

Buffering the Vampire Slayer  
Episode 5.09: Listening to Fear

**Jenny:** Hey, everybody! Before we get started, we just have a few announcements.

**Kristin:** We do. First and foremost, if you didn't see on social media, we are selling our limited edition Be the Thing that Monsters Have Nightmares About t-shirt. It is in navy blue this time, for the first time. It will only be up in our store through January 27, and all of the proceeds—100% of the proceeds will be going to help out Australia as they recover from devastating fires. So get on over there, grab yourself a t-shirt and know that all of those profits will be heading to benefit those in Australia. If you're listening to this in Australia, our thoughts have been with you and our efforts will continue to be with you. So we are so sorry to see everything that is happening over there to you all.

**Jenny:** Oof. On a much lighter note, I am pleased to report to you our findings from our last survey of everyone's opinion about the Sexual Tension episode from the previous episode. [Kristin laughs] Ahem! Coming in with a despicable, pitiful 5% of the vote, it's Riley and Sandy. The only thing people hate more than Riley is... Riley and Sandy, I guess.

**Kristin:** If only we had remembered when Sandy was sired, which we'll talk about in the main episode, we could have probably gotten away with nominating Sandy and vampire Willow. And for that, I am so sorry. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Mm, yes. We have failed you, but alas. We cannot turn back time, we can only blaze boldly forward... to the third place slot, with 18% of the vote, Xander and Riley. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah! [Kristin laughs] Hey, it looks bad, but also, Riley's got a total 23% of the vote. Which is probably record for him. In second place, with 33% of the vote, a clean third, we've got Glory and Buffy doing what we respectfully refer to as the Patrick Swayze. And in first place, rightfully so, as we all knew—it's the only way things could have gone. With 44% of the vote, it's Glory... and her shoes.

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** Her beautiful mountain of shoes from Aldo and other parts unknown. Congratulations, Glory. Congratulations, shoes. I'm not sure exactly how many trophies we have to have—

**Kristin:** A lot, apparently, if we're giving every shoe—

**Jenny:** Does each shoe or does each pair of—does a pair of shoes share a trophy, or...?

**Kristin:** I think that would work. I would actually propose to our trophy maker, if you're listening. I would really love to custom-make these trophies for Glory and her shoes. Can we please shape this one as a high heeled shoe for these winners?

**Jenny:** Ha! Sure, sure, sure.

**Kristin:** Thank you so much, trophy maker. [laughter] Jenny, it is time for something that shoes are usually not, which is spooky. A Spooky News. [Jenny gasps]

[SPOOKY NEWS jingle plays]  
Spooky news!

**Kristin:** Okay, Jenny, I'm gonna start off this Spooky News by saying that I found this Spooky News and I found it to go along, as best I could, with today's episode. A discussion where we find an extraterrestrial in Sunnydale. So I'd like to begin by asking you, Jenny, if you know where the band the Foo Fighters got their name from?

**Jenny:** Ooh! Ooh, I can't remember but it has something to do with aliens, right?

**Kristin:** I mean... [laughs]

**Jenny:** No, but like—that rings a bell of confirmation in my mind, but I can't remember anything else.

**Kristin:** Right. Okay, so in the middle of—I'm reading this from an article in New York Magazine back in 2018. The article is titled "Thirteen Reasons to Believe Aliens are Real." So I found the title alone very appealing.

**Jenny:** Nice.

**Kristin:** This tiny little segment is on Foo Fighters, so I'm gonna tell you about them. In the middle of World War 2, things took a mysterious turn for air force pilots flying overnight missions. They reported seeing lights chasing their air crafts. The number varied. Sometimes it was one, other times ten, and so did the colors. Red, orange, green. But they moved very fast, up to 200 miles an hour, and could dart on a dime. And the pilots, among the world's best pilots, admitted that the objects generally flew circles around them. In 1944, a crew flying along the Rhine in Germany described seeing eight to ten bright orange lights. Neither ground control

nor their own planes caught anything on their radar, and when one pilot turned toward them, they reportedly disappeared. They called the mystery air companions "foo fighters," which was an inside joke based on a phrase the comic book character Smokey Stover used to declare, "Where there's foo, there's fire."

**Jenny:** Huh!

**Kristin:** The term "flying saucer" hadn't caught on yet, or else they probably would have used that. So this is one of many, many, many, many, many, many experiences of multiple reports of very similar things. But this, I thought, was a fun piece of spooky extraterrestrial news, since it also is where the band Foo Fighters took inspiration for their name.

**Jenny:** Great. Yes! 100%.

**Kristin:** Great, so everyone and Jenny, that has been your Spooky News.

[SPOOKY NEWS jingle plays]  
Spooky news!

**Jenny:** I think I'm appropriately spooked. [Kristin laughs] Just a couple more things, just want to remind you all that our live taping in April at the Bell House is sold out. But we still have tickets available for Prom. If you are interested in getting up into some formal, or not so formal, or more like cosplay than formal, or cosplay and formal at the same time kind of wear... and partying the night away with us in April at the Bell House, at Prom, just go to [bufferingthevampireslayer.com](http://bufferingthevampireslayer.com), click on Events. You can get all the information and details about how to get tickets and whatnot there.

**Kristin:** Hell yes. And last but not least, we have some things happening over in Patreon land. Jenny, February 22, you have a concert coming up. You gonna play some songs for us?

**Jenny:** I am gonna play some songs!

**Kristin:** That concert will be happening on our secret Facebook page, because Jenny will be streaming from, I guess, your house.

**Jenny:** Yes?

**Kristin:** But who knows. You could be in a field somewhere—

**Jenny:** Well, I do what I want.

**Kristin:** You do indeed do what you want. I also want to let everyone know that we've added something really fun to Patreon, which is that in addition to our Facebook page, we now also have a Slack. We just, *just* invited our patrons to join us in a shared Slack space yesterday. And I will tell you—I will report to you, Jenny, that within the span of just a few hours, the custom emojis of a heart that says "Five by Five," a vampire stake, a green mug, a Buffy Will Patrol Tonight—these are all custom emojis available to our users in Slack—

**Jenny:** Ahhh!

**Kristin:** All made by you all, because you're all incredible.

**Jenny:** [fondly] Ugh! [fake crying] I love you all!

**Kristin:** It's—yeah, it's already a really fun space.

**Jenny:** How dare you.

**Kristin:** And a lot of people who were not participating in things in the secret Facebook group are really excited, because they are able to participate in the community for the first time. We've got a ton of little sub-channels that you can join and that's growing. There's a channel just for fans of Wynonna Earp, there's a channel for spoilers. And people are very excited about spoiling everything in that channel. [laughter] So that is now open to everyone who joins our Patreon, as well as all the other things that were there.

**Jenny:** Hell. Yeah.

**Kristin:** You can go to buffering—yeah!—[thevampireslayer.com](http://thevampireslayer.com), just click on Patron and all that information will be there for you.

**Jenny:** Hurray! Okay. That's all the pre-business. Let's get into the main business.

**Kristin:** Woo! Let us go listen to some squealing, many-toothed bugs.

**Jenny:** No!

[Buffering the Vampire Slayer theme plays]

**Jenny:** [takes deep breath, pauses] [Kristin laughs] Listen, you can't... I can't hit every single one, every single first time I take that breath.

**Kristin:** I just know that, like, alongside me, our listeners—that I am our listeners in this exchange. So I know that everyone was so ready for it, and then we all were like, [gasps]. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Well, sometimes a little anticipation in life and cultivating patience can be a virtue. But hello! And welcome to Buffering the Vampire Slayer, a podcast where we're watching and discussing every episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, one by one, spoiler free. I am Jenny Owen Youngs.

**Kristin:** And I am Kristin Russo. This week, we are talking about Season 5, Episode 9, Listening to Fear. Could also be called "Looking at a Bug and Feeling Grossed Out." Stay tuned— [laughs]

**Jenny:** It could also be called "please hold while I dry-heave."

**Kristin:** [laughs] 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. You know what comes next. If you haven't started listening to Angel on Top, hosted by Brittany Ashley and Laura Zak, you should! I was on a recent episode called "Darla" and I'm about to be on another episode called "The Trial." So I'm basically honorary third co-host at this point.

**Jenny:** What the hell?!

**Kristin:** Yeah, sorry, Jenny. Taking over.

**Jenny:** I don't know what happened, but I'm gonna have to write a strongly worded text message or series thereof. Listening to Fear was written by Rebecca Rand Kirshner, whose name I have seen about a thousand times in the last month since I've been watching the entirety of Gilmore Girls.

**Kristin:** Ohh!

**Jenny:** And directed by David Solomon, and originally aired on November 28, 2000, [laughing] just six days after I turned 19.

**Kristin:** This is the one— [laughs] this is the one where—this comes from IMDB—as Joyce's sickness makes her begin doing odd things, a demon emerges from a meteorite and begins killing the mentally ill. This is the one with the giant squealing shelled bug with a mouth that is worse—I'm gonna say it.

**Jenny:** So terrible.

**Kristin:** It's worse—

**Jenny:** It's way worse than the Master!

**Kristin:** Well, you know how I feel about the Master's mouth. The Master's—

**Jenny:** I know, but the Master walked so this bug could run.

**Kristin:** Oh, god. I mean, the thing is—so the Master's mouth bothers me for many reasons. But what the Master does not have, which this Queller demon does have, is multiple rows of teeth. Which is—

**Jenny:** [gags] And they're all like, outside of its mouth for some reason? [laughter]

**Kristin:** It's a lot. It's a lot. I prefer multiple rows of teeth to only be in present in vagina dentata. [Jenny laughs] Elsewhere, I refuse.

