shows a picture.

LaToya: Jenoff is aware of Gunn from his reputation on the streets, you know?

Morgan: Mmhmm. Yes.

LaToya: People have heard of Charles Gunn.

Morgan: Hell yeah they have. Yeah, fucking best. [laughs]

LaToya: [simultaneously] Him and his do-rag. 'Cause so many years ago, remember, he wore a do-rag—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Before he started working with these white people.

Morgan: [laughs] Jenoff looks at the photo and he's like, "Very nice. She's a real beauty." So write that down in your Shanshu prophecies so we can talk about it later. And they—says, "The cost is your future." And Gunn says, "What future?"

LaToya: And then Morgan cries.

Morgan: I tear up. And they shake on it and Jenoff's got one of those, like, pokey rings that draws blood. And he smears it on a contract and we are bound by blood oath. And, uh, that's spooky. [laughs]

LaToya: I saw some things trying to call Gunn going to a demon casino, like, a continuity error. Because, you know, he was so surprised about Caritas when he first went there. I mean, there's a difference between knowing of a demon casino where you can trade your soul for something, and knowing about demons going to karaoke.

Morgan: Yeah, it's—

LaToya: There's a real difference there.

Morgan: Like, it's very different—yeah, seeing a demon sing, like, Islands in the Stream, like, on a Tuesday night is very different from this place. [laughs]

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: Yeah. I would—yeah, I would agree with you there. Back to the lair, present day. Vinnie Statham is like, "You made a deal. Blood oath. You traded your soul." And the problem is that Gunn is giving his soul to Fred, but he promised it to Jenoff. So in my notes you might see, in all caps, I have written, "I want to run around the fucking room for real." [both laugh] This, as a premise, kills me. Like, it's very, like, metaphorical and maybe in some ways, this could be seen as, like, a little bit arch. But the idea that, like, he's giving his soul to Fred because he loves her so much and now, like, that debt can't be collected. I was obsessed. I was so into it. They are so cute. They have a very pure love and—they have a miraculous love, as one Buffy Summers would say. And...I adored it.

LaToya: But as you know from one Buffy Summers, it's—sometimes it doesn't work out when you give someone your soul. Sometimes you become a—like, a bloodthirsty monster who kills her friends.

Morgan: True, but I think this one could work out, maybe. [both laugh]

LaToya: Soulless Gunn. Gunn-geles.

Morgan: No! [both laughing] Gunn-geles.

LaToya: Gunn-geles. [both laugh]

Morgan: Horrible. So Gunn is like, "Hey, I wanna see—like, can I see Jenoff? Like, isn't there anything else I can give him?" And Vinnie Statham's like, "No. You have 24 hours to get your house in order, or Fred dies too." And I write, "Nooo!" in all caps in my notes, because, um, I wouldn't like that to happen.

LaToya: Fred-geles. [both laugh]

Morgan: So then, in the Hyperion lobby, Gunn's, like, looking at Fred wistfully. Because, you know, he's only gonna be alive for 24 more hours, I guess. Yikes.

LaToya: And then Cordelia pops up, scarfing her Teamster sub. [both laugh]

Morgan: I was so obsessed with her eating a big sandwich during this scene. It's, like, we've made Cordelia, like, too ethereal and the perfect grief guide throughout this thing. We must humanize her by having her eat a huge sandwich. [both laugh]

LaToya: She's like, "Yeah, it's been—I've kind of been with Angel for hours and since he doesn't eat, I couldn't eat either." [both laugh]

Morgan: I've been quietly mourning and, like, dealing with the deepest, darkest feelings. But I really needed a sub. [laughs]

LaToya: Do you think her stomach growled in front of Angel?

Morgan: 100%. [LaToya laughs] And I think he didn't even notice, because he's, like, in it.

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: And she was like, well, this is embarrassing and left. Grim stuff. So she immediately can sense that something's wrong with Gunn.

[Clip from episode plays]

Cordelia: I can see the misery all over your face. I know what's going on.

Gunn: You do?

Cordelia: It's pretty obvious. Angel's lost his son, Wesley's gone, and here you are, happy as a kid in a candy store.

Gunn: Um. Happy.

Cordelia: And wracked with guilt because of it. Well, don't be. You and Fred are meant to be. I get that now.

LaToya: She essentially says he has survivor's remorse, basically, since Angel's miserable, Wesley's miserable. But not Gunn.

Morgan: Yeah. Cordy, queen of the misread, especially this season. [laughs]

LaToya: [laughing] She is, uh—there's some things she's, like, dead-on with. But nothing regarding this entire relationship status. But again, I guess she—is she better off or worse off than Angel when it comes to this trio?

Morgan: Well, better than Angel, yeah. [LaToya laughs] But god, the lowest ever bar to step over. [both laugh] Bar's on the ground. Gunn is like, "Look, I never thought I'd be around this long." This is, for the record, when I—tears welled up in my eyes immediately. I [inaudible] handle it. I, um—the idea that Gunn has never, like, hoped for his life to last this long, slash get this good, makes me very emotional 'cause he deserves the best. And so Cordy's like, "You're lucky. Things are good. You should live a little." And she pretends that she has a vision of them, taking the day off tomorrow.

LaToya: And Gunn, of course, confirming everything Cordelia said about him in First Impressions that he kept denying in that episode.

Morgan: Mmhmm. First Impressions. A crucial Gunn Squad episode. It's when Cordelia becomes a member of the Gunn Squad. [both laugh]

LaToya: Bang-bang.

Morgan: [simultaneously] Bang-bang, baby.

LaToya: Blap-blap.

Morgan: Blap-blap! So then, the next day in Fred's room, she's woken up by her cell phone ringing. And she and Gunn play this game where she guesses his outfit.

LaToya: They apparently do this every morning! I mean, I don't wanna kick a man when he's down, but Wes, you were never in the game!

