

Buffering the Vampire Slayer
Episode 7.06: Him

[CHIME]

Jenny: Hey, everybody!

Kristin: Hello! Oh, what a delightful time to talk about the episode, Him. Just such a romp, isn't it, Jenny?

Jenny: Uh-huh. Uh, yes?

Kristin: [laughs] Before we get into all of that, I think it's—I actually think it's one of our better episodes. We had a blast. [Jenny laughs] I just finished listening to it to edit it and I had a great time, so. Before we get there, a couple of quick announcements. First, just a reminder that we have just a handful of tickets left for the Friday night live taping of prom. That's Friday, March 11th. It is at Torrance High School, AKA Sunnydale fucking High School. The prom itself is sold out, completely sold out, that Saturday night. But the Friday, where we're gonna be in the auditorium—which, you know, is just right at the base of these steps that they fought the battle of Graduation Day on. No big deal. [Jenny laughs] That—there are literally about 50 tickets left to that before it is also sold out. So if you want tickets to that, go and grab them now. We'll also have Evan Ross Katz there with us that night, who is releasing a really awesome book about Buffy the Vampire Slayer right around that same time. It's the day after the 25th anniversary of the show. It's gonna be fun. So—

Jenny: Mmhmm!

Kristin: Bufferingthevampireslayer.com/prom. I hate when people in, like, February are like, "But oh no!" 'cause then there's nothing I can do. So this is me saying please, I don't want you to be sad. Go get them. [both laugh]

Jenny: In Buffering-adjacent news, it is my supreme pleasure to tell you that I, Jenny Owen Youngs, have announced a spring tour, with friend of the pod and wonderful musician, Hrishikesh Hirway. You know him, you love him. He's the best. We're gonna be playing some shows in March. We're gonna be hitting the northeast in March: Philly, DC, Saugerties, Brooklyn, Boston and Portland, Maine. And then in May, we're gonna be hitting Seattle, Portland, Oregon, San Francisco, and Los Angeles! We're gonna be playing a collaborative set. We're gonna be playing all our songs together. It's gonna be really special and fun and we hope that you will join

us. If you wanna find tickets and info, you can head over to jennyowenyoungs.com/events.

Kristin: So fun. See you in Saugerties.

Jenny: Mmhmm! [laughs]

Kristin: How about some sexual tension, Jenny? Your other favorite thing to talk about.

Jenny: I—[laughs] yes. In honor of what I'm sure will just be a colossal tidal wave of sexual tension occurring onstage between me and Hrish—[both laugh] let me give you the results of last episode's Sexual Tension Awards for Selfless. In fourth place with an impressive 13% of the vote—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Right?

Jenny: It's Lloyd, you know, from the office, and a sketch of Warren being flayed by Willow.

Kristin: [laughs] Thirteen percent!

Jenny: [simultaneously] Congrats.

Kristin: I was really impressed with the listenership.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Good job, everybody.

Jenny: That something involving Warren got that much of a—

Kristin: [laughing] Yeah!

Jenny: Head of steam on it. Disappointingly, in third place—how dare you—with 23% of the vote, it's Buffy and Anya.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Hmph! Barely edging ahead of that with just one additional percent more of the vote, 24% of the vote, second place. It's Halfrek and Willow.

Kristin: Lil' lemon drop—lil' lemon drop love didn't get—

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah.

Kristin: Didn't get to the winning, but second place? Pretty good.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And then, with a—you know, a very final-feeling 40% of the vote, it's definitive. First place, Willow and Anya. You earned it, congratulations. We wish you the best, we'll be sending not only the trophy, but also a fruit basket to your honeymoon suite.

Kristin: [simultaneously] And some tasseled lamps. Don't forget.

Jenny: And some tasseled lamps.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Thank all 536 of you [Kristin laughs] for voting in this poll. Thanks a ton.

Kristin: Especially those of you who I know are literally only on Twitter so you can vote in the poll. [Jenny laughs] Like, I know that you exist 'cause you tell me that you exist. Like, I am only here on this platform to literally vote in the Sexual Tension Awards poll. [both laugh] Alright, a couple of emails before we get into the episode here from listeners, 'cause they're great. First of all, come on, we asked about spiders and if they drool, and of course, we got so many emails. I'm gonna read this one from Kendra—

Jenny: Yes!

Kristin: Who wrote in to say, "Kendra here from Winnipeg, Canada. Long-time listener, first-time writer. Heard you asking during Selfless about if spiders drool. I'm so excited that I squealed. My big sister Sherry just so happens to be what I and many, many others call a spider expert."

Jenny: Alright!

Kristin: [simultaneously] "She is an arachnid enthusiast." I'm sorry, Jenny, I didn't give you space to squeal. Go ahead.

Jenny: Ahhhh!

Kristin: [laughs] "She is an arachnid enthusiast, natural history journalist as well as a biology student. She even had one of her spider discoveries featured in National Geographic years ago."

Jenny: What!

Kristin: No big deal, we're just kidding.

Jenny: [simultaneously] That's very cool!

Kristin: Information from the biggest spider expert in the universe here. So. Sherry said...do spiders drool?

Jenny: [crosstalk] Arachno-logist.

Kristin: Are you gonna make it? Are you okay?

Jenny: Sorry, I'm done.

Kristin: [laughs] "Sherry said, no, not really. Sometimes when spiders get excited—in parentheses, defensive—venom may drop from their fangs. Their legs operate on hydraulics, so they are pretty judicious with expending fluids. If they do not—"

Jenny: [quietly] Oh my god.

Kristin: "Have enough hydration, their legs can't move [Jenny gasps] and they'll die, [Jenny gasps] unable to carry themselves to a water source."

Jenny: Oh my god!

Kristin: "So be a spider friend, and offer your house spiders water by misting their webs with a plant mister. This is often why we find them in our bathrooms and our bathtubs!"

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: Can you even handle it, Jenny?

Jenny: Noo, I can't!

Kristin: So spiders do not really drool and we should help them by misting them so they stay hydrated and their hydraulic legs can continue working! [laughs]

Jenny: Absolutely wild.

Kristin: Also, Jenny, I wanted to just let you know that in the bottom part of this email, Kendra also said that you had absolutely made her daughter Khaleesi's entire year, [Jenny gasps] because you played her song request during your Twitch stream.

Jenny: Oh, yeah!

Kristin: So.

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: That's cute.

Jenny: No big deal. If I'm remembering correctly, it was Khaleesi's first concert. Ever.

Kristin: Ah!

Jenny: So.

Kristin: Agh! So, thank you for that email—

Jenny: Very cool. Yes!

Kristin: For many reasons. And normally I just read one, but I did wanna say. In our last episode, I posited that this guy who is singing about mustard had stained his shirt twice. And I wanna say for the record that producer Alba did tell me in her notes that I was incorrect, that it—that it actually was rev—that I had it reversed. That he actually was staining his shirt and then would—whatever. But sometimes—

Jenny: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Kristin: I like to stir the pot, so I didn't take it out—

Jenny: Uh-oh.

Kristin: And I didn't fix it, so that everyone would be like, "Actually! Actually." So I just wanted to say, I got your actually's. I'm gonna just correct it. Listener N. wrote in and said, "When everyone gathers at the Magic Box at the start of Once More, With Feeling, Buffy kicks everything off by asking if anyone burst into song the previous night, which everyone admits is definitely something that happened, so we get the order of events in reverse. Red Shirt Guy and his wife mournfully sing about the mustard, but luckily, it's quickly resolved the next day at the drycleaners with a song and dance." [laughs]

Jenny: Phew!

Kristin: So thank you for your corrections and thank you—I just wanna let you know that Alba did get it. She did, she did get—she registered it, she told me. And I was like, ooh, fun. Everybody will be yelling at me in their cars. [both laugh]

Jenny: And I was just an unwitting pawn in this whole thing.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Unwitting—I didn't tell Jenny at all, yeah. [laughs]

Jenny: Hmm.

Kristin: Anyway! Why don't we go see what happens when a high school boy puts on a letterman jacket, hm?

Jenny: Mmhmm! What could go wrong?

[Buffering theme plays]

Jenny: Hello and welcome to Buffering the Vampire Slayer, a podcast where we are watching and discussing every episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, one by one, spoiler free, in tandem with the gals I'd really like to see me in my letterman jacket, Angel On Top! [Kristin laughs] Don't you think they'd like that, Kristin?

Kristin: You know, Jenny, I actually do think that they would really love that, yes.

Jenny: Mmm! Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: I support this. I support your endeavors for letterman jacket-wearing around the—actually. You know, you can wear your letterman jacket to your recording with them just next week. [Jenny gasps] 'Cause I think you're gonna be over there in our neck of the woods. I'll shield my eyes. But you can—

Jenny: [simultaneously] Ooh my god. Yes, avert! Avert! [Kristin laughs] I am Jenny Owen Youngs.

Kristin: And I am Kristin Russo, and this week, we are talking about Buffy Season 7, Episode 6, Him. Him who, you ask? We'll find out.

Jenny: Him who!

Kristin: [laughs] It just occurred to me how few spoilers we have to keep close to our chest at this point. We're sort of lighter than we've ever been, you know? Just—[both laugh] you should stay tuned at the end of this podcast every other week for an original song, written by Jenny, recapping the Buffy episode that we are discussing.

Jenny: Him! Was written by Drew Z. Greenberg, [Kristin laughs] directed by Michael Gershman! And originally aired on November 5th, 2002.

Kristin: Wow. Drewz—Drew—can we just call him Drewz?

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Great. This is the one, according to IMDB, where—what a weird description. "Xander—"

Jenny: [laughs] What do they say?

Kristin: It's just like—this is the one where Xander and Spike search for the source of a spell that has bewitched the girls into competing for the affections of the high school quarterback. It's just so weird that the whole thing hinges on Xander and Spike? [laughs] Right? Like, it is true—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: It's not inaccurate, it's just—

Jenny: Well...yeah. They are the active parties, in a way.

Kristin: They are.

Jenny: This is also the one where the writers, feeling just kinda out of ideas, you know? [Kristin laughs] It's just been a long run.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Decide to reread Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered. And!

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: I'll assert, without spoiling—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: That next week's episode of Angel On Top—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Upon which I will be guesting—will be looking at an Angel episode that is sort of a reread of a mashup of a couple Buffy episodes. I won't tell you which, you'll just have to listen to the episode.

Kristin: Oh, my. Yeah, it is. It's like they just got a little punchy. Like, it's—because it's—

Jenny: [laughs] Yeah.

Kristin: It is a reread of, like, the love spell concept. But also, just like, the whole episode—I actually enjoy it, for the most part. Like, just because it's so fun and, like, weird—

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: And bizarre. And the music cues—first of all, the music!

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: There's the whole, like, R.J....whatever that song is. [sings R.J.'s theme] Like, the love song? Jenny's looking it up. But then also, the music in this episode is, like—there's Coldplay, there's The Shins. The Breeders are at the Bronze. Like, it's like—[laughing] you can't walk three steps in this episode without hitting, like, a massive, massive band.

Jenny: The song that we hear every time somebody starts to swoon a little bit over R.J. is a song by Percy Faith, called "Theme from a Summer Place," or "Theme for R.J."

Kristin: [laughs] [sings R.J.'s theme] Previously on Buffy the Vampire Slayer, there's not much to say because you don't—

Jenny: Not much has happened.

Kristin: It's like, they don't—it's so funny 'cause, like, a previously exists so that you can connect the pieces to the important plot points that connect. And it's like, they're really—

Jenny: Yeah. No continuity required.