**Jenny:** Noted. [Kristin laughs] So hey, previously on Buffering the Vampire Slayer, we fucked up because it's Sandy, from Doppelgangland!

**Kristin:** Oh my god! It's fucking Sandy. How *dare* we have fucked up so horribly.

**Jenny:** And bless all of you eagle eyes out there who corrected us.

**Kristin:** Yeah, and some people realizing for the first time because of those of you who pointed that out for us. If you weren't following us on social media, why not? Perhaps you hate social media, in which case, great job. [laughter] But for those of you who didn't see it, Sandy the vamp who sucked on a little bit of Riley blood last episode is Sandy, who was sired by Vampire Willow in—

**Jenny:** Oh my god.

**Kristin:** The Wish!

**Jenny:** Isn't it wild that if a vampire comes to our reality from an alternate reality—I'm just putting us in the Buffyverse—

**Kristin:** Oh, yeah.

**Jenny:** For the sake of... this—okay—examination...

**Kristin:** I mean, Jesus, if an alien bug can be in the Buffyverse this episode, I think we can be in it too.

**Jenny:** Surely we can. So isn't it wild then that a vampire from an alternate reality can come into our reality, sire another vampire, be sent back to its own reality... and then that vampire that it made here stays behind? It's like when a butterfly flaps its wings.

**Kristin:** Oh.

**Jenny:** Causing a little bit of a dust to kick up, which causes a bird to take off from a tree—

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** Which causes an antelope to start running, which causes a whole herd of antelope to start running, which causes—

**Kristin:** There's a meme... for this. Actually, Jenny. It's called—

**Jenny:** It's called the matchstick girl effect.

**Kristin:** [simultaneously] The Vampire Willow effect. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Okay, we're both doing pretty good.

**Kristin:** Just two comedians, talking about Buffy the Vampire Slayer. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah, da-da-da! So yeah, so there's Sandy. Good thing they reminded us in the Previously On that her name is Sandy, so that we could— [crosstalk]

**Kristin:** Oof, yeah. Sorry, everyone, for dropping the Sandy ball. That was our bad. But we've picked it up, we've picked her up. And I'd like to actually give a shout out to Sandy. I was glad to see her in the Previously On for this reason, but also because she has the most beautiful manicure of all time.

**Jenny:** Oh!

**Kristin:** Yeah. And so I just want to give her some credit where credit is due. She's visiting the salon where the Master and several other demons frequent.

**Jenny:** Yes. Yes, yes.

**Kristin:** And she's gone for some gel polish and it's looking hot. Great work, Sandy.

**Jenny:** Fantastic. Well, then. In this episode. [Kristin laughs] Right at the top, we've got Summers girl visiting Joyce in the hospital. Dawn's doing a little bit about hooves in gelatin.

**Kristin:** I did some research, actually, some Jello research. It seemed called for.

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

**Kristin:** So—if you've forgotten, Joyce is basically like, "I don't eat anything that wiggles," which is pretty fair, I think. And Dawn is like, "yo, my friend told me that Jello is made from cow hooves and that [laughing slightly] there's a bunch of cows out there without hooves." It's not funny. I'm sorry to all of us that love animals. It's not funny, it's just—it's funny that Dawn thinks that this is what would happen to the cows. [Jenny laughs] So this is—do you remember this in the 90s? 'Cause this was like, straight up, what I thought for years and years and years. Like, this is—

**Jenny:** Yeah, the number of times that I said this while I was a vegetarian and then later a vegan, I couldn't count.

**Kristin:** Right. So it's sort of—it's a stretch on a truth. That—the urban legend, if you will, is this. But it does—the collagen in gelatin does come from boiling the bones and the hides of animals that, you know, have already been used for their meat. But it's never hooves. Hooves, actually, Jenny, contain a different protein, keratin, which cannot produce gelatin.

**Jenny:** Ah-ha!

**Kristin:** So it's just adamantly untrue. I also—I know that you're not here for Jello, everyone. I know that you're not, but I found out the process of what they do with the gelatin—

**Jenny:** Oh my god!

**Kristin:** It's just really interesting, okay? So to make Jello—which is a brand name, whatever. It's just become like Kleenex, you know. You heat the gelatin in water and the heating breaks the bonds that hold the collagen together. Then, next, you cool the gelatin and so then the collagen strands re-bond in a network, but with water trapped inside. Which is what gives it its semi-solid properties! It's what makes it jiggly.

**Jenny:** Whoa.



**Kristin:** So, like, science is all I'm saying.

**Jenny:** That's cool science, as... I remain firmly anti-Jello, but that's pretty cool.

**Kristin:** I was gonna ask you what your feelings are on Jello. I wish that I was. I'm not, I would eat Jello any time. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yikes.

**Kristin:** I'm sorry. It got in. It got in in the 90s and it's never gotten out. Okay.

**Jenny:** Hmm.

**Kristin:** So... more importantly, or equally important, depending on how you feel about Jello science. A few things. You know, I think that this scene is to paint how supportive both Dawn and Buffy are being to Joyce. The closeness of their relationship, especially because we know where this episode is headed—you know, at the end of the episode, with Joyce and Dawn, and we'll get there. But it's an important place to begin, because Dawn is literally in bed with Joyce. And the underlining of the closeness of their relationship is important. Also, we find out that Joyce is having surgery the day after tomorrow. When the doctor walks in, I don't know his actual name, but what I heard was Dr. Crinkle.

**Jenny:** Sure.

**Kristin:** So I will be calling him Dr. Crinkle, moving forward.

**Jenny:** Dr. Crinks!

**Kristin:** Dr. Crinks.

**Jenny:** Yeah, and Joyce is like, concerned that she might not be able to reschedule volleyball, but she'll figure it out.

**Kristin:** This is like that—I'm glad that you said that, because I thought, when she made that joke, like, aww, it's kind of where Buffy gets her quips from, you know? This is a mom-level quip, in the hospital.

**Jenny:** Yeah, hereditary quips.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** But she's going stir bananas, but Dawn and Buffy are very heroically committed to keeping her entertained during this frustrating time.

**Kristin:** Truly. I can't wait until Willow arrives later with her commitment to keeping Joyce entertained. [laughter]

**Jenny:** She says.

**Kristin:** But before that, we get the—also, the seed planted in this first scene that Riley and the Scoobies are working to let her be with her mom. And we'll get to Riley and where he actually is in a second. But I do think that this episode is really important for that, as well. Because this is one of the first times that we really see them, multiple times, want to call Buffy and be like, no. No. We are not.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And that is, I think... it's really important and it's really wonderful and it's really powerful that they are really holding space for her and her family's needs at this point.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah. Everybody's—well, almost everybody's chipping in. [Kristin laughs] To pick up the slack. Which we promptly see evidence of: Giles and Xander getting whooped, getting... rightly whooped.

**Kristin:** Yo, this lady vamp is *ripped*. She is ripped! She came right off the WWE circuit to fucking vamp land. [laughs]

**Jenny:** That's right. Wow! I know we've been talking about wrestling moves a lot lately, but it has only just occurred to me to consider the possibilities of a WWE wrestler turned vampire.

**Kristin:** [simultaneously] Being sired? I think that's what we're seeing here. [laughs] Just saying. She has Xander in one arm and Giles in the other, pinned against the mausoleum. And Willow—

**Jenny:** Yep, yep.

**Kristin:** Who is looking fantastic in a pink corduroy, fuzzily-lined jacket? It's really great. She's already dusted one vamp and she comes up behind this lady wrestler vamp and stakes her as well. And she's so proud of herself.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yeah, well, I mean, how often does she get two in one night? Probably never.

**Kristin:** [laughs] That is what... I said! So—

**Jenny:** Ah, okay.

**Kristin:** [laughs] So also, Giles picks up his glasses from the table and dusts them off and puts them back onto his face. Which led me to wonder, Jenny, how many pairs of glasses do you think Giles has in his line of work? Because—

**Jenny:** Hmm.

**Kristin:** [laughs] They're not broken, somehow, in this scene. But they probably get broken a lot.

**Jenny:** We've never seen them break, though.

**Kristin:** It's true. Do you think they're made of some metaphysical—meta-physical [sic], if you will—

**Jenny:** Watcher specs.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Jenny:** Yeah, and I love that even though it's beaten and bruised and probably his ego is also a little bruised, Giles doesn't let that stand in the way of him giving a *very* thorough cleaning to those glasses. [Kristin laughs] It's classic, it's complete and comprehensive.

**Kristin:** Mm-hmm. Getting off the mud and the vampire dust, all with some swipes of his shirt.

**Jenny:** And meanwhile, across town, Riley's getting his arm sucked on by a lady vampire in a den of iniquity. In what we can all, I think, agree is the great character assassination campaign of Riley Finn, 2000.

**Kristin:** Yeah. So Jenny, you brought up character assassination last episode and I made us cut it out. Because we had only seen that Riley had done this with Sandy, and I felt it was important for us to see that he had this vampire now on his arm. Which I wrote a little dad joke down in my notes, Jenny.