Morgan: *Never in the game, so hard, if this is, like, the level that they're at. She gets it right on the second try. And he barges into her room, surprising her with, like, a big silver room service tray and a single red rose. He came prepared for the last day, man. [laughs] And Fred is like, "Is today special?" and Gunn says, "Well, it's our day off and it's gonna be the best day of our lives."*

LaToya: Aww.

Morgan: And they have a pancake kiss.

LaToya: [simultaneously] They have a pancake kiss! [both laugh]

Morgan: I—the pancake kiss. We cut back to Wes in the hospital. [laughs]

LaToya: The tonal shifts in this episode are out of control.

Morgan: Unreal, really, this feeling. Wes—it's announced that it's Wes's doctor. His doctor's like, "Hey. You're gonna be released later today. Is anyone around to pick you up?"

LaToya: I mean, I guess Justine's around. Does she still have his car?

Morgan: [laughs] The least she could do, honestly. [both laugh]

LaToya: That was also part of Holtz's plan.

Morgan: It's so awful. We cut from this grim scene to yet another, where—

LaToya: Oh, wait. I guess, actually, it's a good thing the hospital is right next to his place.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: That is something we know, so.

Morgan: Yeah, so not too far, I guess. [laughs]

LaToya: There's the good news. He doesn't need a car, he can just walk there, with his sad box.

Morgan: That's nice. Get a little exercise. [laughs] That'll be good for him. I wanna die. In our next scene, Angel is speculating about how he thinks Connor was gonna

be left-handed. And I wonder if we can maybe step into a certain corner, to talk about this deeply devastating plotline. Maybe that would help lighten things up a bit.

[KRISTIN'S CORNER jingle plays]
Kristin's Corner! Kristin's Corner!
It's all Riley sucks and what the fuck
And horny is hot
Kristin's Corner is the place
For very deep thoughts

Kristin: I mean. I told you that I wasn't going to lighten anything up a bit. So, Morgan and I—when we first got on the Zoom, before LaToya arrived. Morgan was like, "Isn't this the best episode ever?" And I was like, "This is the saddest episode I've ever seen." [Morgan and Kristin laughing] We had, like, two completely different focal points as we watched. [laughs]

Morgan: So valid. I just—there's gooey, spooky monsters!

LaToya: I'm on both sides of the fence, obviously.

Kristin: I actually—I wanna—before I talk—'cause I just have a few things to, like, say for real about Cordelia. But before we get there, two little things. One, this arc, this story line, is very similar to I Will Remember You in the 24 hours together...I mean, it's different in a million ways. But, like, when I was watching it, I was like, oh, this reminds me of—

Morgan: Yeah.

Kristin: This other time that two people who love each other deeply have 24 hours together before they'll never see each other again. At least in that form. Two is—LaToya, at least insofar as I know, you and I are both single, and Morgan is in love. [LaToya laughs] I just wondered how you felt about this. 'Cause I—when it was like, Gunn's soul is going to Fred, I was like, okay! That's a little intense, everybody. But Morgan was really into it, so I wanna know where you fall on the party lines. [laughs]

LaToya: I mean, I support it 'cause I support Gunn/Fred. I'm not, like—

Kristin: Yes.

LaToya: I'm not, like, opposed to people finding love.

Kristin: No!

LaToya: I just know I'll never find love.

Kristin: [simultaneously] No! It's just—[laughter] LaToya, no. It's not about them finding love. It's about, like, the symbol of being in love being that you are literally giving your soul to another person. That—it's a little much for me. It's a little—and maybe that's because I just am—you know, I have been in love. I've fallen out of love a few times. And I'm like, okay, a soul's a little much. [laughs]

Morgan: [laughs] I fully agree, like, it's a little large, yeah.

LaToya: It's like the song says, last Christmas, I gave Jenoff my soul. [Kristin laughs loudly] The very next day, I gave it away to Fred. [laughter]

Kristin: Lyrically, it's right there for us, you're right.

Morgan: It is—like, it's very broad. And like, the idea that—I don't necessarily subscribe to the idea that you, like, give away—

Kristin: [simultaneously] No, I—yes.

Morgan: A big, huge chunk of yourself when you love someone or whatever. But I just can't help but—like, the two of them. They have such a lovely, warm, sweet thing. So the idea that, like, you can't take him! Like, he's mine! Like, it just—

Kristin: Totally.

LaToya: Yeah, it also—

Morgan: [simultaneously] It's more about the back half of it to me—is like, her being like, "You can't take my boyfriend. He's mine. Like, you don't own him, I own this bitch."

LaToya: [simultaneously] You bitch.

[laughter]

Morgan: Like, that's what I relate to, I guess.

LaToya: But it also—it reaffirms how little the concept of souls seems to matter to people until they know Angel and what having a soul actually—

Kristin: Right.

LaToya: Does mean, you know?

Morgan: Yes.

Kristin: Right, right.

LaToya: 'Cause obviously, Gunn's not thinking about what a soul means or anything like that.

Morgan: Yeah, he was just—

LaToya: He never had to, until he met Angel.

Morgan: And he was just trying to survive. Yeah.

LaToya: Yeah.

Kristin: Ah-ha.

Morgan: Ugh.

Kristin: See, I knew I'd get the goods outta ya. [LaToya laughs] If I just poked a soul around in this place. [laughter] And no, Morgan, I know that you don't believe that to be in love, you need to give your soul to your boyfriend. [Morgan laughs] I just thought it might be one of those things where, like, because you are currently happily in love, you're like, "This is so lovely." And I'm like, "This is *stupid!*" [laughter]

Morgan: I mean, happily? [laughs]

LaToya: Kristin's just, like, booing the TV as she's watching it.