Kristin: [laughs] None. You can just jump—as a matter of fact—

Jenny: BYO-continuity.

Kristin: Yeah, when someone says, "What's the first episode you should show somebody of Buffy the Vampire Slayer?" I'm gonna be like, Him, actually. It's a great—you don't need to—[Jenny laughs] you can just jump right in. [Jenny laughs] But we get a little clip of Buffy and Spike, where she's like, "Get out of the basement."

Jenny: Right, right.

Kristin: You know where you're going, where you always go when you're not living in your crypt. To Xander's. [laughs]

Jenny: How is it always...Xander? Xander hates it so much. Do you think that Buffy makes Xander do this because he hates it so much?

Kristin: Maybe Buffy, like us, secretly has a mini ship for Xander and Spike—

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: And just keeps hoping that this'll be the time.

Jenny: Yeah, she's like, "I really need Spike to get his mind off me. [Kristin laughs] So why don't I put him in close proximity to Xan-derrr?"

Kristin: [imitating Jenny] Xan-derrr.

Jenny: [singsong] Roomies again, roomies again!

Kristin: And then for no reason whatsoever except for I think the poor editor was like, "I don't know what the fuck else to put in the Previously Ons." We get Anya being like, I'm alone, walking off into the whatever.

Jenny: Well, I think we get Anya's not a vengeance demon anymore, because the first thing that happens after the credits is Buffy helps Anya out with—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Is Buffy with Anya.

Jenny: D'Hoffryn hit demon.

Kristin: D'Hoffryn-feffer? [laughs]

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Okay, so...we start at Xander's, speaking of, because Spike is moving in. Roommates once again.

Jenny: [gasps] They were roommates. [Kristin laughs] Xander and Dawn, reasonably enough, are like, "Why are Spike's problems your problems?" And Xander is perhaps silently—or not so silently—adding on, "And why then are Spike's problems that are your problems now my problems?" [laughs]

Kristin: Now my problems, right. Xander, full of nicknames of people that he disapproves of in this. He calls Spike in this scene a "nimrod." "I invite you in, nimrod." And then later, he calls R.J. "chowder-head." So, just—[laughs]

Jenny: Yeah. What is *that*?

Kristin: What is happening?

Jenny: What *is* that?

Kristin: [laughing] I don't know. But yeah, I mean, the recurring Dawn theme, besides the whole R.J. situation in this episode, makes me very happy. Because she just keeps saying, "So what's a soul, then? So, what? Why does a soul matter?" And she's basically just on this podcast now. Dawn is here with us, being like, so what the fuck is the point of a soul and what does it mean and what does it not mean? [laughs]

Jenny: [simultaneously] Yeah, yeah. What does it *mean*? Spike says that he doesn't need any "mollycoddling," which I'm googling just now.

Kristin: Oh, so prepared, as a podcast host.

Jenny: To mollycoddle is to treat someone in an indulgent or overprotective way. So, coddling. Is coddling perhaps...the progressed...

Kristin: [simultaneously] Coddling is the same thing as mollycoddling?

Jenny: Form of mollycoddling? And they were like, too many syllables.

Kristin: Buffy's like, "It's not coddling. Now go to your closet." [both laugh] But you know, I mean—I guess the point of this scene is just to establish that Spike is no longer in the basement. Xander's not thrilled about it. Dawn is wondering why Buffy is doing this. Xander's wondering why Buffy is doing this. Spike is kind of even wondering why Buffy is doing this.

Jenny: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Kristin: Is Buffy wondering? Maybe a little. And, um, then we go to the football field.

Jenny: Take it to the bleachers! [Kristin laughs] They're continuing this conversation, Dawn and Buffy, about like, Spike and his whole deal and Buffy's deal with him. Buffy's telling Dawn that she doesn't love Spike, but she feels for him. And Buffy also tells Dawn that Spike knows how wrong what he did was.

Kristin: He knew. Like, he knew even then—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: How wrong what he did was.

Jenny: Mmm. Mmhmm.

Kristin: So he went to get a soul.

Jenny: Mmhmm. [Kristin laughs] And Dawn, very astutely observes, so like, oh, a soul makes you a better person? Well, Xander had a soul when he stood Anya up at the altar—

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: For example.

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: Not exactly apples to apples, but a point perhaps worth considering.

Kristin: Right. And also, like, you know, most people who commit horrible acts have souls. Insofar as we know. Like, a soul does not mean that you are then not going to commit hor—and as a matter of fact, it's kind of summed up later—although it's a little backwards, 'cause Buffy says in this scene that Spike knew what he did was wrong even before he had a soul. But later at the Bronze, Xander is like, "You'd think a soul would make you pick up your wet towels off of the bathroom floor." [both laugh] And Willow's like, "Well, no, but it probably makes him feel bad about not picking up his towels from the floor." [both laugh] Anyway. This is sort of like a, Dawn doesn't know what love is, but one day, she'll learn. [Jenny laughs] And Jenny...that day happens to be today, because R.J.—

Jenny: Today!

Kristin: R.J. is do—a class—this is how I actually flirt with people all the time. I just pick up my water bottle and, like—

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: Squirt it into my mouth and then, like, all over my face. [laughing] It really is very effective. Just makes all the girls swoon.

Jenny: This boy is, as I understand it, at football practice?

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And at football practice, as I understand it, [Kristin laughs] you know, you run. You throw the ball. Maybe you punt, if you're on special teams.

Kristin: Mmhmm. [laughs]

Jenny: You tackle. You generally work up a sweat, even if you're the quarterback, who...

Kristin: Quarterback is just very precious.

Jenny: [simultaneously] I don't know if it's exactly appropriate to say that, like, the quarterback is—not the least physical position. But it is, like, probably the one where you're getting, like, the shit beat out of you the least.

Kristin: Of course! That's the whole—

Jenny: Right?

Kristin: The point—like, the point of the rest of the team is to make sure nobody touches the quarterback.

Jenny: Right.

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: But so, we would think that R.J. would be working up a sweat. And it does follow that he would then spray water over his face after he got all hot at practice. But he is hot enough to be spraying water in his face, but cold enough [Kristin laughs] to have put on his letterman jacket, [Kristin laughs] in the middle of practice? Question mark?

Kristin: [laughs] Meta-physics?

Jenny: I just—

Kristin: Uh, yeah. And we get—this is the first time we get the theme of R.J. [sings R.J.'s theme] [Jenny laughs] And then Dawn falls off of the bleachers. Classic Dawn.

Jenny: There she goes.

Kristin: I won't let us leave this scene without at least noting the fact that Buffy is rocking tiny sunglasses once again. [Jenny laughs] We haven't seen her rock tiny sunglasses in a long time. She's also now wearing tiny sunglasses while drinking a can of 7Up with a straw, which just felt—

Jenny: Huh.

Kristin: Beautifully 2002 to me. Just—just—a gorgeous little snapshot of 2002. [laughs] Then we go to the credits.

Jenny: A can with a straw. Alright.

Kristin: Yeah, I never drank—I've never, ever drank canned soda out of a straw. It's not for me, personally. Have you?

Jenny: [simultaneously] Yeah.

Kristin: You like canned—canned soda out of a straw?

Jenny: No straw, thank you. There's something about soda or beer coursing over a metal surface—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: That is part of the taste experience to me?

Kristin: [simultaneously] Experience. I agree.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Agree. It also does something weird to the bubbles when you use a straw—

Jenny: Mm.

Kristin: With carbonated beverages.

Jenny: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Kristin: You know?

Jenny: Too much—too much, too fast.

Kristin: Yeah. I'm so glad that we agree. A podcast united. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah, on such an important issue. Credits, and then...

Kristin: Oh, god.

Jenny: Over at Anya's—poor Anya, can't catch a break. D'Hoffryn has decided he shall not suffer an Anyanka to live, after all. And is—

Kristin: Rude!

Jenny: Sending hit demons after her. Thankfully, Buffy just happens to be swinging by, at exactly this time.

Kristin: Do we ever find out, "oh, she's swinging by 'cause they need her help?" That's why? Is that—like, they're gonna ask her back into the fold? Why is she there? [laughs]

Jenny: I think Buffy's there because as she states after the fight is over, something bad is happening and she doesn't want her friends alone out there.

Kristin: This is an FBYID housecall.

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Oh-ho-ho, yesh.

Kristin: Got it, got it, got it.

Jenny: Yes, it is.

Kristin: And maybe she also has a note from Willow that Willow's written on a piece of looseleaf paper that's like, "Dear Anya, will you date me? Circle yes or no."

Jenny: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Kristin: "Love, Willow." Anya is up to her hilarious Anya tricks. She's like, "I could be—" saying to the demon, "maybe you got the wrong Anyanka. Did you ever think of that? It's possible that somebody else pissed off this D'Hoffryn-feffer." [laughs]

Jenny: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Kristin: Pretending that she doesn't remember his name.

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: Buffy kills the demon. Anya's like, "Thank you for the generous lifesaving, now please go away."

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: "I don't need help. Well, I do need help, but I don't want help." [both laugh]

Jenny: Buffy pleads her case and Anya comes around in a very Anya way and says, well, I guess you could use my help.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Willow's not very good with practical strategizing, except when she's evil. And Dawn is not really good for anything!

Kristin: [exhales happily] I actually—like, we don't get to really spend a ton of time talking about the relationship between Anya and Dawn. But it is hilarious. It is—I mean, there is no real relationship except for, like, the time when Dawn was tiny, really tiny, and they were, like, playing board games together. But then it's mostly just been Anya being so over Dawn. Like, for as long as I can remember, Anya's just been, like—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: So fucking over it.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, what practical use does this child have?

Kristin: [laughs] 'Cause she wants to trade in this child for cash.

Jenny: [simultaneously] Also, you know, the shoplifting. I'm sure she's still burnt over the shoplifting.

Kristin: Oh, that's true. So we go to high school. And Dawn's pacing. She's trying to figure out—

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: She's putting a lot of thought into how she's gonna really just knock this flirt outta the park. And...[laughs]

Jenny: Oh my word.

Kristin: We meet our four high school students in this scene. We've got Cheryl, played by Riki Lindhome, who you probably know from a million-billion things. We

have Lori, O'Donnell, and—I guess we already met R.J., out on the football field. And they're standing—

Jenny: Okay, so you didn't recognize Lori?

Kristin: No—

Jenny: She didn't seem familiar to you?

Kristin: She looked familiar to me, and then in my mind, I was like, she's the Jackie. Like—I, like, made her the Jackie of Yellowjackets in my mind. But I didn't recognize her. [Jenny laughs] What's she—what would I recognize Lori from?

Jenny: Well! The place I think that maybe most people would know her from is as the host Clementine on Westworld.

Kristin: Oh my god! Yes, of course. Of course—

Jenny: [simultaneously] [whispering] It all makes sense.

Kristin: It all just clicked right into place, yes.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, she has a very—

Kristin: Oh, I loved her on Westworld.

Jenny: Yeah! She's so great on Westworld.

Kristin: Clementine ruled. Yes. She does have, like, a very particular face.

Jenny: Singular face. Yeah.

Kristin: Yeah. Yeah, she does.

Jenny: She's very cool looking.

Kristin: [simultaneously] What do you think most people know Riki from? Because I feel like—

Jenny: Well, there's Garfunkel and Oates.

Kristin: Of course.

Jenny: There's Another Period. She's in Knives Out.