**Jenny:** Please.

**Kristin:** This vampire gives a whole new meaning to the term "arm candy."  
[laughs]

**Jenny:** [laughing] Boo!

**Kristin:** [laughs] But now I think that we're seeing that this is, at the very least, a pattern for Riley. I think there's space to talk about the extremity of this choice for this character. And you know how I feel about Riley, despite Marc Blucas charming me in person. I do think that Riley struggles with some stuff, some power dynamics. And I think that manifests in some ways that are unfortunate, and we've seen those, and we've talked about those. I find this to be—I agree with you, Jenny. I think that this is a bit out of our character of Riley.

**Jenny:** Yeah, I mean, it's really just... reeks of a writer's room. [Kristin laughs] It's just like, with everything that we know, and what we've seen this season up to this point, there's just not... enough.

**Kristin:** Well, and I think—I sort of made mention of this, I think, last episode. But you know, Riley went through some really traumatic stuff. And I think that had this been some of the actions that he took and maybe we could really stretch it and be like, well, it's just manifesting now. But it's like, this would maybe have been more believable to me as a choice that Riley would have made if it was a bit closer to when he learned about the Initiative, when Maggie died, when—you know, when he was really just—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** When he had chemicals inside of his body, when he learned there was a chip, when Forest died.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Like, all of these things sort of caused him to really go through turmoil and we watched that. And this feels like it belongs in that period of time. And now, he seems to have been really moving through a lot of stuff and growing as a character—so, anyway. Not to put too fine a point on it, but. I agree with you, is all I'm trying to say.

**Jenny:** Not buying it.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Then it's the credits and hey. I just want to take a moment out in the middle of an episode, when there are disgusting space bugs with multiple rows of exposed teeth. And Riley's getting sucked on by a vampire. And Joyce is going into surgery. That hey, it's really nice to see Buffy and Faith, continuing to dance in the credits.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Lovely, Jenny! That cheered me right up.

**Jenny:** I know, right?

**Kristin:** Made me forget all about those bugs and hospital trips entirely.

**Jenny:** Yeah. You know what else is great for morale? Tiny Jewish lady Santa.

**Kristin:** Oh my god, I love—I love Willow casting herself as tiny Jewish lady Santa. And I love, even more, after Buffy gets her gift, which is her homework— [laughter] that she looks at Willow and says, "I don't believe in tiny Jewish Santa anymore." [laughter] It's a really cute little back and forth. Listen, I'm not gonna spend too much time on the wardrobe, I promise. But we don't have Kate in this episode, and the ends of Willow's sleeves are literally just a giant pile of threads. A., if she's anywhere near Miss Kitty Fantastico, Miss Kitty Fantastico is losing it.

**Jenny:** It's over.

**Kristin:** And B., if she's literally trying to do *anything* in the world, it is impeded by these sleeves, so I'm upset about them.

**Jenny:** But would you say that they're festive?

**Kristin:** They are festive, yes.

**Jenny:** Would you say they're appropriate for tiny Jewish lady Santa?

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yes, yes, okay. Fair, fine.

**Jenny:** I find Willow bringing Joyce a beer helmet in the hospital to be, like, highly relatable content for me. [Kristin laughs] In the same age bracket that they're all in now. That's exactly the sort of bullshit nonsense nobody needs that I would have been all about. And Joyce is so gracious?

**Kristin:** Yeah—

**Jenny:** In her... acceptance of it.

**Kristin:** I didn't think that this would be the second time that Faith got brought up in the episode. I thought it would be the first. You surprised me with your credit shout out. Because all I thought of in this moment when Joyce is like, "It's perfect," was Faith being like, "It's crappy." [laughter] You know? And Joyce—how many times has Joyce had to be like, "it's a lovely gift, honey." [laughs]

**Jenny:** [laughing] Oh my god!

**Kristin:** So, also, just really, really cute here. Willow giving Dawn this book of spells that doesn't actually have any spells in it, and Dawn is so excited to read it and learn.

**Jenny:** Yeah! And also, Buffy got a yo-yo.

**Kristin:** Yeah! Were you a yo-yoer, Jenny?

**Jenny:** Not just homework. I was a hell a yo-yoer.

**Kristin:** Yeah? Could you do tricks? Could you "walk the dog"?

**Jenny:** I could "walk the dog" and—what's the cradle one?

**Kristin:** Oh, cat's—

**Jenny:** "Rock the baby"?

**Kristin:** Oh, "rock"—yes, yes. Where the—you sort of—the string is a shape and then the yo-yo's in between it.

**Jenny:** Is the little triangle, yeah, uh-huh. And "around the world."

**Kristin:** I could do—

**Jenny:** Did you say that already?

**Kristin:** No. Walk the dog. Walk the dog around the world—

**Jenny:** Walk the dog, around the world, and rock the baby.

**Kristin:** Yeah, I could do none of that. I could barely get the yo-yo to come back up the string one time. [Jenny laughs] So then we take a turn from the fun and

light into a pretty dark place with Joyce here. We've been told, as Buffy's been told, that she may have outbursts because of the tumor that's pressing on her brain.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** But they really—you know, the writers really, I think, explicitly chose for her outbursts to be these things that are explicitly not Joyce, the Joyce we know.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And explicitly really vulnerable and uncomfortable for her daughters to hear.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** In every instance, right? And so the first one is this. She says, "I'd rip it in half and stick it in bed with me." And it's just this very aggressive and possibly sexual—it's unclear, of course, what's she saying. I think. Unless it's clear to you, Jenny.

**Jenny:** Uh, no.

**Kristin:** But it's... I have people close in my life, but one person in particular, whose mom is going through—suffering from dementia right now. And she's in the really end stages of dementia. And so she's not having outbursts like this, but she does say things that don't make sense and is doing things—and I went up to see her mom. And I don't mean to bring this into a super, super dark place. But I just want to say that, like, that experience of being the child to a parent who is not well does have this... rawness to it that is really hard to explain. And it's very jarring and it's very intense, and I think that in a small span of time, with these little lines, the writers are really giving us that. And I think that they do a really good job of it. I don't like to watch it, I don't like to see it, I don't think any of us like to see it. But I do think that it encapsulates this experience that so many people do have with their parents in one way or another, when they're ill and when their illness is impacting their brain and their mind.

**Jenny:** Yeah. So, as soon as the words have left her mouth, basically, Joyce kind of snaps out of that mode and kind of looks like she doesn't know what's going on.

**Kristin:** Right, right.

**Jenny:** And just says she's gonna take a rest. So the girls leave, so Buffy can have this little conversation with Dawn about what's going on. And she tells Dawn about

how the tumor is pressing on Joyce's brain and might make her say weird stuff. And after the operation, there'll be no more pressing, and she doesn't know what she's saying when she's saying that stuff. And then just as they're getting through this— [laughs] just as they're getting through this little bit of reassurance. A security guard who we saw Glory suck the brains out of not too long ago comes by and he's clearly been a patient at the hospital. He's being sent home. He sees Dawn and starts pointing at her, saying, "there's nothing there, there's no data."

**Kristin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jenny:** All very disturbing, especially right on the heels of what just happened with Joyce.

**Kristin:** Yeah. This is a really hard episode for Dawn. She's really... you know, I'll— maybe I'll speak to it now. I think it's really, totally inappropriate that they sent Joyce home with—

**Jenny:** Right?!

**Kristin:** With them. It's totally—I mean. And actually, this is maybe a good point to bring it up. Because I also find it to be totally unbelievable, and I'm sure that those of you in the medical profession will agree. I *hope* that you'll agree, that in a situation where a hospital does not have space for its patients, that they're not going to send the ones with families home. This security guard, his arc is that he is sent home with his family because he has a family, not because he is okay to be sent home. And then of course, he wanders out into the woods and dies. So I think maybe a little bit more plausibility in the medical sphere could be helpful in this story line, but it is what it is. And maybe we'll learn from our medical people that things like this do happen, because also, you know, health insurance and our health industry in this country is kind of a mess. So who knows! But. What I—

**Jenny:** Especially where mental health is concerned, a lot of the time.

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** But at least we don't have terrifying space bugs.

**Kristin:** Well, we *think* we don't. I mean...

**Jenny:** So far as we know.

**Kristin:** So far as we know. [laughs] Yeah. And yeah, to your point about mental health, this is sort of a plot line of this season, right? Is that—and we're really



getting into it, this episode. And some of the scenes here reminded me of the... One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, with the nurse sort of in the other room. And she leaves as the patient is telling her not to, and the patients are, you know, restrained in their beds. And just the overall treatment of mental health is—I'm— at this point, gonna say I'm finding it interesting. Because on the one hand, you can look at it as a reflection of how under-recognized mental health is in our medical system and just world in general. But on the other hand, is the show treating it the way that it should be treated? I think it's a discussion that we'll have as the season goes on, but we're putting a pin in it for now. Or at least, I am.

**Jenny:** Yes. Put a pin in it because, hey!

**Kristin:** [laughs] Paging Dr. Ben!

**Jenny:** [simultaneously] Paging Dr. Ben! Uh... looking good, Ben. That shampoo commercial hair is looking so good. [Kristin laughs] Classic dude rolling up line: "was that guy bothering you?"