Kristin: I'm like, okay, you can live your lives, guys. You know, it's fine. [laughter] Anyway. The reason that I have invited you here to my corner. [laughter] Is really, seriously, like, I—obviously I'm happy that Cordy is back. But I...the way that Cordelia holds space for Angel in this episode—and this is, like...I mean, this is the writing, too. Like, yes, Charisma does an incredible job, David does an incredible

job. But the lines that are written for them to—for, really, Cordelia to say to Angel and the things that she says are so powerful to me. And, like, I've talked a little bit in various places about, like, having gone through trauma, even if it's not the same trauma as someone else. Like, knowing how to validate their trauma. Like, and she does that. She says that to him in their little—I liked that you called it a little bottle episode, like, in the interior of this. But she...she just sits there. And, like, you were just at the part where he starts to talk. And the only reason he starts to talk is because she's been sitting there quietly for as long as it took for him to talk. And it's so powerful to me. And that she says to him, "It's not gonna get better. It is always going to hurt." And so I just, like, wanted to come here to give a standing ovation to the writing of this little interior plotline. Because I think it's very authentic to, like, people who have gone through trauma, and also, so authentic to where Cordelia is, right now in her growth. So, there ends my monologue. I know that's not what I usually—I usually come in here with my fucking top hat and my tap shoes on. But I had some shit to say today. [laughs]

Morgan: That's so valid. It's such a—it feels so grown up. Like, again, I—having watched this when I was a lot younger. Like, and watching it again now, like, this just feels so much more mature.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Mmhmm.

Morgan: And such a—a very, like, adult understanding of, like, grief and trauma and loss. And the idea that she knows him too well to sugarcoat what this experience is gonna be like, and she wouldn't do that to him, 'cause that's not what he needs. And like, giving him the space and all of that stuff, it's so beautiful. While I have you, I wanted to touch on, like—

Kristin: You mean, while *I* have *you*—

Morgan: Oh, yes, absolutely—while—

Kristin: In my corner.

LaToya: Yeah, she's wrangled us into this corner. [Kristin laughs]

Morgan: While I'm trapped in this corner. [Kristin laughs] I would like to talk—I thought it was interesting that this is kind of like a thematic alignment. This idea about futures being taken. The idea that, like—so Cordy kind of says, like, if you—like, you had a future with your son and now it's gone. And the idea is that,

like, Gunn's future is about to be taken from him because he gambled it away, thinking he'd never have one.

Kristin: It's—I mean, like, you talk about how this is super mature. And obviously, like, I am the host of your rival nemesis podcast, Buffering the Vampire Slayer—

LaToya: Mmhmm.

Morgan: Boo, hiss.

LaToya: You are. With that damn Jenny.

Kristin: [simultaneously] There's hard shit going on there—[laughing] yeah, that damn—that damn Jenny.

Morgan: A menace.

Kristin: Just every fucking week. Just singing your praises, again. [laughter] But yeah, I—Season 6 is so dark, it's so sad, it's so hard. But I really do think that we see between Cordelia and Angel here—and honestly, between Angel and Wes, and what have you—is, like, at a different level. Not—and I'm not talking about, like, quality or what have—or depth of feeling, even. But just, it feels like later in life, you are, like, feeling things in the way that these characters are feeling them, versus where we are still in Buffy.

Morgan: Yeah, I fully agree. And that's why I brought it up, 'cause I know, like, watching it right after I watched Buffy, as a teen, I felt very, like, at sea and bombarded—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Morgan: By all of these much heavier themes and feelings. And I did not feel ready for any of that stuff. And I—that's why it's been such a gift to, like, watch this again with you guys, right now, where I'm, you know, slightly more mature than I was when I was 15. [Kristin laughs] Yeah, not by much, yeah. [laughter] But just a little bit.

Kristin: Okay, well, I'm gonna go play Gangsta's Paradise on loop and teach young children of color that poetry is just like rapping and it's great. [laughter] So I hope that that's cool with all of you, that I'm gonna use my time that way [laughing] while you talk about this episode.

LaToya: Of course.

Morgan: [simultaneously] I think it's a great use of your time. [laughter]

Kristin: [laughing] Okay, thank you, bye-bye.

[KRISTIN'S CORNER jingle plays]
Kristin's Corner! Kristin's Corner!

[AD BREAK]

LaToya: Yeah, so in this scene, Angel says, you know, "You think you know something about living because you have a really long life. And that's really all you have, in my case, anyway." And honestly, it circles us back to the premiere, Heartthrob, where James is telling Angel that, like, he actually lived when Angel just existed. And it's easy to kind of forget that episode, especially 'cause you just think it's all about Buffy and Buffy's death.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: But it ultimately informs the rest of the season and the Connor stuff. Because with Connor, Angel has been living. And now, losing Connor, that just stops. And now what?

Morgan: [simultaneously] You're right. It's a return to just existing, yeah.

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: That—yeah.

LaToya: [simultaneously] And obviously Angel doesn't wanna go back to that. And he says, "I had a son." And then when Boreanaz says "I had a son," that's where *I* tear up.

Morgan: So fair. I also have "I had a son" written in my notes. He says something about—he's like—like, the idea that, like, you know, you think you live long but you lose everyone. He just kind of says, like, he was just little. Like, he was just getting started. Like, it's just such a tragedy. It's one of those things that—I'm just like, I don't know how you even begin to process that kind of thing. And what Cordelia does for him is so beautiful. But yeah, it's, um...it is absolutely fucking devastating. [laughs] And I think—I think, to a certain extent, it—transitioning into our next

scene. We talked about, like, tonal shifts in this episode quite a bit. But I think this scene leading into this next scene with Gunn and Fred kind of helps.

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: Because of the, like, deep sadness undercutting it. And we watch Gunn trying to have fun and trying to pretend that everything is okay with Fred, when it is absolutely not. Despite Fred wearing a little plastic gold crown. [laughs] Which I—

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: I think can solve a lot of problems.

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: But not all of them. [laughs]

LaToya: They're having lunch on what I assume is the Fox lot.

Morgan: Yeah. [laughs]

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: It looks like it was where the Cordy opening titles were shot.

LaToya: Yeah. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: So the Fox lot.

Morgan: It's so cute. Fred's finally full. She's feeling a little overloaded. Which is a real shame, because Gunn says something about going to a roller rink. And I'm like, give me that now. I wanna see Charles Gunn rollerskate, right fucking now. [laughs]

LaToya: They had Sixth Street tacos. They had fish sticks at the Pier, because again, we're going to Santa Monica. They had Dodger dogs. [laughs] We're going all around LA!