Kristin: Knives Out, yes. I knew she was just in something very—on a very large scale. Knives Out, yeah. Ugh, she was so good in Knives Out. What a great movie. [Jenny laughs] So anyway. Dawn sees this little gaggle of high schoolers, and she's like, let me just walk—like, what child will walk over...like, wait until R.J.'s alone. I mean, even if you're not good at flirting—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: That's fine. Many of us are not. But like, to attempt this maneuver that she's doing while all four of them are there is just—[laughing] it makes me wanna crawl under my desk and hide forever.

Jenny: Yeah, this is—this is...the most horrific [laughs] scene in any episode, up to this point. So hard to watch.

Kristin: [simultaneously] [sighs] Oh my god. It's really hard to watch. I just wanna also—I don't know if you—do—so Cheryl, Riki's character. Very cute braids on Cheryl. And she's saying, "I think I can still cheer." She's, like, on crutches so she's like, "I can still do it, guys, I can still cheer." And Lori's like, "No, you can't, we're gonna replace you. We're gonna have tryouts, whatever." Do you know what happened to Cheryl? Did you write down the line?

Jenny: Oh, yeah. [Kristin laughs] Kristin. Cheryl is injured because, of course, a vending machine fell on her. How do we think this happened? Do you think she did the thing where she put in her 75 cents—

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And she pressed A4—

Kristin: Uh-huh.

Jenny: For pizza-flavored Combos.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And then the little spring dial guy [Kristin laughs] was like—[makes whirring sound] rotated just enough that it didn't quite fall—and then she banged upon the vending machine and rocked it—

Kristin: Uh-huh.

Jenny: Away from the wall to see if she could get her Combos to fall out. And then accidentally brought down the vending machine upon herself?

Kristin: Maybe. Or, alternate theory, there's a new class of lesbians in town, you know, and they held hands. And—

Jenny: Ohh! Wow, I forgot about the...

Kristin: Ka-blam! [laughs]

Jenny: The ultimate purpose of vending machines in Sunnydale. [both laugh]

Kristin: I think Cheryl may have just gotten in the way of the vending machine during a lesbian tryst in the other room.

Jenny: Maybe Cheryl and Lori were sitting together—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Face-to-face—

Kristin: Yep.

Jenny: Fingers entwined.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: You know?

Kristin: Yeah. Your first time—

Jenny: And they just—

Kristin: It can be—you know, you don't always know what to expect. So maybe it just went in the wrong direction and—

Jenny: Yep. Yep. Yep.

Kristin: Yeah, so that's my theory, personally. Or I guess the theory we just built live in real time together, [Jenny laughs] but I had a feeling we would wind up there. I had a feeling we would [both laugh] end up at the proper destination.

Jenny: Just when it seems all is lost, Dawn's grasping little fingers find a thread. [Kristin laughs] And they close around it so tightly. She's got something to say. She has something to add to the conversation. Kristin, what is it?!

[Clip from episode plays]

Dawn: The quarterback is the most important member of the team. He is like the rudder that guides the ship.

Kristin: Ahhh.

Jenny: Ahh!

Kristin: Dawn. Yes. Where do you think Dawn learned this? Do you think this is what she was doing last night? She was googling, "what is a quarterback? How do you kiss a quarterback?"

Jenny: Mm.

Kristin: "What do quarterbacks like?" [both laugh]

Jenny: Oh my word. Yeah, this is—

Kristin: They—ohh! It's so awkward. They're all being horrible to Dawn, but also, Dawn is just being a nightmare. It's just bad. It feels awkward. And then, they all leave. And Dawn is just yelling after them, "We'll talk later, guys! That's cool!" [laughs]

Jenny: Ohh, Dawn. Oh, god!

Kristin: [simultaneously] They go really hard on how much of a dork Dawn is. Like, maybe a little too hard. Like, I feel like—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Dawn might do a little bit of a better job than this, but.

Jenny: She's—yeah, she's dorking out pretty hard. Down she goes into the Summers' basement, [Kristin starts singing tune] dig, dig, digging!

Kristin: I was immediately like, am I watching the movie Garden State? And then looked up Garden State to confirm, like, this was part of the Garden State soundtrack, wasn't it? And it was. But that wasn't until 2004. But The Shins—that's how I met The Shins, was in the movie Garden State.

Jenny: Mmm. Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: But this song is—just the songs in this episode. It's like you're watching a movie. You know? Like, there's just such large scale bands. Coldplay is gonna be—anyway. She's down there, she finds Buffy's old cheer uniform.

Jenny: [distressed] Yes, and she wears it to tryouts! [groans]

Kristin: She's the only one wearing a...

Jenny: Vintage?

Kristin: Vintage? Yeah—cheerleading outfit to tryouts. And I know we just heard Dawn embarrass herself in the hallway, but we're gonna listen together to Dawn's—

Jenny: Yeah, if you thought she was embarrassing before. [laughs] Buckle up!

Kristin: Let's hear her tryout cheer.

[Clip from episode plays]

Dawn: Razorbacks, razorbacks, we're gonna play! We got a secret weapon and his name is R.J.! Hear us cheer, hear us yell, listen what we say! Razorbacks, Razorbacks, goooo R.J.! [thud and Dawn yelps]

[Kristin laughs]

Jenny: Yeah, this ill-fated cartwheel. Man.

Kristin: She should have stuck with "how funky is your chicken." In my personal opinion. [laughs]

Jenny: Oh my god. Also, no.

Kristin: Lori, for some reason, is like, not even that mean and is just like, "That was very spirited." [both laugh]

Jenny: Cut to the Summers house. We've all been the teen on the other side of this door.

Kristin: Aww. Yeah—

Jenny: Shrieking and wailing.

Kristin: Don't you feel like Buffy—especially Buffy—could do a better job with this? Before she's in love with R—like, you know, once she's fallen for R.J., then all bets are off the table. But like, in this period of time, I'm just like, dude. Like, you know not to tell a person who is young and in love that they don't know what they're feeling. Like, that's not—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Gonna ever be effective. [laughing] And also, the first thing she says to Dawn—Dawn's like, [weepy] "I just really feel like he's never gonna notice me." And Buffy's like, "Well, from what you said, I actually—[both laughing] seems like you made—"

Jenny: Look, she's trying to find the positive in a difficult situation and I celebrate that.

Kristin: I don't know. I don't know. Xander: "Don't teens a snit—"

Jenny: I mean, she hasn't had to do this before. She doesn't have practice dealing with this side of Dawn.

Kristin: That's true. I guess it is her sister and that changes the dynamic, overall.

Jenny: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Kristin: That's fair. I'll give her some wiggle room because Dawn is her little sister, her little mystical ball sister. [laughs] So. Xander says—

Jenny: Oh yeah.

Kristin: "Don't teens in a snit love pizza?" [Jenny gasps] Who is writing Xander's dialogue in this episode? [both laugh]

Jenny: Yeah. I think it's the guy from that Halloween episode. [both laugh] Was like, [imitating old man] "My toys!"

Kristin: I actually—I was texting—

Jenny: [simultaneously] [imitating old man] "My toys!"

Kristin: [simultaneously] I was texting with Joanna—

Jenny: "Teens in a snit!"

Kristin: I was texting with Joanna Robinson last night about the fact that we were recording Him. And she was like, "Is Him the Halloween one with the letterman jacket?" And I was like, no, no, no, the Halloween one with the letterman jacket [Jenny laughs] is the one where the old man says, [imitating old man] "My toys!" [both laugh] But like, easily confused, it's fair.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Kristin: [sighs] Oh, god. So just glad that this old man keeps coming up, just in casual conversation.

Jenny: Yeah. Well, can't you hear that guy being like, [imitating old man] "You chowder-head!"

Kristin: [laughs] Yes. [imitating old man] "Come into my kitchen, I'm making cookies!" Whew! So, anyway.

Jenny: Terrible news. [Kristin laughs] RIP. Dawn has shredded Buffy's cheerleading uniform into ribbons.

Kristin: [laughs] Seems like quite a choice to make, with something that didn't even belong to you at the outset.

Jenny: She's in pain, Kristin! [Kristin sighs] She's in *pain*.

Kristin: Xander uses this opportunity—they've migrated to Dawn's room after discovering the shredded cheerleading outfit. And Dawn's like—[laughs] I think Dawn says, like, "You didn't need it anyway," or Buffy—somebody says that Buffy didn't need it.

Jenny: Dawn says, "I'll buy you a new one," and Buffy says, "That's not the point. I don't want a new cheerleading uniform."

Kristin: And Xander's like, oh, I know what to do here. I know—I know—wait, hold on, let me just look up the character "Xander" in the dictionary. What would—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: WWXD. [laughs]

Jenny: He's like, let me just really Xander out here. For a sec.

Kristin: [laughs] What would Xander do? And he's like, "Oh, maybe you should think—well, not the moment for a fucking joke—"

Jenny: "Let's not be hasty, rah!" [laughs]

Kristin: Thanks, buddy.

Jenny: Uh, sir?

Kristin: Thanks for letting us feel at home. Letting us know where we are—

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: Who's here.

Jenny: Yeah!

Kristin: Xander unwittingly kind of answers the entire riddle of the episode, by saying—

Jenny: [laughs] Oh, yeah.

Kristin: "It's the jacket. It's the letterman jacket. It always makes the girls go wild."

Jenny: Yeah, and he observes that you couldn't pin any old letter to your jacket and [imitating old man] "get play! You couldn't get play by—" [both laugh] help! "Get play?"

Kristin: Get play. Yeah. Mmhmm. [Jenny exhales] Dawn, meanwhile, is like, "It isn't a crush, it's love." This is the whole "you're telling me I don't feel what I feel" thing.

Jenny: Uh-huh. Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Kristin: Buffy's being really too condescending. Dawn says, "You have no idea what real love is." And you know, I think that everyone in this room realizes that Dawn is probably about three seconds away from screaming, "Get out, get out, get out!" [both laugh]

Jenny: I know! I was wondering if it was gonna happen. And it didn't.

Kristin: Thankfully—

Jenny: She also says, "Maybe I don't want advice from the dysfunction queen." Shots. Fired.

Kristin: I know. Yeah. Dawn. Dawn's in a fighting mood. She's in love!

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Speaking of being in a fighting mood for love—

Kristin: Woof!

Jenny: Turns out, O'Donnell—who I do not trust—just heard from coach that he's gonna be starting—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: At QB in their next game.

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: And I thought here, too bad for R.J. that coach isn't a lady. Because things would be going way better for him.

Kristin: That's true.

Jenny: But he doesn't need coach to be a lady because he has Dawn around to shove O'Donnell down the stairs for him.

Kristin: Really, um—like, a very Melrose Place moment just situated—

Jenny: Ha!

Kristin: [laughing] Right in the middle of this episode of Buffy.

Jenny: Yeah, also, that is only a half-flight. Not to, like, nitpick or whatever, but I just don't know—

Kristin: Yeah, he'd probably be fine.

Jenny: I just don't know if that would have been a sure thing.

Kristin: Yeah. Yeah, I agree.

Jenny: You know what I mean?

Kristin: We're in Principal Wood's office with Buffy and Dawn. And they're like—I guess O'Donnell has lied several times before. So it's an easy one for Dawn to squeak by. And she does—

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: You gotta give her credit that she's like, "I mean, he was probably just embarrassed. It's really embarrassing—" Dawn knows firsthand. She's like, "It's pretty embarrassing."

Jenny: She's like, "It's definitely—I can tell you from experience—"

Kristin: [simultaneously] To be clumsy. [laughs]

Jenny: "It's embarrassing to be clumsy!" And it seems like all's gonna go off without a hitch. But then she says, "At least you've still got R.J. to take over." And Buffy's Spidey sense is goin' nuts!