**Kristin:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Jenny:** "'Cause if he's done, I'd like to start." [laughter]

**Kristin:** Wow! Well, there it is. You've queued us up for a beautiful jingle, Jenny. [Jenny laughs]

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

**Jenny:** Hey, Ben doesn't even deserve it, he's just being a nice boy.

**Kristin:** No. But it wasn't really for Ben, it was more for your comment on men.

**Jenny:** Yeah. [laughter] Moving briskly away from any and all comments on men—

**Kristin:** Truly. Oh—

**Jenny:** Willow and Tara are looking at the stars.

**Kristin:** Queer ladies! On a rooftop, with their thermos, pointing out... the stars. This is really sweet, because—so, you know, Tara has named the constellations her own names, which is really cute. But before we get there, Willow says—

**Jenny:** [laughs] Oh my god.

[Clip from episode plays]

**Willow:** You know, some of the stars we're looking at... don't even exist anymore? In the time that it takes for their light to reach us, they've died. Exploded. Poof.

**Kristin:** Tara immediately—like, I'm sorry, but this is a truly representative emotional exchange between two beautiful queer women. Where Tara's like, "so... were things rough at the hospital, babe?" Because— [laughter] you're talking about stars dying before their light reaches—after their light reaches us. So I'm thinking maybe there's some other stuff going on.

**Jenny:** Yeah. And then Willow points out a couple constellations and Tara starts pointing out some constellations that Willow's never heard of, because of course, they are all constellations Tara has made up. And while I was watching her point to things she called "Moose getting a sponge bath"—

**Kristin:** [laughing] Yeah.

**Jenny:** And "pile o' crackers"—

**Kristin:** *Little* pile o' crackers.

**Jenny:** I was like—right, right, right. "Pile o' crackers, minor." [laughter] I was like, damn, she's not even trying, these constellations don't make any sense with regard to the stars that she's pointing out. And then I was like, hang on. Actually? Save for the Little Dipper and the Big Dipper.

**Kristin:** None of them—

**Jenny:** Our constellations kinda suck. [Kristin laughs] They don't *suck*. But they're just, like, not tethered—it's not like, if you didn't have a book or a person telling you what to look for that you would pick it out naturally, with the exception of the Dippers.

**Kristin:** Right, exactly. They're dots that are then connected that are then sort of... exacerbated? Exaggerated? Whatever. So I'm on board—

**Jenny:** Extrapolated?

**Kristin:** Extrapolated? Yeah, maybe that's the E word I'm looking for. But I'm on board for Tara— [giggles] I would like a full rundown of all of Tara's constellations.

Please. Please, please, please. And then, through the sky comes a bird, a plane, no! It's Superman—

**Jenny:** A huge flaming meteor—

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** About to crash into something. Have you ever noticed that no one on this show can ever do anything nice or peaceful? Like, if you see characters enjoying a quiet moment doing something, like looking up at the sky, you can bet something flaming is about to fall out of that sky. [Kristin laughs] Something's gonna blow up. They can never—you can never relax in Sunnydale.

**Kristin:** I beg of no one to relax in this episode, because we're about to turn the corner into the squealing face of our Queller demon.

**Jenny:** Ahh!

**Kristin:** So the security guard, as I mentioned, has been released from the hospital, completely inappropriately. He has wandered out, probably when his family fell asleep.

**Jenny:** Ugh.

**Kristin:** And he is headed directly towards where this meteor crashed. Well, it's not a meteor, it's a... egg? I don't know. They don't—they're not really clear on what the vessel is that the Queller crashed in.

**Jenny:** Sure.

**Kristin:** But this Queller guy—Queller demon—has hatched out of its thing. And jumps out of the tree? Is that where he is, a tree, at first?

**Jenny:** Well, it crawls out of the meteor—it crawls over to a tree that is strategically placed just beyond where the guy is walking. So it kinda like, gets up and out on a limb so that it can drop down on the guy at just the right moment.

**Kristin:** It's got really incredible talent at suctioning to things upside-down.

**Jenny:** Oh, yeah.

**Kristin:** It reminded me—like, it creeped me out in a way that triggered my memory of Clockwork Orange, with the baby on the ceiling. Do you remember what I'm talking about? How could you not, really.

**Jenny:** Yes. Yes, of course.

**Kristin:** [laughs] And the other incredible ability—extraterrestrial ability that this Queller demon has, is that no one sees this mammoth baby bug—

**Jenny:** Dude...

**Kristin:** [laughing] With arms stuck to the ceiling?

**Jenny:** We need to talk about it when we actually get to places where it's on the ceiling. Because—

**Kristin:** Okay. [laughs]

**Jenny:** In well-lit hospital hallways. [laughter] Ahh!

**Kristin:** Okay, so. Well, that's the next scene. Because right after the Queller demon—I mean, here's the—

**Jenny:** Oh, yeah.

**Kristin:** Let me be transparent with everybody. The reason I'm struggling a little bit to figure out where exactly the Queller demon is and what the scenes are is because I usually take really detailed notes. [laughter] But it appears that as soon as the Queller demon came onto screen, all I wrote was, "bug view, no bug, ahh, no bug on ceiling, no." So. [laughter]

**Jenny:** Great.

**Kristin:** It's a little unclear. But I think we go to the hospital and I think it's now on the ceiling.

**Jenny:** Okay. Can I tell you a couple things?

**Kristin:** Please.

**Jenny:** Before we talk about how ridiculous it is that it's up on the ceiling and nobody sees it.

**Kristin:** [laughing] Yes.

**Jenny:** Okay. So... two people are part of the performance of the Queller demon. The first is Debbie Lee Carrington, who I got super pumped when I started down this Wikipedia rabbit hole, because you may have seen her as a martian rebel named Thumbelina in Total Recall.

**Kristin:** Whoa!

**Jenny:** A movie that I've watched about a thousand times. You may have seen her as a frickin' Ewok in Return of the Jedi.

**Kristin:** What?!

**Jenny:** And you may have seen her playing Valerie Vomit in The Garbage Pail Kids Movie!

**Kristin:** Stop it!

**Jenny:** I can't stop it. It's the truth.

**Kristin:** That's literally the best resume I've ever heard of in my entire life.  
[laughs]

**Jenny:** I know, right? She fucking rocks. She's been in so—like, her resume is bananas, but when I saw Thumbelina and Total Recall, I was like, holy fuck!

**Kristin:** Wow!

**Jenny:** Debbie Lee Carrington unfortunately passed away a couple years ago, but she was an actor and a stunt woman and one-half of the team that brought the Queller demon to life.

**Kristin:** So—

**Jenny:** The other half of the team...

**Kristin:** Yeah. What did they do? Did they just share the role or did they—

**Jenny:** It's—so it's not specified in anything that I could find. It may have been, like, they needed to do additional shoots and maybe there was a scheduling conflict for the first person who worked on it. Or it may have to do with something very

specific, that they each have to offer. Barbara C. Adside, who was the other person who performed as the Queller demon, is a stunt woman who was born without legs.

**Kristin:** Oh, wow!

**Jenny:** So I think that it's possible that because of some of the stuff they have the Queller demon doing...

**Kristin:** Uh-huh.

**Jenny:** That Barbara may have been able to do stuff that Debbie couldn't.

**Kristin:** Wow! Wow, look at you with your research.

**Jenny:** I—this is quite a bit speculative, 'cause I couldn't find too much about it.

**Kristin:** Right.

**Jenny:** But I wanted to share all of that.

**Kristin:** Well, if you know anything—if you know how—is Barbara still alive?

**Jenny:** Yeah!

**Kristin:** 'Cause we could find out more. I would like to know more about the Queller demon, actually.

**Jenny:** A cursory Googling yielded articles like, "Whatever happened to Barbara C. Adside?" and "Where's Barbara C. Adside now?"

**Kristin:** [laughing] Okay.

**Jenny:** [laughs] So Barbara may have retired from the biz, I'm not really sure.

**Kristin:** I see. Okay. Wow. Okay, so we go into Joyce's room and this is where they're having her go home. And I don't understand this, in so many ways. Buffy looks very overwhelmed at this prospect, although she wants to give her mom what she wants. It just seems like she's overwhelmed. I can read it, I assume—I know that the doctor can read it. She's been given all these sedatives and meds to take care of her mom. It's a lot even just for Buffy to do with Joyce, but also the fact that Dawn is in the house and is—

**Jenny:** Yeah! And not—

**Kristin:** Pretty traumatized by the fact that her mom is not okay. It just seems like a bad idea all around.

**Jenny:** Yes. 100%.

**Kristin:** Yeah. So Dawn is sent out of the room, and she goes to read her spell book. And... I don't know what noise—what noise do you think the Queller demon makes as it suctions itself across the ceiling? Just like a— [makes a wet clicking sound]

**Jenny:** Oh— [audibly shudders] [Kristin laughs] I... quit.

**Kristin:** It's like, you think that the Queller demon is bad enough. And then you find out that its special ability is to puke— [Jenny laughs] fucking goop all over people's faces! [laughter] What are they trying to do to us here?

**Jenny:** It's bad. It's bad!

**Kristin:** We just got over the snake with arms, now we have a fucking many-toothed puke demon? Jesus—from outer space?! Okay.