Morgan: I'm like, when did you have time to go to a full baseball game? [both laugh] And did you see that there's a little bunny in their bag? Which ties back to him being like—

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: "Win me a bunny." I—ugh. I was—I was unwell. So Fred is kind of, like, a little joy-overloaded. She wants to pump the brakes.

LaToya: Oh, also, I'm so sorry. Their plates are stacked with wings.

Morgan: Yep.

LaToya: Stacked with chicken wings.

Morgan: And she's having a, like, double mocha, double whip shake.

LaToya: She's gonna puke.

Morgan: She is. What a queen. [LaToya laughs] Gunn is like, "Oh no, I blew it. I...have to pass away." And Fred's like, "No, no, no, we just—we just don't have to cram the rest of our lives into these, like—into these, like—you know, the rest of this day."

LaToya: And then. Amy Acker delivers what I think is the funniest line delivery ever. [both laughing]

Morgan: Mmhmm? Which is?

LaToya: "Charles, do you have leukemia?" [both laugh]

Morgan: Which she's seen on the news, like...[both laugh] she references having seen leukemia on the news. And I'm like, that's the—that's where you found out? [LaToya laughs] Gunn seems to find it very funny as well, 'cause he laughs hysterically.

LaToya: [laughing] She's just like, something's terribly wrong and then be, "Charles, do you have leukemia?"

Morgan: He's like, "No!"

LaToya: Leukemia, obviously, not funny. But in this instance, the question is very funny, as is the fact that she hears about it on the news all the time.

Morgan: Yes. Fully agreement there. He laughs at her and he's like, "No, I'm fine." And she's like, "Oh, great, I'm relieved. Wait, I'm not relieved? Something's still very wrong. It's something with us." And so she, like, really is like, "You need to stop lying to me and tell me what the fuck is wrong, right now." And I think that's, like, a great thing between the two of them. The idea that, like, you know, you're saying a pretty big thing about them if you know his soul is hers. You're saying that they have a pretty dang miraculous love. And the idea that they know each other this well, that she can just cut through the bullshit and be like, "There is something you are not telling me. Spill right now," feels very authentic and real and earned to me. I think that's so lovely.

LaToya: But then, Gunn panics and decides to shut down and be a huge asshole.

Morgan: *This* wasn't—uh, I was—I was unwell during this. She, like, tries to push him and he does shut down. And she's like, "Is it me? Like, what's wrong?" And he's like, "Now I gotta make a list?" Ugh! [laughs] I—

LaToya: Gunn! Come on.

Morgan: Watched this scene through my fingers. Like, I could not handle it.

LaToya: Yeah.

Morgan: Fred takes off her little crown!

LaToya: He decides to cause a scene.

Morgan: And he *dumps* her. And she asks if there's someone else and he says, "Yeah, her name's I'm a Real Woman, Not a Stick Figure." I wrote so big in my notes, "Stop that right now." [laughs]

LaToya: She should have slapped him.

Morgan: She should have. But I think she's just, like—she's so shocked and, like, humiliated. And he just leaves her behind, crying. And it's, like, devastating. And then we cut back to Angel's room, so it's like, yeah. The vibe continues. Like, we remain upset. Cordelia sits down with Angel and says...

[Clip from episode plays]

Cordelia: I'm not gonna sit here and pretend that I know what you're going through. Or that I could begin to understand what it is you're feeling. The last thing you need right now is someone saying that, given time, things will get better or the hurt's gonna go away. Because...things won't get better. The hurt's never gonna go away. The truth is, if you lived another 200 years, you'd never forget how Connor was taken from you. And you shouldn't. You loved your son, Angel. And you'll go on loving him. And missing him. You'll go on living, too. You'll do that.

LaToya: And that's where, in my notes, I note, of course, "The hardest part of this world is to live in it. [Morgan exhales] You have to go on living." All the fun Once More, With Feeling things that we learned about on Buffy Season 6. See, we don't always shit on Buffy Season 6 over here.

Morgan: Yeah! [laughs]

LaToya: It's obviously a different emotional struggle that Angel is facing from Buffy.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: It's interesting 'cause I think a lot of—like, certain themes in Buffy Season 6 probably work or would work better on Angel. Just because its default is darker.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: As we've—we've talked about, like, how if Marti Noxon had become showrunner of Angel, that would have made a lot of sense.

Morgan: Yes.

LaToya: I think it's kind of that similarity. And—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Honestly, I love this scene and could probably talk about it forever.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Just like, again, Boreanaz and Carpenter are so fucking great in this episode. And it's just...like, they pick up like she hasn't been for episodes, these two. Their chemistry is just—

Morgan: Oh, yeah.

LaToya: It's very special.

Morgan: And it's such a lived-in dynamic. Like, it's—and both of them just seem, like, as actors to each other—they're able to be in such a generous space, as performers. And very, like, giving to each other. And there's a lot of just, like, looking and listening and just being. It's a really, like, lovely thing that they have. Which again, also just feels more inherently adult than any of the couples on Buffy. Like, I'm not seeing those people sit around quietly very much. And this is, again, not to shit on Buffy, which I do love, as I've said a million times. But it's like, Xander and Anya can't, like—they have to be yak-yak-yaking at each other all the time. Like, this—this quiet is—there's something about it that's just, like...it speaks for itself. Like, it's so beautiful. Like, you can't deny that these people have something so important—

LaToya: Mmhmm.

Morgan: With each other. Yeah.

LaToya: And as everyone knows, we love our Vampire Diaries.

Morgan: Hell yeah.

LaToya: But like, I can't help but think that, like, this is the type of tragedy where if any vampire on The Vampire Diaries were faced with it, they would immediately turn their humanity off.

Morgan: Yep. [laughs]

LaToya: As opposed to—like, Angel's not going, "I need to lose my soul and not grieve this at all."

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: He's just—he's dealing with it.