Kristin: Yeah, too bad that Spidey sense bangs into a fucking wall and does a U-turn just moments later.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Before it does, R.J. and Dawn are in the hallway, really scheming. "Oh, it was no big deal." He's like, "It was." She's like, "It's out of nowhere." And he was like, "It's funny how those things can happen sometimes, out of nowhere."

Jenny: Yeah, just happen. Just accidents, oops.

Kristin: Oops.

Jenny: It's interesting—I guess when you're in high school, the principal is, like, a—can be a scary figure. I perhaps am distracted by Principal Wood being hot. Far too distracted with his hotness to be intimidated by his—

Kristin: Principal Wood does not need to wear a letterman jacket.

Jenny: [inaudible]—exactly. [both laugh] But R.J. is very impressed that Dawn just, you know, faced him. She also says, "Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition." This is a Monty Python quote.

Kristin: Oh!

Jenny: Picturing Dawn watching Monty Python—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Monty Python?

Jenny: Picturing Dawn being like, "We are the knights who say ni."

Kristin: [laughs] I could see it, actually—

Jenny: I'm picturing it.

Kristin: Now that you said that quote.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: I could—yeah. That fits.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: So yeah, R.J. has asked Dawn out on a date. And what a date, indeed. I would love to fucking see The Breeders play at the Bronze, myself.

Jenny: There they are, in all their glory. The Breeders are playing at the Bronze, okay?

Kristin: The Breeders are fucking playing at the Bronze. Kim and Kelley Deal are just standing up on that fucking stage, singing their little twin—

Jenny: Being twins.

Kristin: Being twins!

Jenny: Twinning out.

Kristin: We didn't even know who Tegan and Sara were, they weren't even around. These were the twins. Okay?

Jenny: I know!

Kristin: Okay. That's not true, probably we did know—did we know who Tegan and Sara were? *I* didn't know who Tegan and Sara were in 2002, but maybe somebody did. Were they around?

Jenny: [makes high pitched thinking noise]

Kristin: Okay, I googled to see if Tegan and Sara were Tegan and Sara or Sara and Tegan in 2002. And I am so sorry to everybody that you are being led by two queer women who didn't know the answer. But in 2002, Tegan and Sara released their third album, *If It Was You*. I don't know—you know, the first—

Jenny: Oh my god!

Kristin: The first couple may have—I don't know if the first two were under Tegan and Sara, but the first question that came up when I googled that—[laughs] you know, where it's like—Google's like, "people also ask..." And the first thing is—

Jenny: Mm.

Kristin: "Are Tegan and Sara straight?" Guys. [Jenny laughs] Guys. Get it together. Anyway. So we had a lot of twins in the year 2002. We had Kim, Kelley, Tegan and Sara all singing music for us. What a beautiful time. [both laugh] What a beloved time.

Jenny: Did you know...

Kristin: Probably not.

Jenny: As you know, I recently partook in the holiday variety show of Josh Kanter, the Red Sox organist. And one of the other special musical guests was Tanya Donnelly, with whom I had played a show many, many moons ago, 'cause we were both on an indie lullabies compilation together and both played the release show—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Yes, I was at that show. That was at Joe's Pub—

Jenny: Yeah, yeah.

Kristin: Right?

Jenny: It was, it was. And she's so friggin' nice. And when they were introducing her, I didn't realize this, but she was not only a founding member of Belly, not only a member of Throwing Muses, but also a founding member of The Breeders.

Kristin: Yeah, I didn't know that until I looked up The Breeders to learn a little more. And there I saw Tanya and was like, holy shit. What hasn't she done?

Jenny: She's everywhere!

Kristin: She's everywhere.

Jenny: She's freaking everywhere. Get out of the way.

Kristin: Yeah. So...it's time to dance at the Bronze, wearing as little clothing as possible. [Jenny gasps loudly] You know who would be so proud? Faith fucking Lehane.

Jenny: Faith.

Kristin: Faith would be like, "Yeah, bitch! Get it!" [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah. She'd have, like, some little nickname.

Kristin: [pleased] Ugh.

Jenny: For Dawn.

Kristin: She would.

Jenny: I can't remember...we haven't seen them together. No, because the last time Faith was here was in Season 4.

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: And, uh—but what do you think—what do you think Faith would call Dawn?

Kristin: I imagined her, honestly—like, it's not even, like, a fully-Faithy kind of a nickname. But I just imagine her calling her "pipsqueak." Like, I just can see it. I just can, like, hear it in my mind.

Jenny: Yeah. There's, like, one of those—

Kristin: Yep.

Jenny: And then there's also, like—this is not it, but conceptually, you think of a cigarette and then think of just the filter?

Kristin: Okay?

Jenny: Not that she would call Dawn "filter." But I just feel like she would take something badass—

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: And then take one small component of it—

Kristin: Uh-huh.

Jenny: A little tiny component—

Kristin: Ooh.

Jenny: And call Dawn that.

Kristin: Okay.

Jenny: But I don't know what it is.

Kristin: It's very poetic, Jenny. I like it. Well—

Jenny: Thank you.

Kristin: This is where—this is where everyone at home gets to play. So—

Jenny: Yes. Everyone at home gets to play. Tweet @BufferingCast on Twitter.

Kristin: Please. Please.

Jenny: Tell us what you think Faith would call Dawn.

Kristin: Yep. Yep.

Jenny: Thank you very much.

Kristin: I cannot wait to get all of those tweets. [Jenny laughs] I will compile them and print them out, frame them and put them on my wall. [laughs] So, um, a bummer. Faith isn't here. Double bummer, Xander is.

Jenny: Agh!

Kristin: So...[laughs]

Jenny: Agh! They spy the Scoobies. Willow, Xander and Buffy are sitting at a table at the Bronze. And they see R.J. on the dance floor and they're like, look. It's R.J. And a scantily-clad young woman—well, not even scantily-clad. But just, like—

Kristin: One shoulder out.

Jenny: Tightly and—one shoulder out, one hip bone out?

Kristin: [laughing] Out.

Jenny: Kind of an asymmetrical reveal-io, if you will.

Kristin: [laughs] It's called—this shirt is actually—the name of this shirt is called the hokey-pokey. You just put—[both laugh] you put your shoulder in—

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: You put your hip bone in and you shake it all about. Okay.

Jenny: Yep. Yes, correct. And Willow observes, "Check out the fan club," referring to this girl, who's dancing up on R.J. Xander says, "Daddy. Like."

Kristin: [simultaneously] Nope. Beeeeeeep! [both laugh]

Jenny: [laughing] Under the best of circumstances, I don't wanna hear this.

Kristin: Ooh, it's bad. It's bad, it's really bad. I have a literal—like, I—so I did my job how I'm supposed to do my job this week. So I, like, hand-wrote my notes and then I typed them. And so—I do my best job podcasting when that's my process [laughs] 'cause my brain needs a little, like, reminder of what I wrote down. And I not only put a frowny face in my handwritten notes, but I typed out the frowny—like, I was committed to this getting a full frowny face—

Jenny: [simultaneously] Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Kristin: No matter where it was written. Is my point.

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Kristin: Buffy! [laughs]

Jenny: Buffy—oh, no—foreshadowingly says, "Good thing Dawn isn't here to see what's going on." [laughs] Before immediately realizing, oh no, it's Dawn!

Kristin: Oh no. Xander is like, being very dramatic.

Jenny: [babbles in imitation of Xander]

Kristin: Gagging and whatever. Willow chimes in with a, "Right there with ya, buddy." Everybody was ogling Dawn and everybody is very upset about it. Dawn is—walks over, I guess? Like, it's not even—like, Buffy doesn't go over and, like, drag her off the dancefloor. She, like, comes over and Buffy's, you know, like, "Yo, we're fucking here." And then Buffy makes a comment that references sailors to Dawn, who—

Jenny: Yeah...

Kristin: Doesn't get it at all, because who would—she's literally like, [laughing] "What are you gonna do, take that outfit down to the docks later?" What is happening?

Jenny: "And wait for the fleet to come in." Yeah, it's interesting because Buffy says a lot of...mmm...I think what we would generally categorize as, like, very slut-shamey stuff in this scene.

Kristin: Yeah. She literally says “slut-bag hussy.” [laughs]

Jenny: [simultaneously] But she’s also—yeah, yeah, exactly. But she’s also, like, functioning as not just Dawn’s sister, but Dawn’s parent and guardian.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And, like, I don’t know. It’s at this, like, weird intersection where Dawn is a minor and is, like, growing up around very adult stuff, like demons and death.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: But hasn’t really had, like, a love life?

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: You know? And as we saw earlier with the outside the bathroom scene, Buffy just doesn’t have a nuanced approach to this in any way.

Kristin: Yeah. And I think, too—I mean, it is the year 2002. And I don’t think—

Jenny: Mm!

Kristin: Like, I think if it were 2022, like—that, like, Buffy would be able to, like, have the education—the cultural education from, like, media that was surrounding her at the time to empower Dawn a bit more. But in the year 2002, that was not as present for many of us. So, you know.

Jenny: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Kristin: Buffy says, “Anna Nicole Smith thinks you look tacky.” And I was like, ooh, I wonder if this was when the Anna Nicole Smith Show was on. And Jenny, it was. [Jenny gasps] It released on August 4th, 2002.

Jenny: I didn’t know that Anna Nicole Smith had a show.

Kristin: Oh my god! I watched it in real time. It was what put Anna Nicole Smith on the map for me. And I was reading a little bit of the Wiki about it. It was a reality show where they, like, created circumstances but didn’t script, you know, Anna Nicole and, like, everyone else. But I’m just gonna—if you don’t—if you’re not familiar with The Anna Nicole Smith Show, I’m gonna read what the Wikipedia says it is. Because I feel like it’s a—well, I’m just gonna read it to you. “The Anna Nicole

Smith Show follows the exploits of Anna Nicole Smith and her entourage. Much of the focus of the series was on the fact that Smith had gained weight after falling out of the public eye, no longer received regular modeling or acting work, and, at the time of the series' debut, was in a precarious financial state after lavish spending sprees and the battle against her stepson for her deceased husband's fortune. Story arcs included Smith's alleged period of unwilling celibacy, her struggle to cure her miniature poodle's habit of attempting intercourse with inanimate objects, her love-hate relationship with her toothless, redneck cousin, and her fashion feud with interior decorator Bobby Trendy." This is what I was watching. I was just—I loved Anna Nicole Smith. RIP, Anna Nicole Smith, who—yeah. Anna Nicole Smith died in 2007 of a drug overdose. And her stepson also died a few years later of a different drug overdose, but also of a drug overdose. And I just think—I think it's—I know that my brain knew that the—like, the premise was that this person was, like—had been a model and an actor, and now she had a reality show. But I don't think I, like, ever really internalized the fact that it was like, well, she got too—she got too fat to be a model anymore, or like, whatever.

Jenny: Hmm.

Kristin: Anna Nicole Smith sort of occupies a similar space in my brain as Jenny McCarthy did, back—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: In the MTV days. Just like, a really brash, beautiful blond woman. Like, and—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: And I loved Jenny McCarthy when she was in her Singled Out days and I loved Anna Nicole Smith. So I just delighted in the show. I can't—it's what Joanna and I would probably refer to as a dangerous banger, where you're like, "I know I loved this thing. But it might not hold up." [Jenny laughs] We didn't create the title. That actually comes from the Succession creator and—Kieran Culkin. But anyway. All that to say, Anna Nicole Smith, we all know who she is in 2002. If you didn't know by 2002, then you can follow the Kristin Russo train, and she had just debuted her Anna Nicole Smith Show.