**Jenny:** Before we can talk about whatever it is throwing up into people's mouths—

**Kristin:** [laughing] Gross!

**Jenny:** [laughs] First, the Scooby crew, including Riley this time, has to head out to the meteorite zone.

**Kristin:** Oh, right! We didn't even say that Riley didn't—that Xander was very upset.

**Jenny:** Oh, yeah. Xander in particular was very...

**Kristin:** Uh-huh!

**Jenny:** Pissed off about it, I wonder why?

**Kristin:** My note is [singsong] "Xander's mad at his boyfriend!" [laughter]

**Jenny:** But Riley has rejoined the group. They're all examining the meteor impact site, and Anya asks if it's hot because if there—and says, "if there's radiation, you could all go sterile." And the look on Riley's face, and Xander's panicked run—

**Kristin:** [laughs] Right.

**Jenny:** Are pretty priceless.

**Kristin:** "No! Not our sperm!" [laughs]

**Jenny:** "Not our precious seed!" Which, I mean—sorry. I said that, but also—

**Kristin:** Fair.

**Jenny:** Yeah, it's okay.

**Kristin:** Totally. [laughs]

**Jenny:** It's funny to think about Xander in particular, because he just seems so far away from any potential parenthood or additional responsibility. [laughs]

**Kristin:** Well, but you bring up a good point, Jenny, is that I'm not sure that the reason for honoring one's sperm is always rooted in wanting to be a future parent.

**Jenny:** Right.

**Kristin:** There's the whole power dynamic of—I mean, we saw that when they played with that with Spike and his impotence as a vampire, remember? It's like, there's that whole—I can't believe—I was just saying how the episodes hadn't really been bringing us to the patriarchy jingle a lot lately, but here we are *again*.

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

**Jenny:** [laughs] I'm gonna just devil's advocate... at you, for a second. Because I think—I think what's happening here has less to do—[laughs] I know, I'm always this person on our podcast now. [Kristin laughs] To me, this has less to do with a power dynamic and more to do with the weird biological imperative mechanisms that start firing in your brain when you're kind of like, an adult who's too young to be thinking about it in terms of like, "one day I will have a family and I would like my sperm to be healthy, to help with that process."

**Kristin:** So you're saying that Xander's like, [singing] "I'm not a girl... [Jenny laughs] Not yet a woman!" [laughs]



**Jenny:** I'm saying, I don't think we'd see 12 or 13-year-old boys be like, "my sperm!" You know?

**Kristin:** Sure! Well, right. I think—okay. Whatever. I can't—I literally did not—I don't know how I imagined we wouldn't spend four hours on Xander's sperm this episode, but yet, here we are. [laughter]

**Jenny:** Everyone's favorite topic!

**Kristin:** I do think that part of Xander jumping behind Anya is about his manhood, if you will. Not necessarily connected to parenting, but the—power is a very big word to use. But I think that there's something about Xander and—more than Riley. 'Cause Riley's concerned, but he's more concerned with, you know, this alien bug that just dropped from the sky.

**Jenny:** Right, right.

**Kristin:** Whereas Xander's like, "no!" [laughs] "My special manhood!" [Jenny laughs] Anyway!

**Jenny:** Okay, so it's very clear that something hatched out of that meteor.

**Kristin:** Yeah, it's hollow. And Willow is like, "so something bad came inside of it, obviously." They're like, let's see if we can figure out where it went, and then they stumble upon this security guard, who is dead. And ugh! Is it Riley? Yeah, who like, opens his mouth and pulls—[Jenny gags] this reminded me—not to keep connecting things to other things. But I guess that's what a podcast is. But this reminded me of Silence of the Lambs, when they pull the worm—

**Jenny:** Oh yeah, the death's-head moth.

**Kristin:** The moth. [laughs] "The worm." The moth, right, the moth cocoon out of one of the victim's mouths. Ugh!

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** And we don't get a lot—you know what I realized? We don't get a lot of smell on this show.

**Jenny:** Yeah, that's true.

**Kristin:** Right? It's like—

**Jenny:** Although, they did just go to the dump earlier.

**Kristin:** That's true.

**Jenny:** In this season.

**Kristin:** That's true, but usually, the demons and death and things like that, they're presented as visual cues to the characters, you know? Like, they see somebody who's dead or they—whatever. It's not as common for us to see all of them collectively retract in horror from the smell of whatever has just been removed from the mouth of this man.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** So Riley's like, "I'd like to stay with the body, please. I'd like to do a little bit of research on the body." And they're like, okay, man, whatever. [Jenny laughs] And they go to do their research. And then of course, Riley calls the Initiative.

**Jenny:** But not before Willow, while walking away, says, very fairly, "I don't wanna be the one that finds the bodies anymore." [laughter]

**Kristin:** Seriously.

**Jenny:** She's done enough.

**Kristin:** She does—Willow has really great lines in this episode. In the first scene, with her and the jacket, slaying the vamps. After she slays them, she says something like, "My knees feel dizzy." Which I just—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** I was like, that is the most beautiful—it just is like the coolest line.

[AD BREAK]

**Kristin:** Cool, here we are in the scene where we learn the power of the Queller demon is to...

**Jenny:** Okay.

**Kristin:** Puke... on people.

**Jenny:** So right, it throws up this clear, viscous nonsense into the faces of these people who, I guess, can't do anything about it because their hands are restrained...

**Kristin:** Yeah, so this—

**Jenny:** How does this demon get by in places where its victims arms aren't restrained? Just wondering.

**Kristin:** Right? 'Cause its arms are very small and seem not very efficient. But let's just—can we just talk about the ethos of the Queller demon? Is that what you call it? Like, its story, its—because I don't really... I know that—

**Jenny:** Who is the Queller demon, *really*?

**Kristin:** Because it's like, so we're to believe, in a large, broadly painted brushstroke here, that Glory needs to live by sucking something out of the brains of people. But not everything, because they're alive still. And when this happens, they become able to, it would seem, see things that other people cannot see, like for example, all of them have looked at Dawn and said, "there's nothing there, there's no data."

**Jenny:** Mm-hmm.

**Kristin:** So she's pulling something out of them and we don't know what it is. And then the antidote, which is really fucked up, 'cause it's like, so what do we do, then—and we find out—I'm skipping ahead, but we find out that Ben—bum bum bum!—has summoned this Queller demon. So Ben is like, "I'm gonna clean up Glory's mess," and by "Glory's mess" he's referring to the people who are left behind.

**Jenny:** Oof!

**Kristin:** And the way I'm gonna clean that up is by summoning a space bug—[Jenny gags] who, when the bug lands on Earth, will vomit viscous fluid on these patients so that they die. And therefore, we've cleaned up the quote, "mess." So—

**Jenny:** Not very compatible with the Hippocratic oath, *Ben*!

**Kristin:** [laughs] I mean, this is like a really... I just—there's a lot in here that is upsetting, when we talk about mental health. There's also a lot in here that's like, just kinda messy in a storytelling sort of a way? So... ah. I'm feeling a little bit like that Jello about this Queller demon. A little wiggly, if you will.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Okay. So. The doctor lets Buffy know, [Jenny starts laughing] as they're releasing Joyce from the hospital... [Jenny laughs louder] that she has a lot of things. She has the medicine. She has his home phone number!

**Jenny:** Oh my god.

**Kristin:** What were you cackling—are you cackling 'cause you're getting ready for what I call the Queller Peek?

**Jenny:** For the peek-a-boo!

**Kristin:** The Queller Peek? [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Kristin:** Okay, so the camera sort of pans out. And as it does, we hear Joyce, who's had another outburst. She says, "You look just like your father when he cries" and "what do you think he was begging for?" So another one of these lines that's like—

**Jenny:** Yeeee!

**Kristin:** Jesus Christ! There's so much in there that is totally uprooted—uprooting for Buffy and Dawn and whatever. And then right on the heels of that line, we get your favorite scene, I think, in the series, Jenny.

**Jenny:** Dude. Yeah, this is it. [laughter] Uh... ahh! [laughs] So the hospital hallway. The well-lit hospital hallway with ceilings that are not that high.

**Kristin:** Not high at all.

**Jenny:** But the hallway's broken up by these sort of segments of molding where, like... [Kristin laughs] who knows why? [laughter] It seems like they were only constructed so that the Queller demon would have a place to do its upside-down peek-a-boo bullshit. [laughter] And it sees the Summers girls and it's like, hey, that one's checking out, I better head to the parking lot. [laughter] And guess which sensible four-door Sedan might be theirs. [laughter]

**Kristin:** Do you think their license plate is S-U-M-M-R-S?

**Jenny:** Yeah, definitely. Or a Z maybe, at the end.

**Kristin:** [laughs] "Summerz."

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Yeah, sorry, that laughing fit caused me to not only lean back in my chair but to hit my chin into the microphone. [laughter] So it was a really good one for the Queller Peek. They get home. The whole happy family, Joyce, Dawn, Buffy and Mr. Queller.

**Jenny:** Ha!

**Kristin:** And Joyce is like, yo, the lights are hurting me. They turn off all the lights. It's really creepy, actually. There's a real—I mean, I know that this is a fantasy/horror show. But it's a very particular episode where they really go hard on horror, and they go hard in this episode. And they pan out and you see all the lights, one by one, turning off inside the house. And we cut to the woods, where a helicopter—they love a helicopter in Season 5. Let me tell you what. A helicopter is just swishing away, blowing all the dust. And out come all of the boys with their berets. And Riley's like, "hey boys!" [laughter] "I got this *alien*!" I got—apparently, Riley carried with him some vials with which to capture the protein alkaloid. Which—I tried to look up what that is and what I found was it doesn't seem to be a thing. But, hey. Scientists, let us know. And he's like, "yo, this is not a Sub-T. It's an Extra-T." Bum-bum-bum!