Morgan: Yeah. [laughing] That is—jeez, yeah, everybody would be flipping their dang switch.

LaToya: Flipping their switches all over the place. [both laugh] Like, they're like a bunch of Justines. [both laughing] Justine goes to Mystic Falls.

Morgan: I was, like...thinking about her meeting Klaus. [both laugh] [whispering intensely] "I like you, Justine." [both laugh] Horrible.

LaToya: She's, like, comforted by him 'cause he has a weird accent, just like Daniel. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah, vaguely European-sounding men. What is it about them?

LaToya: I will say though, with this episode. I'm pretty sure, like, this era—especially—'cause the hair reminded me. This is probably around the time there was kind of pushback—and it's probably, like, more television [inaudible] instead of—not general fandom. But like, Saint Cordelia criticism that's, like, about her possibly being, you know, too perfect and too empathetic. Even though I think it fits perfectly here and it makes a lot of sense.

Morgan: Yeah, 'cause I think it's also like—it works because she's being very perfect for Angel in this moment. But she's in this relationship with Groo that we've already discussed is, like, flawed in various ways and is—has a certain amount of denial baked into it. Like, that is imperfect. And she also, like, tries to read what's going on with Gunn and is completely wrong as well. Like, she's—she is also, like—there is human error still happening with her. Like, I don't think she is—god forbid I use the Mary Sue word. But, like, she's—

LaToya: You said it!

Morgan: She's not doing that kind of stuff. Like, she's not a—I think Cordelia would be inherently less interesting if she suddenly was perfect and never did anything wrong ever in her life. Which, in a lot of ways, I do think she is and she never has done. [LaToya laughs] But—'cause she's my baby. But you know, she's still, like, Cordelia. She's still making some mistakes and being a little too abrasive every once in a while. Like, it—I don't subscribe to that, I'd say. Yeah. I'll fight anybody. [laughs]

LaToya: Oh, boy.

Morgan: You come for Cordy, you come for *me*!

LaToya: Should we play the theme?

Morgan: Hell yes, please! [both laugh]

LaToya: Hit it, bitch.

[CORDELIA jingle plays]
Cordelia... (ah-ahh)
I love you, Cordelia (ah-ahh)
You're perfect, Cordelia (ah-ahh)

Morgan: So then, this—the scene is interrupted by some crying sounds. And they weren't *me*. [laughs]

LaToya: Hm!

Morgan: They are Fred, who is just sobbing outside the door, like, cartoon-character crying. Amy Acker is so—um, she threads the needle on this being both funny and sad so beautifully. She's a gift. She says, "It's Charles. I think he's in terrible danger."

LaToya: And he is.

Morgan: Mmhmm!

LaToya: He is.

Morgan: So we go to the casino. Jenoff pokes a guy's eyes out and, like, sucks his soul out through 'em?

LaToya: Because the eyes are the windows to the soul, you guys.

Morgan: [laughs] Further proof. And Gunn shows up and says he's here to pay his bill. Noo!

LaToya: And with that "no," I say it's time for a Fuck Watch, baby!

Morgan: Yeah!

[FUCK WATCH jingle plays]
Flirting, understanding consent, and kissing

Flirting, understanding consent, and kissing
Fuck Watch!

LaToya: Morgan.

Morgan: Mmhmm?

LaToya: I mean, in this episode, obviously you wanna fuck a bunch of people, I can tell. Who is it?

Morgan: So I'm gonna steal—I've noticed that you've been a little tricky on a Fuck Watch or two. So I think I'm gonna be a little tricky, and I'm gonna say that while I have picked Gunn and Fred as separate entities, [LaToya laughs] I've never picked them as a couple. And there is no better episode to do that in than this one. [both laugh] I'm gonna fuck Gunn and Fred. [laughs] LaToya, who are you fucking?

LaToya: [simultaneously] Finally giving you the throuple energy you always want.

Morgan: Yes. I think this is the ideal throuple for me. [both laugh]

LaToya: Oh, I'm definitely fucking Vinnie Statham. How could you not tell?

Morgan: [laughs loudly] I love it. Oh, those—that—he's so blue. [laughs]

LaToya: He talks like he's from London. [both laugh]

Morgan: I love that for you, so cosmopolitan. [both laugh]

LaToya: And Kristin's like, "Sahjhan," even though he's not in the episode. [both laugh]

Morgan: Kristin screaming "Sahjhan" from a distance.

Kristin: Sahjhan. I've—[laughter] sorry, I was in the middle of a portal. [laughter] I'm so sorry that I missed my cue. I've just been searching all dimensions for Sahjhan. [laughter]

LaToya: Desperately Seeking Sahjhan. [laughter] Just need a poster made up for that.

Morgan: I would like that. Please, someone, please make Desperately Seeking Sahjhan. [laughs] Well, that's Fuck Watch. [laughter]

[FUCK WATCH jingle plays]
Flirting, understanding consent, and kissing
Flirting, understanding consent, and kissing
Fuck Watch!

Morgan: Our next scene's in the Hyperion lobby. Groo is, like—is there and he's like, "I'm very sorry." And Angel's very confused by what's going on, as Fred kind of, like, regales them with all the information. And—

LaToya: Yeah. 'Cause this is when the episode fully just becomes a comedy.
[laughs]

Morgan: It's—this scene is so funny. And Cordelia's like, "Why do you think he's in danger? I'm very confused." And Fred yells, "Because he broke up with me!" [both laugh] I write—

LaToya: And Groo's the most confused. 'Cause he doesn't understand—he just doesn't understand.

Morgan: Not one piece of this does Groo understand. I write in my notes, "Fred's self esteem is rightfully through the roof." I'm so glad. 'Cause you know, like, we've played her other ways and I think there's, like, a world where she is very insecure and believes everything Gunn said about her, and is like, "Yeah, 'cause he could never like me. And like, of course he broke up with me" and all that stuff. But, like, that just lasts for, like, a minute after hearing all those mean things said to her. Afterwards, she's just like, absolutely not. He'd never do that. Like, I'm a fucking prize. And—

LaToya: Yeah—

Morgan: Good for her.