Jenny: Whew. I didn't—I did not anticipate getting so much Anna Nicole info. But I'm happy.

Kristin: You're welcome. You're very, very welcome.

Jenny: Here's something interesting that I like. Dawn says, "I like the way R.J. makes me feel. And if you think that makes me a slut, or whatever, I don't care."

Kristin: Ahh. A new generation.

Jenny: How nice. Philosopher Dawn, back at it. [Kristin laughs] Challenging norms. Saying, "Slut shame me not!"

Kristin: Yeah. And Buffy's really—like, really goes low in this, like, last little argument bit, where Dawn's like, "It's my life and I'm gonna do what I want. What are you, Mom now?" And Buffy says, "No and I'm glad she can't see you like this." What the fuck, Buffy?!

Jenny: Dude.

Kristin: Buffy's like, "No more dancefloor for you, you're fucking outta here." I was actually absolutely shocked that Dawn listened? Like, I just thought that Dawn was gonna be like, "You can literally go fuck yourself" and go back to the dancefloor with R.J. But she leaves—

Jenny: I can't believe she leaves without saying anything to R.J.

Kristin: I know!

Jenny: Shocking.

Kristin: But it gives us a great moment with Lori, out in the alley.

Jenny: Oh my god, Lori!

Kristin: [laughing] And just in case you thought the slut shaming was done, Lori's first line is, "I know what you're doing, slut." Okay. Okay, Lori.

Jenny: Oh my god, and they fight! And they fight. And Buffy breaks it up.

Kristin: Oh my god—

Jenny: And is like, ahhhh! [laughs]

Kristin: Because I love Lori—you know what’s really funny is last week—if you’re an Angel On Top listener, you’ll know about last week’s episode of [laughs] Angel On Top. They just, like, have a whole thing with a Lori there that’s also, like, a one-and-done Lori. It’s like, just a really big moment for the Loris of the Buffyverse. [Jenny laughs] But this Lori—I’m gonna give her a sound clip because I love the way she delivers this line. So please, let us listen to Lori.

[Clip from episode plays]

Lori: I’ll never let you have him, bitch! [thud noise]

Jenny: She kicks. Buffy. In the shin. Shin-kicking was my primary mode of defense, in elementary school.

Kristin: Really?!

Jenny: Yes?

Kristin: Wow, you kicked people in the shins?

Jenny: As a method of defense, and also...if a boy was cute.

Kristin: You kicked him in the shins?

Jenny: Yeah!

Kristin: Wow! I can’t believe that I never knew this about you.

Jenny: Yep, yep, yep. I’m not proud of it, I’m not proud of my shin-kicking—my dark shin-kicking past.

Kristin: Did it work? Did you ever date a boy whose shins you kicked?

Jenny: No! [Kristin laughs] What are you, kidding? [laughing] I kicked them in the shins! They were like, leave me alone, please.

Kristin: Do you think that the earlier music cue of The Shins was foreshadowing for this—

Jenny: Wow! [laughs]

Kristin: I just realized we were saying “the shins” so many times, and I was like, wait a—

Jenny: Yeah, yeah. Yes.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Wait just a gosh-darn minute.

Jenny: This is a music cue of Yellowjackets-ian proportions.

Kristin: [laughing] Yeah. Jenny, if you didn’t—you know, we haven’t really talked about Yellowjackets in proper pod. So if you don’t know, Jenny and I just completed what was probably the most intense television viewing experience—I don’t even—I—of my life. Alongside you, I’ve never seen you go deeper in a television show spiral than you did for Yellowjackets.

Jenny: Yeah, I was going nuts!

Kristin: Nuts. I mean, just absolutely—

Jenny: [simultaneously] Going *nuts*.

Kristin: It was really delightful. So my brain is still set to that, which is how I got to that shins on shins—[laughs] I’m just—

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: The yarn is still on my wall, I haven’t taken it all down yet, so.

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah.

Kristin: Anyway.

Jenny: Anyway.

Kristin: Oh, no. We’ve delayed—[laughing] we’ve backpedaled all we could to stay away from the next scene, but we’re here.

Jenny: Oh, no!

Kristin: Oh, no. I literally—I wrote what could almost be considered a poem. Because it’s four stanzas that are, like, divided with “oh nos.” Just like, building “oh nos” in this scene. But...we haven’t gotten there yet. Let’s set up the scene. We’re

in Principal—R.J.’s leaving Principal Wood’s office, is walking by Counselor Summers’ cubicle. And, um, you know, Buffy’s like, “Sit down. You haven’t gotten outta here yet, sir.” She refers to him as “Mr. Wizard.”

Jenny: [laughs] So weird.

Kristin: So weird! And then, she’s basically, like, about to admonish R.J. for last night at the Bronze. And R.J. says, “You saw how hot she looked.” Okay.

Jenny: Ahhh!

Kristin: Don’t—let’s not—

Jenny: Not an acceptable argument in the court of...her sister, sir!

Kristin: [laughs] Yes. Agree. And as he’s saying this, he’s putting on the jacket. Now, a question—a larger question that I have is, does R.J. have any idea what this jacket does? No, right? Like, they don’t know what the jacket does? Because the brother would have—Lance, who we haven’t met yet—but like, Lance woulda never given up the jacket if he knew that the jacket was the key to his success. Right? He would have not—

Jenny: Right?

Kristin: Given it to fuckin’—

Jenny: Just been wearing that to, like, board meetings for the rest of his life.

Kristin: [laughs] Totally.

Jenny: Go Razorbacks.

Kristin: [laughs] So this is where my poem begins. It’s—

Jenny: Yes! A poem!

Kristin: It’s not—it’s not an erotic novel. It’s actually an anti-erotic novel. But I’m just gonna read what I wrote. And then we can discuss. I wrote: “Oh no. Must be under a lot of pressure. I didn’t mean to hurt anyone. Oh no. You run a lot. They work you pretty hard. Oh no. I’m basically the same age as you. I’m just like you, but with the sexual experience and all. Oh no.”

Jenny: Aghhhhh!

Kristin: “Magic R.J. song plays again.” [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah, thank god they get interrupted in the middle of this.

Kristin: [sings R.J.’s theme]

Jenny: [exhales] [groans] Also, right before Buffy starts grilling him, there’s a lot of conversation about Wood “riding” R.J. Which recurs later in the episode—

Kristin: Mm!

Jenny: There’s a lot of talk about—

Kristin: Wood riding R.J.?

Jenny: And I just...[laughs]

Kristin: Yeah, that’s a lot to handle. Okay. Something positive I would like to say about this scene is that Sarah Michelle Gellar is fucking incredible.

Jenny: Oh, yeah! She’s so good.

Kristin: She is just—she’s, like, putting on her Cruel Intentions cap for this scene.

Jenny: Ha!

Kristin: Right? Like, this is some, like, Cruel Intentions—

Jenny: Dude—

Kristin: Sarah delivery of these lines. Especially, “they work you pretty hard.” That just, like, to me, was like, you could take that right outta Cruel Intentions. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah. Also, “I just realized I’m basically the same age as you. [Kristin laughs] Like. I’m not even older, actually. We’re basically the same.” [laughs]

Kristin: It’s so good! And she’s just like—to deliver lines like this in a way where they can read as both seducing the character and also hilarious to the viewer is a very special skill. Like, you’re doing—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Two things at one time and she does it fucking perfectly. So—

Jenny: It's very nice.

Kristin: There's me giving a positive spin to this scene that otherwise makes me kind of feel like Xander in the Bronze earlier. I'm just like—[shudders] stop it. [laughs]

Jenny: Smashing the unsubscribe button.

Kristin: Yeah, yeah.

Jenny: Of this scene.

Kristin: Oh god.

Jenny: Oh, no! Back at the Summers house...subterfuge is afoot!

Kristin: [laughs] Dawn—Dawn's like, "Ambush!" [laughs] as she walks in the door. Buffy—[groans]

Jenny: Buffy's like, "I talked to R.J. All you need to do is just, like, back off and let him come to you." Agghhh!!

Kristin: Wow. What a bitch! We're back at Melrose Place. [laughs]

Jenny: I know!

Kristin: "I think he likes you, but he said you come on a little strong. Maybe you should just lay back a little." Fucking fast forward to the next day at school where Buffy has literally put on a, like, fucking porno school teacher outfit. She's wearing, like, a silk black...ruched shirt. [laughs] And a, like—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Gray checkered skirt with, like, a couple of—

Jenny: Well, it has, like, a—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Buckles?

Jenny: [simultaneously] Like, a—adult, sexy, porn, schoolgirl thing to it.

Kristin: Right. Right.

Jenny: Right?

Kristin: Like, 100%. It just looks—it looks like the outfit you would—like, if you're—in my imag—when I imagine—

Jenny: [laughs] [simultaneously] She's like, "I'm just like you, but with sexual experience." That's the outfit.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Right, right. How do I—[both laugh] Yeah, I mean, this is just, like, what I imagine, like—if you're a straight woman and your husband is like, "I would love to roleplay. Can you be a sexy schoolgirl?" This is the outfit you're gonna put on. Like, this is what you—

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: This is what you're gonna put together. In my imagining of what it's like to be a straight person with a husband who would say that.

Jenny: Right. Right.

Kristin: [laughs] So...Buffy's like, "The principal needs to see you" or whatever the fuck she says.

Jenny: Yeah, we need to see R.J. Brooks down at the guidance office, if you know what I mean.

Kristin: Yeah. She's—[Jenny groans] like, Dawn's research was, like, googling what a quarterback is. And Buffy's research was just, like, watching porn all night long. [both laugh]

Jenny: She takes him into a classroom. And he's like, "There's nobody here." And Buffy says, "One of you. One of me. You were the one in math class. Tell me what that adds up to."

Kristin: Wow! What the sound cue should have been was the Spice Girls "When 2 Become 1."

["2 Become 1" by Spice Girls starts playing]
Come a little bit closer, baby
Get it on, get it on
'Cause tonight is the night
When two become one

Kristin: But it is not, it is...[singing] "Born inside." Coldplay?! What is happening on this television show?

Jenny: Just a—not a very...I just wanna say that this Coldplay song is not a sexy cue, to me.

Kristin: No. I agree.

Jenny: It's a mournful—I guess it's, like, Dawn's thing? I don't know, I just feel like they could have found something—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Oh. Right.

Jenny: That was a little more—

Kristin: Yeah, the Spice Girls, When 2 Become 1. [both laugh]

Jenny: Buffy says, "I've always been—"

Kristin: [simultaneously] Just do it, somebody give me the scene with fucking 2 Become 1 over the top of it. Please. Let's see if it fits. [both laugh]

Jenny: Buffy says, "I've always been fascinated by football." Caring about football for the very first time ever in all of her life.

Kristin: Oh, god. "You're like a teacher." "Does it bother you?" Like, porn.

Jenny: Aghhhh!

Kristin: We just watched porn all night long.

Jenny: I need to put Listerine in—into my eyes, after I watched this scene.

Kristin: Literally. One of my favorite parts about hosting a podcast with Jenny is that, like, anything happens and she's yelling about 1080P HD. But like, an actual

porn is happening, and she's pouring Listerine in her eyes. You know what I mean? Like, that's—

Jenny: [laughs] Yeah. Yeah!

Kristin: That's the cohost I appreciate. So—

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Dawn is walking down—

Jenny: Also, he's talking again about Wood riding him. [both laugh] I'm sorry—

Kristin: Jenny—

Jenny: It's just a recurring theme that I feel like needs to be addressed.