**Jenny:** I mean. [laughs] Okay. And then... we go... back to the Summers' house. The creature! Is in! The house! And I quit the podcast. [Kristin laughs] I—[gags] can't.

**Kristin:** Yeah. It's bad. I do think that it's really cool camera work that they do for what I call "Queller vision." [laughter] We're looking through the Queller demon's eyes, it's sort of this fishbowl kind of a shot and we see Joyce come down the stairs, undetected by her daughters. She goes into the kitchen. She very quickly burns something. The timing's a little off on that, but she very quickly burns something. The girls run into the kitchen and she has yet another outburst where she says, "I'm making breakfast, but not for you," to Buffy, "you're disgustingly fat." So again, just these sentences that would never come out of Joyce's mouth as a character that we know and that we know that Buffy and Dawn know about their mom. And then... oof. They get Joyce to bed. This is upsetting for so many reasons, because—

**Jenny:** Oh my god.

**Kristin:** One of the more horrific scenes happens while Joyce is in bed. But Joyce is in bed and Dawn goes in. And Joyce says, "Don't touch me," to Dawn. "You thing." And then she very interestingly says, "You're a shadow," which was the title of the last—

**Jenny:** Of the previous episode.

**Kristin:** Yeah, of the last episode. So Dawn is really upset, because as she says to Buffy, "People keep saying these things to me."

**Jenny:** Yeah. Ugh!

**Kristin:** Yeah. And Buffy is really good, I think, about this. She's sort of like, you know, "Dawn, listen. Sometimes when something goes wrong, it's like a short circuit. So it feels to the people that are saying this to you, like, nothing is real except for them." As somebody who's had panic attacks, I will say that I thought it was an interesting and pretty accurate depiction of what a panic attack can feel like. Where nothing feels real except for you. It's sort of like a dissociative state, is what Buffy is describing. And she's using it in this instance to comfort Dawn, to—and to also kind of lead Dawn off of the scent, if you will.

**Jenny:** It's also particularly ragged right before this, after Joyce has said all of these things that are really upsetting to Dawn and she runs out of the room. And in the same breath, Joyce is like, "aw, Dawn honey, what's wrong?"

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** As Dawn is running away—it's like so—ugh.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah. [sighs] This is not... there's a lot going on. And we talked about it last episode, this demarcation of sort of like fantasy and not. And the lines are blurring in this episode, because Joyce is sick and we know that and we've gotten confirmation. But we also now are dealing with the fact that Joyce's symptoms are starting to blend with the fantastical story line. Because she has looked at Dawn and seen something that the patients who have been attacked by Glory have seen of Dawn. So it's getting muddy and confusing. So you know where we should go?

**Jenny:** How about... to Xander, staring up at a model of the solar system suspended from the ceiling.

**Kristin:** It's a library! We haven't been in a library in so long! How fun.

**Jenny:** Sure, sure, sure, sure, sure. Yes, great. But in this library is a model of the solar system suspended from the ceiling. And Xander says, look at how teeny Mercury is compared to Saturn. Whereas when you look at cars of the same name... [laughing] implying that, well, the cars are like the same size, it's so weird.

**Kristin:** [laughing] Is that what he says?

**Jenny:** Like... up until I chimed in with "oh, the cars are the same size, that's so weird." But yeah, that's his line. Which is, again, a lovely diversion from everything else that's going on in this episode!

**Kristin:** [laughs] So... okay. The best line in the episode, I think, happens in the library. Which is when Xander refers to the Queller demon as "a killer snot monster." And Giles—because he's basically like, "Why do we have to be at this library for a killer snot monster?" And Giles, without really thinking through what he's saying, turns to Xander and goes...

[Clip from episode plays]

**Giles:** Because it's a killer snot monster from outer space.

**Jenny:** I mean, he's got a point.

**Kristin:** He does have a point. And—

**Jenny:** But I don't know if that makes it really any worse or more worthy of study.

**Kristin:** Well, I think that it's nice that they are, at least, giving a nod to us as the viewer, of—'cause this is really out of realm of Buffy. I mean, we—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** We have seen—not to borrow Riley's language, but we've seen a lot of Sub-Ts and never any Extra-Ts on this show. And so I think that it's nice that they, in addition to giving us this horrific alien demon, are at least acknowledging that this is a bit out of the universe for us, and so therefore for the Scoobies too.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** Jenny, if I could ever find this book called *Meteors and You*, exclamation point, I'm gonna get it for you. [Jenny laughs] Because it seems like something you would love to have.

**Jenny:** Thank you. Yeah, that sounds like exactly what I'm missing.

**Kristin:** And this is when we learn about—you know, Willow is really—you know what? You know what Willow fucking deserves in this episode is her goddamn jingle. She has slayed two vampires and she's about to put some important pieces of information together. Give it to her.

[WILLOW jingle plays]  
Who knows the square root of 1,225?  
Willow!  
Who is gentle of heart and nimble with a hard drive?  
Willow!  
Willow, Willow, Willow.

**Kristin:** So Willow is like, hey, so there's only been one other met—or sort of like... large-scale meteor crashing to Earth. And it's called the Tunguska? Is that how she pronounced it?

**Jenny:** That sounds right.

**Kristin:** And it's actually incorrect. The library needs to check their sources. Because this is something that did really happen, but it didn't happen in 1917. It happened in 1908, which is an odd mistake to make, because everywhere I looked, it says 1908. And they said 1917, but. Yeah, so this was a large explosion that happened in Russia in June of 1908. And it flattened an estimated 80 million trees of the forest. Eye witness reports—

**Jenny:** Holy shit.

**Kristin:** I know! Eye witness reports suggest that at least three people might have died in the event, but it was in the woods. Very similar to what we're seeing here. And then it's generally attributed—this is from a Wikipedia article—to the air burst of a meteoroid. It's classified as an impact event even though no impact crater was found. The object is thought to have—

**Jenny:** Whoa!

**Kristin:** Yeah! The object is thought to have disintegrated at an altitude of three to six miles above the Earth, rather than actually hitting the surface of the Earth. So this is real. This is very real.

**Jenny:** Holy... blip.



**Kristin:** And pretty crazy, right?

**Jenny:** So the Earth is crawling with Queller demons, is what you're telling me. That's the information I'm getting out of what you said.

**Kristin:** [simultaneously] Yeah, I mean, Russia—they were in Russia, but we know how they get around. So they could be anywhere now.

**Jenny:** Urgh! Yeah, they could be on any ceiling.

**Kristin:** Yeah, or below anybody's RAV4, at any time. So.

**Jenny:** [laughs] Hey!

**Kristin:** [laughs] That's the car that Jenny drives, in case you were wondering why she's upset with me.

**Jenny:** Ehh, not anymore! Gotta throw 'em off the scent.

**Kristin:** [laughs] So, anyway. Willow is linking the fact that there were these mass reports of insanity linked with the meteor crashes and then the summoning of this, what they learn, Queller demon. Which is again, the name is derived from "quelling." Which is, again, not to repeat myself, but really fucked up, these human beings who have been affected by—I guess we're to believe, Glory? Like, this is just Glory through the centuries?

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** Okay. So they call Riley. Riley is at the hospital and he's lying about being with the Initiative.

**Jenny:** Uh-huh, uh-huh. It's actually not the Initiative. It's a post-Initiative military subset.

**Kristin:** Ah. The Black Berets?

**Jenny:** [laughing] Sure. But we met them recently when Riley played basketball. Remember?

**Kristin:** Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I remember Riley playing basketball alright.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, okay. So they tried to recruit him—or Graham kinda tried to recruit him.

**Kristin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jenny:** That's when he was like, "what are you, the mission's boyfriend?" Et cetera.

**Kristin:** [laughs] So... Riley's like, "just keep doing your research and let me know how to kill this thing." And then Willow is like—

**Jenny:** I love how they're always like, how do we kill this thing? But usually they just, like...

**Kristin:** Stab it. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Kristin:** I just want to point out something that's important for later, here. Because this is a really hard episode. Second in a row, but this one's even harder than last episode for sexual tension. So I want to point out here that on the phone with Willow, Riley says to Willow, "That intern Ben told me," dot-dot-dot. To which I say, show me the tape of Riley and Ben talking to each other about stuff! Huh?

**Jenny:** Yeah, wow, that might be too much caramel for one... one lens, you know what I mean?

**Kristin:** [laughs] Oh. Turning a hard corner from sexy men to... [Jenny laughs] puddles of gasoline eyeballs looking down at Joyce.

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

**Kristin:** Oof!

**Jenny:** Yeah, Joyce is talking up to the ceiling, kind of rambling. Dawn can hear through the wall and is having a hard time. Buffy is doing dishes and listening to this song. You know the one that's like, [sings Spanish tune for a while] Sorry, I have to do the whole thing. [keeps singing whole tune as Kristin laughs] That's the song and it just loops everything I just did, over and over and over again. And what happens, if you have the closed captioning on—

**Kristin:** Oh, I know! I saw.

**Jenny:** What happens if you have the closed captioning on when this song starts, it just says, in brackets, "Spanish." Even though the song is instrumental.