LaToya: She says, "Because he would never say those things to me." And Cordy's like, "Those things he said?"

Morgan: [simultaneously] "He said." [both laughing]

LaToya: "Yes!"

Morgan: So you've come to the point in my notes where I write, "A perfect run of dialogue occurs." Ending—

LaToya: [laughing] Yes.

Morgan: In Angel saying, "So let me get this straight. You and Gunn are dating."
[laughs]

LaToya: Yes! We have been calling it out for episodes that Angel has no idea what's going on with them. [laughing] And they finally confirmed.

Morgan: [laughs] I died. And Fred—I know I say at the top of every episode of this show that I am the Winifred Burkle of this podcast. But never have I felt it more than when he says that to her and she flails her arms and goes—[LaToya laughs] "Not anymore, I guess!" Like. That was, um—that was a window right into my soul. I love her. She's the best. And I can relate. [laughs]

LaToya: What a brilliant, brilliant scene.

Morgan: It's absolutely perfect. I—

LaToya: Our Fuck Watch is actually this scene. [laughs]

Morgan: Yeah. I mean, really, yes. Yes. My Fuck Watch is absolutely everyone's comedic timing in this scene. She says, "He'd only hurt me to protect me." And Angel says, "Okay, then I guess we'd better help him, because we're not losing another member of this family."

LaToya: Yeah, the funny scene ends up being the saddest scene at the very end because of that. I do just have three sad faces in my notes.

Morgan: To me, it's so beautiful. It's like, everything Cordy has said to him throughout this episode has prepared him for, like, this moment. It's the idea that, like, if life is gonna continue, so is the danger we're constantly in. And all he has—you know, to a certain extent—is his calling and his community to keep, you know, making living more than existing. So naturally, it's like, we have to get back to it. We have to go save Gunn, 'cause, like, you know, this is the highest stakes that's left now that my son's gone. And yeah. They're a family. I don't know if you noticed, but I'm emotional about it.

LaToya: [laughs] Really?

Morgan: [laughs] Yeah.

LaToya: Speaking of being emotional, Wesley arrives home with his box, all alone. He has no more family.

Morgan: I wrote in my notes, not “yikes,” just “yike.” [laughs]

LaToya: I guess Wesley’s lucky that he has his own apartment and doesn’t live in the hotel.

Morgan: I guess. Yeah, I guess he doesn’t have to find a new place, so that is, you know, “lucky” in air quotes. Absolutely.

LaToya: Yep, so we’re done with Wesley for now.

Morgan: Bye, Wes! It’s been fun. [both laugh]

LaToya: Which one’s the sadder bottle episode, the Cordy/Angel stuff or the Wesley stuff? [both laughing]

Morgan: I’m like, at least Angel has Cordy. Like, it’s like, you know, he’s lost something so significant. But at least he still has beautiful things in his life. Unlike Wes. Who—who—I’m coming up empty on the list—I guess he has his tea set back.

LaToya: Yeah, he has his box with his tea set, and that’s about it.

Morgan: God. Agony. So then, in the Hyperion lobby, they’re calling Gunn. He’s not answering his phone. They’re kind of trying to plan everything and divide and conquer. And then Groo says, “Oh, great, and wherever we go, we should probably leave behind these, like, small rectangles.” And he holds up a business card from the casino that Vinnie Statham left behind. [laughs]

LaToya: This is where I wrote in all caps, “Himbo!”

Morgan: Me too! [both laugh] And he’s like, “Please remind me to give this to Gunn when we get him.” And then he puts his arm—his hand on Fred’s shoulder. “Because I do believe we’re gonna get him.” [both laugh] How can—Kristin. How can you not—

LaToya: [simultaneously] Yeah, we’re—[laughs]

Morgan: Love him when he has a heart of gold? He’s so stupid, but in this moment, where he is just demonstrating his stupidity, he’s like, Fred—

LaToya: [simultaneously] This didn't soften him up for you? [laughs]

Morgan: Nothing?

Kristin: Okay, okay. Yes. It softens him up for me a little bit.

Morgan: Yay!

Kristin: Also, I'm really busy on a project, so I'm not doing my full production job. But you'll be proud of me. Just give me, like, five more minutes, okay? Anyway, I—

LaToya: Are you doing Desperately Seeking Sahjhan?

Morgan: [simultaneously] Desperately Seeking Sahjhan?

Kristin: Shut up. I gotta go.

[laughter]

Morgan: Just yelling at me. "Ugh, shut up." [both laughing] Thank you. The feud continues.

LaToya: I hope we don't cut that, because I just want everybody to know, that's what Producer Kristin is like. She's just yelling "shut up" at us. [both laugh]

Morgan: I love Producer Kristin, she's the best. [both laugh] Oh my god. I—yeah. "For I am confident that we shall." That he's a himbo that speaks like a Lord of the Rings character—like, it just—it...it's too much for me. Then, Angel is like, "Oh, I know Jenoff, the soul sucker?" Oh god.

LaToya: That's what he does.

Morgan: [laughs] Yeah, the reputation. So then, at the casino, melty-eye guy is dragged away. They tell Gunn, "It's pretty brave of you. Not a lot of people walk in here of their own free will to pay their debt." And he's like, "Yeah. Let's just get it over with." And then who busts through those double doors?

LaToya: Our Angel and the gang.

Morgan: Thank goodness. We got a little fight. But they are surrounded pretty quickly. Angel, like, takes a hostage and Jenoff's like, "Hey, you're disrupting my business." And Angel's like, "You're disrupting mine. You're taking one of my

employees." Fair enough. Very Provider energy. [both laugh] And Angel's like, "Well, what if—you know, like, I'll let you live if you give me back Gunn." And that doesn't work.

LaToya: Not a good deal at all.

Morgan: So instead, he says our episode title, "Double or nothing." And he bets his own soul and he gets to choose the game.