Kristin: [simultaneously] Copious notes. Copious notes. I missed all of that, somehow. [both laugh] So Dawn's walking down the hallway and—

Jenny: Ugh. Oh, no.

Kristin: You know, Jenny, you've pointed out a few times that the new Sunnydale High School is pretty lax. There have just been adult women walking about, meandering in the hallways. Now we have, like, a student and a counselor, just fully grinding each other on a desk, with nothing covering the window. Dawn looks through the window in the door and is like, what the fuck? She sees them, she runs, sits outside. Xander—cue Xander's construction boots as his, like—[Jenny laughs] like, to answer your, like, "Xander's here?" Yes, he's a construction worker, remember? It's all in that one shot of his construction boots for you.

Jenny: Yeah. Yes, look at his hardhat.

Kristin: Yeah. "Is this about the guy in the jacket?" he says to Dawn, who says, "I don't wanna hear his name!" [laughs] And Xander's like, "I said the guy in the jacket." She's like, "That's what I call him in my head sometimes." [sighs]

Jenny: [laughs] And then she says she doesn't ever wanna see Buffy again. So Xander goes on the hunt and—ughhh! [babbles]

Kristin: Yes.

Jenny: Walks in on Buffy astride R.J.

Kristin: Is that what astride means? Straddling?

Jenny: Let's have a look, shall we?

Kristin: Please.

Jenny: Astride. With a leg on each side of.

Kristin: Okay. I always imagined it to be next to. Like, it just—to my brain, it sounds like you're next to something, you're astride of something.

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: So I'm just so happy to know that that is not what that means. You know, that could really get me into quite a pickle, you know, down the line, so.

Jenny: [laughs] Uh-huh.

Kristin: Happy to know it. Yeah, they're just sort of like, I don't know. What are they doing? They're just humping each other on the desk. [Jenny laughs] They have all their clothes on.

Jenny: I am sorry to say, but I believe that's what's going on, yes.

Kristin: I think they're just humping, yeah. Okay. And my note—my first note is, "dear god in heaven, help us," with each first letter capitalized, 'cause I have a lot of feelings.

Jenny: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Kristin: R.J.'s like, "You should try knocking, man." Um, sir.

Jenny: Uh...

Kristin: You're in a—you're—okay. [laughs]

Jenny: Sir?

Kristin: This is where Xander calls R.J. "chowder-head." And—

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: You know, they break this up, thank god! Because it could have gone further, and it didn't. We just—we stopped at—

Jenny: Bleghhh!

Kristin: Humping. We draw the line at humping. [laughing] Okay?

Jenny: Yes, we do. On this podcast, we—well. We'd like to draw the line a little earlier, to be frank, but. [Kristin laughs] Back at the Summers house, Buffy helpfully tells Dawn, "Your crying isn't gonna make his love for me go away." [laughs]

Kristin: They're all privy at this point. They get back to the Summers house and Anya, Willow and Xander are all there. And they're like, "We've seen this before. We know what it is. There's a fucking love spell." Anya's like, "Soon neither of you will be in love." And Buffy and Dawn are like—

Jenny: In unison.

Kristin: Like, *glaring* at Anya. Buffy's like, "He's not a boy!" and Dawn's like, "What do you know about our love?!"

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah.

Kristin: Amazing comic acting from Sarah and Michelle, I think, in this scene.

Jenny: Ohh, Buffy referring to R.J. as her "lover." He-e-elp! [Kristin laughs] Xander has a little flashback to happier times when he was the object of the fervor of women under a love spell.

Kristin: I spent that entire time you were talking trying to think about what the line was from *The L Word*, which is, "I'm...I'm Dawn and this is my lover, Cindy"? It's "my lover, Cindy," right?

Jenny: Yeah. Dawn Denbo and her lover, Cindy, unfortunately.

Kristin: [simultaneously] And her lover, Cindy. So it would actually really work quite well for Dawn. "I'm Dawn and this is my lover, R.J."

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: You know.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Sorry. I just—like, I was paying no attention to what you were saying. I was just falling down an L Word hole.

Jenny: [whispers] Okay. [laughs] Good, good.

Kristin: So—so—

Jenny: What I was saying was—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: Xander has a little flashback to happier times when he was the object of the fervor of women under a love spell, at Sunnydale High.

Kristin: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Anya refers to Dawn and Buffy as “crazy little lust puppies.” [laughs]

Jenny: Well.

Kristin: And we learn—Xander’s the one who clocks it, I think, that, “Oh, well, this guy has an older brother.” This is when we meet Lance. So they go on a detective mission, [Jenny laughs] to Lance’s house—

Jenny: Well, it’s the only way to be safe. [Kristin laughs] But also, you’ve left the women unattended.

Kristin: [simultaneously] But also, Willow—like, it’s like, how do we know boys are safe? From the—

Jenny: Mmm.

Kristin: I don’t believe that that’s a—

Jenny: Mmm!

Kristin: Safe assessment, you know? Detective Xander and Spike go over to Lance’s. Lance is now *not* the hottest guy in school. He is a pizza delivery boy. He

still lives at home. I have to say, I actually really love Lance's pizza delivery outfit. [laughing] I think it's pretty awesome.

Jenny: Yeah. Good outfit. [groans] He's living at home, though, is—[makes uncertain noise] while sometimes necessary, not always fun.

Kristin: Yeah, I mean, it's just like, the most hamfisted way in 2002 of saying, like, you were hot now, but you're not hot—you...you were hot then but you're not hot now. You know?

Jenny: Right, right.

Kristin: Like, you now deliver pizza and live at home is just, like, the—yeah. Those are the two buttons that you hit to make that easily readable in 2002, for better or for worse. [both laugh]

Jenny: Lance tells Xander and Spike that one time he found poetry under R.J.'s bed and it turned out R.J. wrote it. Time to go to R.J. dot com. [Kristin laughs] Or...what was Cassie's website?

Kristin: I don't—1-800-1-Cassie is all I remember. [both laugh]

Jenny: Oh, yeah. Time to go to 1-800-1-R.J. dot com. [Kristin laughs] Or geocities dot com slash 1-800-1-R.J. [laughs]

Kristin: Yeah. This is kinda sad, 'cause it's like—you know, you learn that, like, Lance was really concerned about his younger brother, who was, like, sensitive and writing poetry, until he—

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: Quote, "blossomed." Meaning, like, he became a football player and, like, left all of those fanciful ideas behind.

Jenny: I have to call, like, a little bit—like, half bullshit on Spike being like, "You're wearing your brother's jacket." I don't believe that Spike doesn't know what a letterman jacket is. He spends a lot of time among high schoolers—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: And knows that a good percentage of them have the same exact jacket as each other.

Kristin: Totally. Totally. But you know, Jenny, there's only, like, fucking ten minutes left in the episode, so we gotta get there, we gotta go—

Jenny: [simultaneously] I know. We gotta move it along. [laughs]

Kristin: We gotta do a whole four-square inset scene, like we're in a fucking—[Jenny laughs] Death Proof over here.

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Fucking Ocean's 11. [Kristin laughs] Sunnydale edition.

Kristin: I just—I'm sure you noticed this, but there's a small moment that Spike takes during this interrogation and investigation to turn around some of the ceramic angels that are Lance's house. [both laugh]

Jenny: Wow, I totally missed that. He's—

Kristin: [laughing] He's, like, turning them to face the wall. [both laugh] It's, like, so quick but it tickled me.

Jenny: Wow.

Kristin: So they basically put it together real quick. When Spike says, "That's your jacket," then Lance is like, "Yeah, it was my jacket. I gave it to R.J. and my dad gave it to me. And you know, it's been in the family a long time." And Xander's like, "Gotta go! Like, we know this math. We know how to defeat this demon, this spell." And Lance is like, "Wait, wait—" and this is another—like, the words—and I think it's just, like, because it's written as, like, pretty much a comedy script. Like, that's the only way that I can sort, like, why the dialogue is written the way that it is. 'Cause Lance says, "I've got a rumpus room." [Jenny laughs] Who the fuck says rumpus room? He wants the boys to stay and hang out and be friends with him. [laughing] And his mom from upstairs is like, "I have snacks! Does anybody want a little box of raisins?" [laughs]

Jenny: Oh my god, the saddest of all snacks. Even though—

Kristin: You know, except I loved them. I still love them.

Jenny: They're delicious and I love raisins in a box, of course. But from just, like, a vibe check place?

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: They are a sad snack.

Kristin: They are a sad snack. Did you ever use your tiny box of raisins, after emptied, as a whistle? Do you know that trick? That was, like, a big thing in my school.

Jenny: I have no idea.

Kristin: If you empty—like, they have to be the little kind, if you're listening and you're about to try this at home. Has to be the little kind and you have the top of it open and the bottom of it closed. And if you blow air through it, just the right way, the, like, base of the box opens just enough to make a very high pitched whistle. So.

Jenny: Sounds delightful.

Kristin: You're all welcome. Anyway. Let's hear what—let's hear what Willow and Anya are up to at the dining room table at the Summers house.

Jenny: Please.

[Clip from episode plays]

Willow: Damn love spell. I have tried every anti-love spell spell I can find.

Anya: Even if you found the right one, the guy would probably just do an anti-anti-love spell spell...spell.

Willow: What?

[doorbell rings]

Kristin: Just a fucking little comedy duo here. Just...you know...

Jenny: Yeah, yeah. Little spell-ducken.

Kristin: Yeah. And then the doorbell rings, and uh-oh! It's R.J.!

Jenny: Oh no!

Kristin: "Buffy's not here, go away. No Buffy for you, go away." The women are trying very hard. [laughs]

Jenny: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Kristin: Doesn't—

Jenny: But uh-oh, then he walks away.

Kristin: [sings R.J. theme] What a GIF. [Jenny exhales] You know that Kristin Russo is gonna fucking post this GIF to social media immediately. [Jenny laughs] Because Anya and Willow are framed in the doorway and their heads time perfectly to tilt, sort of like a—like if you said, "You wanna go for a walk?" to your dog, you know?

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Like, that like, slow, like, mmmm?

Jenny: Yeah, yeah.

Kristin: Except they are not excited to go for a walk. They are excited to both stare at R.J.'s ass as he leaves.

Jenny: Do you wanna...make out with a quarterback? [Kristin laughs] Do you wanna...? [laughs]

Kristin: I love them. A good moment to also give a major shout out to Anya's outfit. She's not in her bank robber outfit yet, which I also love, and I also find—

Jenny: [quietly] Oh my god.

Kristin: Extremely hot. But she's in, like, a fucking white t-shirt with a black vest. Speaking of The L Word, she could fit right in.

Jenny: Oh, yeah. Yes.

Kristin: Fit right fucking in over there with the ladies in Los Angeles.

Jenny: She'd love a latte at The Planet.

Kristin: [laughing] Yes. So now Anya and Willow are arguing. Right? And now—

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: All the girls are in on it. We're all fighting.

Jenny: Oh no!

Kristin: We're all fighting. "I saw his soul." "Not unless his soul is in his ass." Well. Maybe it is. We have a lot to learn—

Jenny: Could be!

Kristin: About souls, you know?

Jenny: Yeah, as touched on earlier in the episode. [laughs]

Kristin: [laughing] Anya says, "A.J. is my dearest darling." [Jenny laughs] And Willow's like, "It's fucking R.J.!" [both laugh] Buffy and Dawn come downstairs and Buffy's like, "Willow, you're a gay woman." Beat. "And he isn't." Willow—bisexuality just simply does not exist—it's just—it doesn't exist in this—

Jenny: It can't be conceived of!