**Kristin:** Yep. It says "Spanish" with a music note next to it, so. Right?

**Jenny:** Oh, I didn't get the music note on my end. Maybe it was a glitch.

**Kristin:** Oh, I got a music note next to a bracketed "Spanish." Yeah, nice work, everybody. But I will say—first of all, Jenny, incredible performance. Thank you for that.

**Jenny:** Thank you.

**Kristin:** That's actually this week's song. We put it in the middle of the episode.  
[laughs]

**Jenny:** Nice.

**Kristin:** So, I love this, though. I love the set up of Buffy at the sink, doing the dishes, having turned on music. Any music, it doesn't matter. What it is—even the fact that the mood of the music is in complete contrast with what she's going through and she's just sobbing at the sink. It just reads really true to me and really powerful to me that these moments—whenever you're going through something in your life that is devastating, you couldn't script it. You can't script it. I mean, I guess technically in this case they did literally script it. But you can't predict the moments that are going to undo you, the places in which you're going to lose it. It's never the places where you think it's gonna be and it's never with the setting you think it's going to be. And so I just think there's something really powerful about that and about, you know, the larger image here. Which is that Buffy is carrying fucking everything in this episode. I mean, in this series she carries a lot too. But with the Summers family right now, she's managing Dawn, she's managing Joyce, she's managing Dawn not being her biological sister. She's—you know what I mean? She's managing all of this and she's completely alone with it.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Man. And you know, wouldn't it be nice if she had an available partner [Kristin laughs] who was willing to take on some of her emotional burden and share it with her? But no!

**Kristin:** Are you jumping to Spike? [laughs]

**Jenny:** Oh my god, no. I was just like, lamenting the fact that up until this point, Riley has been pretty there. And she just doesn't seem to either want to or be able to lean on him for anything.

**Kristin:** Right.

**Jenny:** Which is unfortunate, 'cause he's so *sturdy*.

**Kristin:** Well, if he just hid in the basement, looking through her old photographs.  
[laughter]

**Jenny:** Well, before we get there...

**Kristin:** Right.

**Jenny:** Before we get there. Joyce is continuing to talk up at the ceiling. And I have terrible news, listeners.

**Kristin:** Oh...

**Jenny:** Terrible, *terrible, terrible!* News.

**Kristin:** Oh. It's bad.

**Jenny:** Because she's not just talking to the ceiling. She's talking to the Queller demon, who's on the ceiling. Kind of like propped up slash down on its arms, in a slumber party pose.

**Kristin:** Yeah, the Queller demon has really practiced for this close-up. You know? He's kinda got himself a smokey eye. He's looking a little faded, a little creepy, a little old-timey.

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

**Kristin:** He's really worked on his pose. It's all in all—

**Jenny:** What do you think it says that even though I told you that the Queller demon is being portrayed by two women, that you keep referring to it as a "he"?

**Kristin:** [laughs] I guess it just—

**Jenny:** Men are disgusting?

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yeah—

**Jenny:** [laughs] Just kidding, boys. Obviously, just kidding. Also, Kristin said it, not me.

**Kristin:** [laughs] My notes in this scene get equally disjointed as they did when I first saw the Queller demon. I will read them to you. Each phrase ends in an exclamation point. Just the letter Q, exclamation point. Pukes, exclamation point. Dawn, exclamation point. Coat rack, exclamation point. Runs, exclamation point. Screams, exclamation point. Buffy can't hear! Exclamation point. Dawn! Exclamation point. Doors! Exclamation point. Woo! Exclamation point. [laughter]

**Jenny:** And that's the podcast, folks. [Kristin laughs] Thanks for tuning in. Yo. Amazing work, first of all.

**Kristin:** Thank you.

**Jenny:** Second of all, this Queller dropping down on Joyce, the worst.

**Kristin:** Ooh!

**Jenny:** Dawn busting in and immediately grabbing the coat rack—

**Kristin:** Fuck yeah!

**Jenny:** Feet first is like, ba-doom! That rocks. Great job, Dawn. Really amazing.

**Kristin:** I also love how she does it and then she immediately is like, "Ahhh!" [laughter]

**Jenny:** Well, everything is a process.

**Kristin:** Yeah, no, totally. I just think it's really believable.

**Jenny:** But I love how she runs around getting all the doors closed. And is like, [breathes heavily] and then opens the door to be like, [screams] "Buffy!"

**Kristin:** [laughs] It's really good! This is Dawn's best work to date.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, it's really fantastic. I think this Dawn's best episode.

**Kristin:** Yeah, well.

**Jenny:** So then Buffy's there and she's like, "you guys stay here, I got this." We see Joyce holding Dawn and saying, like, "It's okay, my baby, it's okay"—

**Kristin:** Ugh! But not before Joyce peels off the fucking gelatinous fucking—

**Jenny:** Oh, yeah! Sorry.

**Kristin:** You didn't like Jello, Joyce? Well, you got a fucking face full of it, so...

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yeah. [gags]

**Kristin:** Okay, so yes, then it's sweet and she's holding Dawn.

**Jenny:** Well, it's sweet, but Dawn also looks a little hollow in the eyes, I feel like, while this is happening.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Like, a little bit like, do I believe this or nay?

**Kristin:** Well, she's... [sighs] very traumatized.

**Jenny:** She's super traumatized, yeah.

**Kristin:** [sarcastically] I'm sure things will get better for her in the next few episodes. [laughs]

**Jenny:** [clears throat] Uh-huh? Meanwhile... Buffy's fighting the Queller demon all around the house. And is interrupted, we think, by the Queller demon coming up from the basement, but no. Lo, it's Spike and he's here because he was just stealing some junk from her basement, as he quickly stuffs what Buffy momentarily clocks as photographs of her into his jacket pocket. Just before the Queller demon, in a very timely fashion... pops back in to attack again.

**Kristin:** The line that Spike has when he first appears, where he's like, "did you hear a noise?" [laughter] is the best comedy of all time. Just completely unannounced, "did you, uh... did you hear something?" [laughter] Also, to those of you—there were a couple of you who wrote in, our last Sexual Tension Awards. And you were like, what about Spike and the sweater, Buffy's sweater? And so since Spike has now, two episodes in a row... sort of broken into Buffy's house, room, whatever, and stolen her things, I will say, we did discuss it. And we decided against giving Sexual Tension Awards to Spike if he is removing Buffy's possessions without permission. So—

**Jenny:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Kristin:** [laughs] No, sir. No, thank you. Actually—

**Jenny:** Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

**Kristin:** Should we go? Should we go to the Sexual Tension Awards before we get to the end? I think I have all of my nominees ready.

**Jenny:** Sure. I have no nominees, so I can't wait to hear what you have.

**Kristin:** Great, let's do this.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]  
Sexual tension award!

**Jenny:** My nominees, which I texted you while I was doing my watch, are "uhh..." And then in the second slot, "um..." And then in the third slot, "hmm..." And then in the fourth slot, "errr..." [laughter] I hope yours are a little more compelling than mine.

**Kristin:** I hope that they are.

**Jenny:** Wow, I'm never on this side of the line, getting to hear the nominations. That's a surprise.

**Kristin:** I know. And I—right, I normally tell—we normally discuss before, but since I had to mine this episode for these four, I decided to not tell Jenny. So bear with me, everyone, they're all stretches, okay? I'm going to nominate: Tara and Willow looking at the stars. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Okay. That seems legit.

**Kristin:** You know? They're probably gonna make out right after that. Except for then the meteor, so, you know. Next up, we have Xander and his boyfriend, Riley. They're in a fight, you know, things can get a little sexy when you're mad at somebody, [singsong] I'm just saying! [Jenny laughs] Third up, Jenny, I have Riley and his Beret Boys.

**Jenny:** [laughing] Oh my god.

**Kristin:** Because I think they wanna go to the bar after this and let off a little steam, if you know what I mean.

**Jenny:** Ooh! Yes. I know what you mean.

**Kristin:** Apparently, I am really for men-on-men in this Sexual Tension watch, because the fourth and final nominee that I could squeeze out of this episode is the missing scene between intern Ben and Riley.

**Jenny:** [laughs] Well, that's where my vote's going.

**Kristin:** You can follow us @BufferingCast for what probably will be the weakest, least cared about vote-off in Sexual Tension Award history. [laughter]  
@BufferingCast, see you over there. Thank you so much.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]  
Sexual tension award!

**Kristin:** So, Spike tosses a knife to Buffy in the most careful way ever. It's very straight. [laughter] It's kinda like how you hand someone a pair of scissors.  
[laughter]

**Jenny:** And Buffy stabs the shit out of the Queller demon. How nice.

**Kristin:** Oh god, and this is like—this is definitely the—

**Jenny:** Oh my god, they were like, we worked so hard on the mouth. Could you just make sure you really emphasize the mouth? [laughter] As the Queller demon's dying.

**Kristin:** Do you think Sarah Michelle Gellar pissed somebody off this day, where they were like, you know how it's gonna die? It's gonna nestle its little bug head in the crook of her neck! [laughter] It's so horrible! I feel so bad for Buffy for so many reasons, but maybe this is the worst thing—

**Jenny:** Yeah, this is the one.

**Kristin:** That has or will ever happen to her—

**Jenny:** What a nightmare.

**Kristin:** Is the Queller demon curling up and dying like a fucking baby in her arms.  
[laughter]

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yes. Yes.