LaToya: Yeah, Jenoff at first didn't—like, "You're a vampire. That's useless." He's like, "I'm a vampire with a soul, fool." He's like, "Oh yeah, you're *that* vampire." Jenoff, you need to know who's coming into your casino. Like. You knew who Gunn was when he came into your casino. You didn't know who *Angel*, the vampire with a soul, was? Come on!

Morgan: Maybe we're seeing Jenoff, like, far after his prime. Maybe, you know, seven years ago, he was on top of all of it and he was ruling his piece of the city with an iron fist, all from his casino throne. But now, he's let himself languish a bit. He's gotten greedy and slothful. And he doesn't, you know, keep track of the players in town anymore. These are all of my thoughts and—[both laugh] when I write my Jenoff spinoff novel. [both laugh]

LaToya: Put it on the list.

Morgan: Hell yes. So we come back from commercial and Cordy's like, "Okay, what's the plan?" And Angel's like, "I don't know, I've played a lot of cards."

LaToya: Yeah, she thought this was a stall tactic and not the real plan. [laughs]

Morgan: Fred is like, "Uh, I'm not okay with this. Like, this is leaving stuff up way too much for chance." Jenoff is clearly feeling very confident. And Angel gives Cordy a stake and is like, "In case I lose." And he says to make it quick because he never loses an opportunity to tell someone close to him that they might have to kill him. [both laugh] As emo as it gets.

LaToya: He's always telling 'em. It's like we say, he's always telling 'em.

Morgan: He is—he is always telling them. And Cordy's like, "You know I will." So. That's friendship. Pure, unadulterated friendship. So they go to the blackjack table. And they're like, cool, one hand of cards. And Angel's like, "How about just a cut of the deck?" [laughs]

LaToya: Angel, why? Play a game of cards!

Morgan: I believe the first time I watched this, I screamed. And I was just like, this is reckless on a level I cannot handle. [both laugh] They're like, okay, high card wins. Jenoff draws a nine. And Angel draws a three. [both laugh] Everyone's horrified.

LaToya: Everyone's like, "A three!"

Morgan: Everyone's reading of "a three" is so funny. [both laugh] So Cordy springs into action. She pins Jenoff's hand to the table with the stake, and Angel cuts his head off. And they're like, yeah, that was the plan all along. Angel looks to Gunn and he's like, "So I handled it. No need to say thank you." And Gunn's like, "If killing him was that easy, like, I can cut a head off, man." What proceeds to happen [LaToya laughs] made me so happy and—

LaToya: This is the real Men in Black shit here.

Morgan: This is the real—like, when Kristin was like, "This episode was sad," and I was like, "This is the best episode ever." [LaToya laughs] All I could think of was this. David mentioned, like, it—these are practical effects. I think it really holds up. Like, if this had been CGI, this probably would not look anywhere near as good as it looks. He grows a new head. And there is goo. The new head has these little stubby baby teeth and starts just, like, screaming. It is *disgusting*! And I am on cloud nine, looking at it. It is amazing. Did you—did this traumatize you as a child? Or were you like, this rules? [laughs]

LaToya: This did not traumatize me, no. This is not one of the things that traumatized me. [laughs]

Morgan: Good. Thank god.

LaToya: I will always let you know when something traumatized me.

Morgan: 'Cause I realized, I'm like, of course I'm saying this is the best. LaToya's gonna be like, I threw up watching this as a child [LaToya laughs] and ran away from my television. And I'll be like, I'm so sorry. [laughs]

LaToya: See, it's not so much the creature designs that get to me. The only time a creature design has ever gotten to me—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: Is on—uh, Gooley Gus from Ghostwriter. [both laugh] He was steaming mad.

Morgan: Oh! That fucked me up too. That—

LaToya: Right?

Morgan: That is a formative fear of mine—like, a chill just ran down my spine. [both laugh]

LaToya: He was steaming mad, he was burning mad.

Morgan: [laughing] I remember watching that as I, like, ate my cereal in the morning and just, like—my blood running cold.

LaToya: That's how they wrapped up Ghostwriter. That was the end of the series. [laughs]

Morgan: That was wrong to do to all of us. So everyone watches in horror as this happens. And it's like, oh shit, well, he hasn't been killed. And then Angel very smartly just yells, "Anyone else owe this guy?" and they run as the casino just descends on this guy to beat the shit out of him. And that's lovely. [both laugh] So from here, we transition into, like, our last big scene, like, with Gunn. We're in Gunn's truck. He is apologizing to Fred repeatedly. [laughs] She makes him apologize into the microphone, which is just her hand. And he, like, gives it a bunch of kisses and they're just looking at each other. And it is stopping my heart. So Fred is like, "Okay. Who'd you trade your soul for?" And Gunn gets shy and Fred wheedles. And what is fun is that the initial conception of this pitch, they didn't have an answer to this. And in talking about it as a room and breaking the story, they realized it, you know, could be and should be the car. And they were like, yeah—I wanna read...

He said, "We spent a lot of time discussing what he could have done for it before we landed on that. It was just so perfect 'cause it said so much about who Gunn was at the time, back in the day, and how much his life had changed since then. And then obviously, the fun we got to have in the last scene where Fred thinks it's about another woman before he reveals it is the icing on the cake." Like, it's—it's so cute for him to just be like, "Yeah, it was this truck."

LaToya: Mmhmm. And I think it being his truck makes a lot of sense, as he points out. It kept him alive, it saved a lot of others. I do remember at the time, again,

people criticizing the fact, like, “Really? A truck? That was it, he sold his—” Like, what are you—? Yes, the truck was very important.

Morgan: It’s very important.

LaToya: The truck is, like, the first thing we see of him.

Morgan: Yeah.

LaToya: The character.

Morgan: And it costs money. Like, that’s the thing is, like, he was mortgaging his future in this way because he didn’t think he’d have—like, he thought this was more important than anything else that could happen. Like, it was shelter and it was helping him, like, do what he deems his purpose. Like, I think that’s incredibly important. Fred says to him, “What is it about you that just makes me melt?” and I write, in big ol’ letters, “We have a song for that!” [both laugh] Hit it, bitch!