Kristin: Absolutely not. It's one or the other. [laughing] Willow is like, "This isn't about physical presence. This is about his heart." And then she also twists that argument and then posits that she actually loves R.J. the most, because—

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: She's straight again. [laughing]

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: That's how much she loves R.J.

Jenny: Uh-huh. [laughs]

Kristin: This is why I don't think the boys were ever safe. You know? Gender—

Jenny: Uh-huh, yeah, yeah.

Kristin: Gender is not a part of this magical jacket's equation.

Jenny: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Anya asserts in response that actually she loves him the most, because she would kill for him.

Kristin: And then Buffy says that she'd kill the *principal* for him. [Jenny laughs] She makes it specific. [laughs]

Jenny: Oh, dear.

Kristin: And Willow's like, "I'll do magic!" Everybody has their fucking skillset. And—

Jenny: Yeah. Buffy's gonna kill Principal Wood, Willow's gonna do a little spell to make R.J. a woman. [laughs] Anya doesn't say exactly what she's gonna do, but she's looking ready to burgle. [Kristin laughs] And Buffy says to Dawn, you know, sorry, you're never gonna get him.

Kristin: Ohhh.

Jenny: 'Cause you don't have a specialized skill. Au contraire!

Kristin: Yeah, she's really good at tying herself to the train tracks, [laughs] so...

Jenny: Yes.

Kristin: Yeah. Anya actually is the one who gives Willow the idea to turn R.J. into a girl, and immediately regrets it. "What are you gonna do, make him a girl? Damnit!" [laughs]

Jenny: But honestly, if that did happen, it wouldn't preclude Anya from getting involved, based on what we've seen. [laughs]

Kristin: No. I mean, I'm—like, I am rooting most for the Willow/Anya/R.J. throuple. Like, out of all the pairings, that's the one I'm going hardest for. [Jenny laughs] So I don't care what R.J.'s gender is in their throupling. But you're right, Anya—Anya doesn't care either way.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Got two bisexual ladies here, even though the show—

Jenny: That's right.

Kristin: Refuses to understand that that is possible. Okay, this is where we get our squares. I don't know why—like, I haven't seen a lot of—like, I haven't seen James Bond, but I imagine that this is sort of, like, of a James Bond editing sequence? Is that right?

Jenny: Yeah, it feels very, like, heist movie.

Kristin: The only one that came to my mind was Death Proof. [laughs] Like, that's—that was my reference point. But same thing. It's just like...it's very fun.

Jenny: Yeah. So what do we see in each of these four screens?

Kristin: We've got Willow, doing a spell. And that screen pulls first, so now we've got just one in the corner. Then we have Buffy, *screeeeech*! In her car, second square. [Jenny laughs] Then we have Anya, whew! Looking hot in a fucking bank robber outfit.

Jenny: Uh-huh.

Kristin: Third square.

Jenny: Burgling!

Kristin: And the squares keep moving, you know, they're not frozen. So while we're getting new squares, Buffy has left the car and now has a fucking bazooka. [laughing] And she's, like, running towards the school with the bazooka.

Jenny: Mmhmm!

Kristin: And that's when we get our fourth square. Which is Dawn, on the train tracks.

Jenny: [groaning] Oh, Dawn, no!

Kristin: Hecate is so fucking over Willow Rosenberg. Hecate is like, "Girl, you fucking—"

Jenny: I was gonna say, why is it always Hecate?

Kristin: I don't—I don't know—

Jenny: Is there no one else?

Kristin: I think Hecate would like to know why it's always Hecate. 'Cause she's fucking tired. She's like, "Call on somebody else." [laughs]

Jenny: Thankfully, Xander interrupts just in time. Just in time! Willow's like, "Ugh! Now I have to start my spell for R.J. all over again." And Xander's like, "R.J.'s a guy." And Willow's like, "He doesn't have to—he simply doesn't have to be."

Kristin: Yeah, yeah. [laughs] They stop Willow's spell by, like, covering her mouth, which is also really fucking funny.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Like, there's just a lot of little comedic beats that work for me. Buffy is—now we're zoomed in on Buffy. She's outside Principal Wood's office. Principal Wood is listening to a CD in the most 2002 CD player that has ever existed on the face of planet Earth.

Jenny: Yes. Also, the music that is playing is, like, very...mature. [Kristin laughs] I would expect something a little hipper from Principal Wood, but he's listening to some instrumental music that is, like, very fit for an elevator.

Kristin: Oh, yeah, he is. And in case you didn't rewatch it, the CD player is, like, clear. And—

Jenny: Oh yeah, and kind of, like—the CD is, like, vertical?

Kristin: Vertical, right. So it's not laying flat, it's standing up and it's clear so you can see the, like, blue disc spinning in the side of the—[laughs]

Jenny: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Very hip.

Kristin: Oh, boy.

Jenny: What does Buffy need to kill a principal? A bazooka. She needs a whole bazooka.

Kristin: Yeah, where did she even get this fucking bazooka from? They just keep one in the basement? Like, what?

Jenny: Yeah, is it left over from the Judge in Season 2?

Kristin: That's the last time I remember seeing a bazooka on this show.

Jenny: Same!

Kristin: Willow, they've somehow convinced to do her locator spell again, but this time she's doing it for humans. I don't know how they convinced her, 'cause she's still under the thrall of R.J.

Jenny: Well. She still...cares about her friends. And they're like—

Kristin: Yeah, I guess it doesn't cancel out.

Jenny: I think they're framing it as, like, "Dawn is in danger."

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: "We need to find her."

Kristin: Right. So...Jenny. I don't—I only watched this episode one time. And maybe I missed something. But they get Buffy. [laughing] There's this hilarious fucking—you know, you can only hear Principal Wood's music playing. And outside, you just see, like, Buffy with the bazooka. And then you see, like, Xander and Spike tackle her, but you can't hear any of it, and it's very hilarious. And they save Principal Wood—

Jenny: [laughs] Yep.

Kristin: And get Buffy and now they go to Dawn. And they find Dawn and she's on the train tracks. And this is where I have the question of: what happens here? It's like, Buffy is running alongside the train, then she jumps on the train, and then when she jumps off the train, she's ahead of the train. I'm like, were there two trains and I didn't do the math right?

Jenny: Yeah, there were two trains—

Kristin: There's *two* trains.

Jenny: Going towards each other.

Kristin: Okay.

Jenny: Buffy gets on one. If Buffy [Kristin laughs] runs alongside a train—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Traveling—

Jenny: Traveling south at 35 miles per hour. [both laugh]

[HELLMATH jingle plays]
Hellmath!

Jenny: Yeah, she rides that train over to Dawn in time to pick her up and get her off the tracks, for the train that's oncoming. Also, when they're like, oh look, it's Dawn. And they all look over at her, it could be Michelle Trachtenberg, and it could be a stunt double, but it looks an awful lot to me like that dummy that played Cordelia in that one convertible scene in Angel?

Kristin: Oh my god. Remember the dummy that Buffy carried when she was running with Dawn? Maybe it's that. [both laugh] Truly one of my favorite moments. Like, I can picture it so vividly, like I'm watching it right now, when I imagine that fucking Dawn dummy. I love—I love that Buffy says, "You're gonna get R.J. by being trisected?" That's nice. That's a nice touch, 'cause it is. It would be tri—you would be in three pieces if a train ran over you.

Jenny: Yep. Yeah.

Kristin: That's a nice little detail.

Jenny: Nicely done.

Kristin: Yeah. Here's our favorite line, isn't it, Jenny? Our favorite line of the whole episode, right now?

Jenny: Oh my god. Dawn says—

Kristin: [snorts] So Dawn's rescued. Buffy rescues Dawn, she gets her off the train tracks.

Jenny: [laughs] Oh, yeah.

Kristin: She's safe, she's fine. [laughs]

Jenny: Sorry. Who cares—

Kristin: [simultaneously] Don't worry.

Jenny: Compared to what I'm about to tell you? [both laugh] She says to Buffy, "You're older and hotter. And have sex that's rough [Kristin laughs] and kill people." Dawn. Good listeners. What?! How does Dawn—what? [Kristin laughs] Has Dawn been watching Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Season 6? [both laugh] How does she know?

Kristin: She's just watching Monty Python—

Jenny: [simultaneously] What has she heard?

Kristin: And Buffy Season 6.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: That's her rotation upstairs. I mean, it truly is—like, how—? It's, A, how—like, A, how does she know that they fucked the house down or whatever she knows. And B, like, how—how is this a sentence? Like, how—does—I—when I watch this in preproduction, I screamed, paused it and took a photo and tweeted it. And when I just watched it today, I screamed, paused it, and took another photo to post again. 'Cause I fucking can't deal with it.

Jenny: It just...it *just*. It just!

Kristin: [sighs] Anyway. Buffy's like, "Why would you do this?" and fucking Dawn is like, "Have you ever fucking read a tragedy? He'd know forever that I died because of my love for him!"

Jenny: No.

Kristin: Oh, Dawnie.

Jenny: Buffy is freaked out. She's like, "I'd give him to you in a second, if I could. That's how much you're scaring me." Aww!

Kristin: [simultaneously] Aww. Lucky for us—

Jenny: Given the circumstances, wow, that seems very powerful.

Kristin: [laughing] Lucky for us, the boys—the boys are completing their mission. "Now, you understand the plan, right?" The plan is literally just to—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Take the jacket off of R.J.

Jenny: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Kristin: And so they do that. They get the jacket, they take it back to the Summers' fireplace.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: So many spells have happened there. Last we were inside the fireplace, it was Tabula Rasa, I believe. [laughs]

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: And they burn the jacket, thereby ending this particular love spell.

Jenny: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Kristin: What do you think was in the jack—like, what—was it—do you think, like, Amy's mom, like—where did this—[laughs] how did—what? [laughs] You know what I mean?

Jenny: Hmmm.

Kristin: Did Amy's mom get—like, was this Amy's mom's boyfriend—high school boyfriend's jacket? Do you think Amy's mom dated Lance and R.J.'s dad when they were in high school? And she enchanted his jacket so that, like, all the girls would love her boyfriend, but she would get him?

Jenny: No, because I feel like, why would she create all that competition for herself?

Kristin: Well, I mean, any good lady likes a competition.

Jenny: I don't know, it sounds exhausting.

Kristin: It was supposed to be a joke, but thank you for thinking that I am—[Jenny laughs] that I am somebody who would very seriously be like, "Every good lady loves a competition!" [both laugh] Well, I like my theory. Anyhow. They're

like—somebody says to Xander, like, “I can’t believe you didn’t think to put this on.” Right? And Xander’s like—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: “Well, it didn’t fit.”

Jenny: [laughs] Xander!

Kristin: We haven’t played the Patriarchy jingle yet, so there we go. Why don’t we just play it right there for our man, Xander?

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

Kristin: Dawn is like, “I feel so stupid over a spell.” And everybody’s like, “Small child, wait until it’s not over a spell.” They’re just so infantilizing with Dawn. And like, I have room for it with Anya, just ‘cause it’s hysterical and it seems like their dynamic. But past Anya, I’m like, can everyone stop?

Jenny: This doesn’t feel infantilizing to me.

Kristin: Really?

Jenny: This feels just like—no, this feels, like, relational. It feels like Buffy’s like, “Huh, if you think this is bad, just like, wait until there’s not a spell. Like, wait until you, like, ride the real loop-the-loop. You’re gonna be all fucked up.”