[GUNN jingle plays]

Check that tux, check that bod
Sign me up for the Gunn Squad
Did someone say Golden God?
I’m all in on the Gunn Squad
Gameboy-playing himbo king
Sign me up for the Gunn Squad
Even when he’s curmudgeonin’
I’m all in on the Gunn Squad
Bang bang! You know Charles gonna shoot his shot
Bang bang! Cracking skulls up and down the block
Bang bang! Got a smile that make the panties drop
Bang bang! Gunn Squad, Gunn Squad

Morgan: Bang-bang. [laughs]

LaToya: Blap-blap.

Morgan: Kapow-kapow. [laughs]

LaToya: Pew-pew!

Morgan: I feel like Yosemite Sam. Please—always doing...and Gunn says that he loves Fred.

LaToya: Aww.

Morgan: [squeals] And they make out and it's very cute and I was very happy. On our last scene. We're in Angel's room in the Hyperion, and he's looking at the crib. And Cordy watches him as he starts to, like, disassemble it and take it apart. And it's kind of this final gesture of, like, okay, the—I guess, like, the denial piece of this is over. Like, he's gonna put that away and start, you know...accepting, I guess—to a certain extent, as much as he can right now—that, like, he is now not someone who has a—you know, a child anymore.

LaToya: Very sad, but I guess it's, like—it's as uplifting as this story can get, really—

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: You know. It's—he's moving on, as much as he can.

Morgan: Yeah, he's—like, it is progress to a certain extent. And it's, like, kind of being—yeah, it's moving into a new phase with the help of someone who cares about him very much. And with the, like, idea that he's going to be supported by all these people around him who clearly care about him and love him. It's just, whew, what a brutal visual.

LaToya: Well, you know what's a brutal visual? What I'm about to recommend for the episode that Angel should watch, effectively ruining the gravitas of this scene.

Morgan: It can't wait.

[DUBBA-DUBBA-WB jingle plays]
Angel is a vampire
Does he even like TV?
"I think he'll *like* The WB."
They got that hot teen drama
To ease the pain and trauma
And here's the episode that he
Needs to see (aw yeah!)

LaToya: So, I was looking through, you know, the list of WBs, going through the rolodex in my mind.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: And I decided, for this episode, I'm not going to choose a WB episode. I'm going to cheat.

Morgan: Whoa!

LaToya: I'm going to choose a show that was part of TNT's Primetime in the Daytime schedule. Which does—it's basically like a second WB, if you will.

Morgan: Very close.

LaToya: And I was just thinking about how, like, Angel—he got a three. [both laugh] He got a three in the casino.

Morgan: Yeah, that was rough. [laughs]

LaToya: I mean, you should know, Angel, that the house always wins. Especially when you have a frickin' three.

Morgan: Mmhmm.

LaToya: And what episode proves more to us that the house always wins than Los Vegas, Season 3, Episode 9, Mothwoman? AKA the episode where Lara Flynn Boyle is blown off the roof of the Montecito, via a gust of wind.

Morgan: That you are bringing up Las Vegas, in 2021...[both laugh] is stunning to me. The second you said the house always wins, I was like, is she about to bring up Las Vegas? No. No, no one would do that. You did it. What's Josh Duhamel doing in that ep? [laughs]

LaToya: I don't know. He is there on the roof with her when she blows away. The whole episode is, um...comic book inspired. So all of its act ends are all, like, comic book panels.

Morgan: Oh, okay.

LaToya: So—and the final comic book panel is a freeze frame comic book panel of Lara Flynn Boyle, flying off the roof of the Montecito.

Morgan: Good...gravy. I love it. I hope Angel has a great time watching it, and that it takes his troubles away. [laughs]

LaToya: It's like, Angel, it could have gone so much worse for you. Again, you got a three and that was pretty bad. But it could have gone so much worse for you.

Morgan: Could have blown right off the roof.

LaToya: [simultaneously] Perspective, my friend.

[DUBBA-DUBBA-WB jingle plays]

Angel is a vampire

Does he even like TV?

"I think he'll *like* The WB."

They got that hot teen drama

To ease the pain and trauma

And here's the episode that he

Needs to see (aw yeah!)

Morgan: I'm very proud of us. This episode, this is, uh...it's a silly episode of our podcast. And it's a great episode of Angel. I loved watching this one. This was—even though the Angel/Cordelia stuff is really brutal and very sad and same with the Wes stuff, it felt a little less...because of the lighter stuff in this, I felt less painful watching this one than I have the last couple. So I had a great time talking about it with you.

LaToya: Yeah, it was technically a break from the pain? But not really. Again, I did cry during this episode.

Morgan: Yeah, same. [laughs]

LaToya: We are—we're deep into Season 3 of Angel.

Morgan: Oof. And it is—and it is hurting us. [laughs]

LaToya: I mean, it could be worse. We could be deep into Season 6 of Buffy.

Morgan: Very true. Thank god for small favors. And—

Kristin: Rude.

[laughter]

Morgan: What was that? Do you hear something, LaToya? [laughs]

LaToya: I don't. It's probably someone who wants us to shut up. [both laugh]

Morgan: And on that note. You can follow us on social media, @AngelOnTopCast, on Twitter or Instagram. You can go to angelontop.com to find our Patreon, where you can find ad-free episodes and exclusive content from us, including a First Impressions watch, which we mentioned in this episode, which is really fun. And a movie podcast, Girls on Film, that we have a couple episodes of out right now. And if you want to find me for any reason on social media, you can find me @LorganMutich. LaToya, where can the people find you? And should they?

LaToya: You can only find me if you solve my riddles three, but first you have to find out what those riddles are! How are you gonna find out? I won't tell you.

Morgan: Good luck, suckers. [laughs]

LaToya: That's it.

Morgan: How do we end this pod—we have to come up with, like, a closing line or something. [laughs] Uh...

LaToya: Until next time.

Morgan: See ya at the casino. [both laugh]

[Angel On Top theme plays]