Kristin: Right. I guess—maybe I’m just like, because of how Buffy talked to her about her feelings before, it’s just—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: I feel if I were Dawn, I would, like, not necessarily feel great about the—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: “I’m the only one who hasn’t been in love in the room” fucking deal. So. [laughs] Anya—everybody reveals—like, you know, we know what everybody was doing. But nobody knows what Anya was doing, and Anya, covering up her tracks, is like, “I wrote an epic love poem. There was a daisy and a tower and a lake.”

[both laugh] And then over the radio, we hear that a masked thief has burgled, uhh—

Jenny: Oh, yeah.

Kristin: The Sunnydale bank. Which means, guess what? You know what, everybody got their fucking episode and Anya got a bag full of fucking cash, and she gets to keep it.

Jenny: Her favorite.

Kristin: She deserves it. She's been through a lot lately, you know?

Jenny: Congrats, Anya.

Kristin: Yes. Congratulations, Anya. You took the situation and you made it your own.

Jenny: [laughs] Speaking of making things one's own...I think it's time...for us to embark—

Kristin: Mmm.

Jenny: On our most sacred of quests, this installation of the Sexual Tension Awards.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Jenny: Well! There are so many noms ping-ponging around, like the lotto on the nightly news.

Kristin: Mmm. Mmhmm.

Jenny: Ping pong, ping pong. But there's so many balls.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: AKA noms.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: But only four slots, AKA, places that a ping pong ball could land.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: Rendering tonight's winning numbers. Alright?

Kristin: Mm. Mmhmm. So you're just gonna reach your hand into that ball pit and pick out the—

Jenny: That teeming mass of flying balls. [laughs]

Kristin: You know who probably would help you with those balls, is Riley Finn. See, ask—ask—

Jenny: He loves them!

Kristin: And his hands are so big.

Jenny: Oh my god, so big, he could hold so many ping pong balls in his hand at one time. [Kristin laughs] I am very confident. So. You know, we've got some new faces, we've got some familiar pairings. Namely upfront, in slot number one. They were roommates and they're roommates again! It's Xander and Spike! Close quarters!

Kristin: [simultaneously] [singing] Detective Xander and Spike!

Jenny: Heat builds in close quarters, as I always say.

Kristin: Oh, no. Pick up your wet towels, Spike.

Jenny: Yeah. [laughs] In slot number two, we need to widen slot number two to have—to throuple with.

Kristin: [laughs] Yeah.

Jenny: Because it's an R.J. sandwich on Anya and Willow bread.

Kristin: Hot. I would like—

Jenny: They just seem like—

Kristin: A bite of that sandwich.

Jenny: The whole—yeah.

Kristin: Mmhmm. It's good.

Jenny: In slot number three, a woman after my own heart, unafraid to kick shins in the name of love! [Kristin laughs] It's Lori and R.J.

Kristin: I really—and now that I know she's Clementine, I like it even more.

Jenny: I know! Let Clementine be happy.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: And in slot number four, so rarely does she get to participate in these awards. [Kristin laughs] But she really made a serious strong play—

Kristin: Yeah.

Jenny: For a win.

Kristin: Mmhmm.

Jenny: At the Bronze. It's Dawn and R.J.!

Kristin: You know, I mean, you give it to the Bronze. That was definitely the most overtly sexy moment they had. But I wanna say, I think that for me, the nom really comes into play in that first scene where R.J. squirts the water all over his face. I feel like—

Jenny: Oh my word.

Kristin: It's a good moment for those two, you know?

Jenny: You're not wrong.

Kristin: Thank you.

Jenny: So! Those are our official noms. Please tell us which set of noms shall reign supreme, one slot to rule them all. Vote in our Sexual Tension Awards poll, which you will find on our Twitter, @BufferingCast, for one week's time after today.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]
Sexual tension award!

Jenny: Well. Of all the retreads of the episode Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered I've ever seen—

Kristin: Mmhmm?

Jenny: This is my favorite.

Kristin: It's real fun.

Jenny: I like this a lot more, I think, than Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered. Because...I don't know. I feel like we just, like, we got a lot more out of the—those infected?

Kristin: Yeah, I guess the focus more—in Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered, the focus is really on, like, the safety of Xander. Like, it's like, Xander is in peril. So it's more, like, following him than it is following—

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Them.

Jenny: Although Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered gave us the Buffy in a silk black robe in the library.

Kristin: [laughs] That's right!

Jenny: Which was...epic.

Kristin: Plus it was back when we had Cordelia on our side of the feud line, so.

Jenny: Mmhmm, mmhmm, mmhmm.

Kristin: I'll always appreciate it for that. But yeah, I was thinking, like, you know, I don't know—we are not the Morgan and LaToya of the universe. We don't have as much experience on television writing as they do, but it's like, an episode like this really can only happen when you have the space to, like, have a fun episode. Because not a ton moves in this episode, right? It's like—

Jenny: Nothing, basically, moves.

Kristin: Nothing—right. Spike comes out of the basement.

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Like, that's what happens. That's—and I feel like now, I mean, I'm not watching any shows particularly like Buffy. But you know, so many of the shows that I'm watching, they're like, six, eight, maybe ten episodes in a season. And there's so much story that it has to happen inside of that span, that like, there's no fucking way that most of these shows that we watch now are gonna be able to be like, "Let's just fucking go absolutely off the wall in an episode—"

Jenny: Yeah. [laughs]

Kristin: And you know—and do, like, something just totally out of the ordinary and, like, really fun. Even—I'm thinking of, like—

Jenny: Well, that's the beauty of, like, a 22-episode season. So luxurious.

Kristin: Right.

Jenny: You can do so many different things.

Kristin: Right. And I guess, like, I was just—I was sort of, like, calling my own self out, thinking about, like, Bojack Horseman. Who—like, I know Bojack Horseman has episodes that are done in very different formats and styles. But I feel like those episodes are still so critical to the plot and to the character development. Like, they have to still—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: They still exist for a deeper purpose, instead of just, like—this just feels like the writers had a pizza party. You know?

Jenny: [laughs] Yeah. Yes, totally.

Kristin: Like, fucking casual Friday over in the writers' room. [laughs]

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: And I love—I mean, I think it's just a wild episode. It's so different than—I mean, I know you called it a retread of Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered. But it

just feels like something we have not seen in this format in this universe, ever before.

Jenny: Mm, mmhmm.

Kristin: Well. That's six episodes in, and Season 7 is a journey. It's a real ride, is what I feel about Season 7. It is not—like, I don't feel like I'm on the same ride that I've been on in other seasons. We know Season 6 is kind of an outlier and, like—for a million reasons. Network change, fucking showrunner change—like, a million changes. But like—

Jenny: Mmhmm.

Kristin: Season 7 just feels, like, wild to me. Like, it just feels like we've been all over the place, and we're only six episodes in.

Jenny: Yeah.

Kristin: Right?

Jenny: Again, I'll say, remember how in the first two episodes, girls were...

Kristin: [laughs] Right.

Jenny: Dying in the cold opens? [laughs]

Kristin: They're like, from beneath you, it...devours, hold on, though. Just hang on—like, just—[Jenny laughs] from beneath—just remember, okay, could you just write it down?

Jenny: From beneath you, it *will* devour. Just hang on.

Kristin: [simultaneously] It *will*...yeah. [laughs]

Jenny: Just please hold.

Kristin: There's actually an ellipses after FBWYID. It's dot-dot-dot.

Jenny: FBYI...[both laugh after a beat]

Kristin: Well, we did it. We did another episode.

Jenny: We did it.

Kristin: And hey, we have something really fun happening. We actually have a couple of really fun things happening in the next few episodes. We don't have guests on as much as we used to. But we have a couple of fun—couple of fun guests headed your way, over the next span of episodes.

Jenny: Oh my god.

Kristin: So that's exciting!

Jenny: Yeah, very exciting.

Kristin: Wonder who they could be.

Jenny: I can't wait to find out. [both laugh] But until all is revealed! I am Jenny Owen Youngs. And Kristin, damnit, when I'm not watching Buffy. [Kristin laughs] You may know, I'm usually writing and recording songs. But did you know also sometimes I'm performing them live?!

Kristin: No. Never heard of it.

Jenny: Well! Get ready! Because I just announced a string of some tour dates, with my co-conspirator and friend of the pod, Hrishikesh Hirway.

Kristin: Woo!

Jenny: This spring. This spring, we'll be playing our songs, together, in Philly, DC, Saugerties, Brooklyn, Boston Portland, Maine, Portland, Oregon, Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles! Tickets and info are at jennyowenyoungs.com. Snag your tickets, and while you're waiting for the show dates to roll around, help the time pass by finding my songs on your favorite digital music platform and listening on repeat. And also, you can say hi to me on socials @JennyOwenYoungs.

Kristin: So exciting. I imagine that a lot of people who are listening have seen you perform live. But if you're like, "I don't know. Like, that sounds fun." Let me just tell you that Jenny's a great musician. Her songs are wonderful. But there are few people that I have ever seen that gives as fucking killer of a live performance as one Miss Jenny Owen Youngs. So if you—

Jenny: Oh my word.

Kristin: It's true. It's true. You're a fantastic fucking live performer. And that is not the case for everyone. So if you haven't seen Jenny just fucking sing her face off in real time, you should definitely grab tickets and go out to see it. I hope to be at the Saugerties show myself. [Jenny gasps] Pretty excited that you're coming to my specific neck of the woods. [Jenny laughs] I barely have to travel. It's how I prefer it. [Jenny laughs] My name is Kristin Russo. When I am not hyping up Jenny's musical career or talking about Buffy the Vampire Slayer, I am often doing talks at workplaces and schools about LGBTQ issues and specifically about how you can be a really awesome parent to your kid, regardless of their sexuality or gender identity, but especially if they are LGBTQ. And you can learn more about that on my website, kristinnoeline.com. That's K-R-I-S-T-I-N N-O-E-L-I-N-E. You can use that spelling to also find me on Twitter and on Instagram. And what about us, Jenny? Where can they find us?

Jenny: Buffering the Vampire Slayer is on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @BufferingCast. Or you can drop us an email at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com.

Kristin: You can support the work that we do here on Patreon. A real easy way to do it. Bufferingthevampireslayer.com, just click on Patreon. Or you can just go right to Patreon.com/Bufferingcast. We're doing a lot of fun things over there, specifically, Jenny and I are a little more than halfway through the series Firefly right now. We're doing a little sub podcast, watching that. I'm watching for the first time, so you can get that content over there. The songs release early over there. We do—I just did a whole Scream watch over there. It's a good time. [Jenny laughs] We did a Yellowjackets bonus conversation over there, 'cause we couldn't stop texting each other about the show. [Jenny laughs] You can also support us by buying some of our merchandise. We have merch in the UK store and over here in the US store. Just click on Shop on our website and you can find all of that stuff. Or you can just, like, be really nice to us and everyone around you, and that will make the world a wonderful place and, you know. That's just good. That's just good vibes for everyone.

Jenny: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah!

Kristin: We take those too. We traff—

Jenny: Please.

Kristin: We take cash and energy, so whichever you [Jenny laughs] feel like you would like to offer up. And both is always great.

Jenny: Indeed. This episode was produced by Kristin Russo, Jenny Owen Youngs, and Alba Daza, with support from our consultant, Mackenzie MacDade, and it was edited by John Mark Nelson. Till next time...

Both: Awwwoooooooooooooo!

[Jenny performing "Him" off the album "Songs from Season Seven" by Buffering the Vampire Slayer]