**Kristin:** So Riley busts in, like, too little, too late, with his crew. And he walks right in on Spike helping Buffy up from underneath the Queller demon. And then we cut to a really sad moment, where Buffy is holding Dawn and her mom—

**Jenny:** Ugh!

**Kristin:** And saying, "I killed it. Everything is alright," which is truly the epitaph—epitaph? Is that what you say?

**Jenny:** Epilogue?

**Kristin:** No. The thing on a head—

**Jenny:** Well, epitaph is the thing that, yeah, goes on a headstone.

**Kristin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's like, I could see that as Buffy's—[laughs] Buffy's epitaph. "I killed it, everything is all right now." It's just like—

**Jenny:** Aww! Yeah.

**Kristin:** You know?

**Jenny:** Put it on her tombstone.

**Kristin:** Like, "I did it, I did it. I did the thing I'm supposed to do." And... yeah.

**Jenny:** [sighs] And then. And then. Because we just can't have nice things, Kristin! [Kristin laughs] It's Dreg in the backseat of Ben's car.

**Kristin:** Aw.

**Jenny:** Being all like, "Why'd you summon the Queller, my dude?" And Ben's like, "I'm cleaning up Glory's mess like I have my whole life." And we're like, [gasps] Ben and Glory know each other? For their whole—or his whole life? Oh my god!

**Kristin:** What?

**Jenny:** And then Dreg says—he's like, "I just want to know, *why*?" It's so weird. If Ben's been doing this his whole life, [laughs] why is Dreg inquiring now? "What is your motivation, my lord?"

**Kristin:** Well, maybe—we don't know—we don't know the lifespan or the career span of minions, you know.

**Jenny:** Oh, that's true.

**Kristin:** Maybe Dreg is newer or wasn't around the last time Ben cleaned—

**Jenny:** Right, right. He's the rookie minion?

**Kristin:** The rookie minion, yeah. Yeah.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah. I didn't realize until I was, again, on Wikipedia for this episode that Dreg is played by Kevin Weisman, who—

**Kristin:** Yes!

**Jenny:** Was most notably, I think, Marshall Flinkman on Alias, but also plays Dale Yorke on the Runaways. He's one of the parents of the runaways—

**Kristin:** Yeah!

**Jenny:** As is James Marsters. What do you think about those apples?

**Kristin:** [gasps] Wow, I love those apples! Thank you, Jenny.

**Jenny:** You're welcome. Also! I was furiously Wiki'ing over here during the taping of this episode to ensure that, as my brain was connecting some dots, Ben Kweller the singer-songwriter did not start releasing solo music until 2002. So I do not believe I can make a case that the Queller demon being connected to Ben [Kristin laughs] is some kind of singer-songwriter Ben Kweller reference. I don't think so.

**Kristin:** Oh my god! Ben Kweller. I haven't thought of that name in a long time.

**Jenny:** I know.

**Kristin:** Wow. Okay, so let's go to a—just the worst ending of an episode. I'm not talking about quality, I'm just talking about my heart. So we go to the hospital. And Joyce is about to go into surgery, which is how this ends, is Joyce being wheeled into surgery. But before we get there, Joyce says—

**Jenny:** Ugh!

**Kristin:** To Buffy, "I had this—" Like, she's sort of trying to describe—she's doing a good job at describing these experiences that she's having, with words that she has. Because she can't possibly compare these experiences to anything else. And

she said, "I had—it was like I had this knowledge that Dawn—" and she just looks at Buffy and she says, "She's not mine, is she?"

**Jenny:** Mm!

**Kristin:** And Jenny, if it's okay with you, I'd like to play a little clip of this exchange that they have.

[Clip from episode plays]

**Joyce:** She does belong to us though.

**Buffy:** Yeah, she does.

**Joyce:** And she's important. To the world, precious. As precious as you are to me. Then we have to take care of her. Buffy, promise me. If anything happens, I don't come through this—

**Buffy:** Mom—

**Joyce:** No, listen to me. No matter what she is, she still *feels* like my daughter. I have to know that you'll take care of her, that you'll keep her safe, that you'll love her like I love you.

**Buffy:** I promise.

**Joyce:** Good. Good. Oh. My sweet, brave Buffy. What would I do without you?

**Jenny:** Uh!

**Kristin:** Yeah...

**Jenny:** Oh my god, I love this.

**Kristin:** This is a lot. Because... [sighs] so much is happening in this moment. First of all, it's Buffy—first of all, it's like, where does Buffy get her Buffy-ness, right? She's the Slayer, but she's also Joyce's daughter. And Buffy's first response, really, to learning about Dawn was like, she took a minute. And then she was like, "but she's my sister and I have to care for her." And Joyce's—ugh, I have full-body chills. Joyce's first response to learning this is the same, is to say, I know that she is not mine, but I know that she belongs to us and she needs us.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And because of that, we have to help her. [groans] I knew I was gonna get a little emotional, but it's—

**Jenny:** [exhales] Yeah.

**Kristin:** I'm just about to get my period and... [Jenny laughs] And then the second layer of this, for me, is that the last thing that Joyce says to Buffy before she's wheeled into surgery is, "My sweet, brave Buffy, what would I do without you?" And Sarah Michelle Gellar, man. You can see in her eyes the line she doesn't want, which is: *I'm afraid what I would do without you.*

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** But I—there's not space for that here. [tears up] I have to be strong for you. And it's just a lot, okay!

**Jenny:** [exhales] Yeah, it is. Thanks for the fricking goosebumps, Kristin.

**Kristin:** I didn't do it! [laughs]

**Jenny:** Joyce.

**Kristin:** [laughs] It's just—

**Jenny:** Sarah.

**Kristin:** Yeah, it's really emotional.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And I guess we'll just see where this takes us. But for now, I think we're left in this episode seeing—we talk so much about the power of chosen family in this. And this is like this blend of, you know, blood kin and chosen kin. And the power that they have in holding each other up. And we saw what the Scoobies did this whole episode for Buffy. They gave her the space to have this experience and to not be—I mean, granted, she did eventually have to stab a horrible Queller demon. But they gave her the space to be with her mom and they gave her the space to be there for Dawn. And then at the end, we see the power of the Summers family and the Summers women.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And... that's why this show is so good. I tweeted earlier today, on the day of the recording of this, a screen cap of Giles saying—whatever his space alien quote is. And somebody replied and they said, you know, "what's incredible is that this ridiculously hilarious line falls in an episode that is also so emotionally resonant and powerful."

**Jenny:** Yeah!

**Kristin:** That's this show! That is this show.

**Jenny:** That is this show. You are not wrong. And on that note. I'd like to close out our discussion of the episode by touching on the very last scene. Which is a whole group of Scoobies assembled at the—

**Kristin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jenny:** Entrance to the OR hallway at the hospital. And everybody's looking pretty serious.

**Kristin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jenny:** And Joyce is rolling away. And *she*... looks remarkably calm. And I think part of it is because of the conversation she just had with Buffy. Like, it seems like some small weight has been lifted off of her.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** And she's got one arm bent up behind her head?

**Kristin:** Mm.

**Jenny:** And she's just got a real, like, "Wazzup?!" pose kinda going. [Kristin laughs] And in my headcanon, in her other hand, she is smoking a joint. [Kristin laughs] On her way to surgery.

**Kristin:** It's a beautiful image, Jenny.

**Jenny:** Saying, "what will be, will be. Life is a beautiful circle. From the moment we arrive on the planet, and step blinking into the sun."

**Kristin:** Mmm.

**Jenny:** "Everything the light touches, except the elephant graveyard."

**Kristin:** It is—

**Jenny:** Et cetera!

**Kristin:** It is interesting what you said. I know that you were making a beautiful last image for us and I'm just gonna fucking shatter it. [laughs] But I do think it's interesting that—what you said. That she looks relieved and you wonder—and I don't know if this is what you meant, if that relief comes from the realization that part of her experience was very real.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Getting confirmation from Buffy that what she had perceived was true—and it does also—I would like to end the episode by talking about that, that overlap. That Joyce is going into surgery for medical reasons, but some of her symptoms or manifestations overlap with the mystical. So things are getting murky, and we'll see where they go.

**Jenny:** We will indeed.

**Kristin:** What an episode!

**Jenny:** Well! What an episode. So. [laughs] You know what comes at the end of the episode, the part where I say: I'm Jenny Owen Youngs. And when I'm not watching Buffy, I'm usually writing and recording songs. You can learn more about me at [jennyowenyongs.com/buffering](http://jennyowenyongs.com/buffering). And you can give me a shout on Twitter @JennyOwenYoungs. Hey, I have a new EP out called Night Shift. You can hear it on digital platforms or buy a physical copy on my website. You could also hear me talk about another petite blond protagonist over on my other podcast, Veronica Mars Investigations.

**Kristin:** [laughs] I like that every single episode, you call her a petite blond protagonist. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Well! She! Is!

**Kristin:** I am Kristin Russo. You can find out more about what I'm doing when I'm not talking about Buffy or receiving many, many screen caps of Queller demons from Jenny Owen Youngs on my phone, on my website, which is [KristinNoeline.com](http://KristinNoeline.com). Somebody tweeted last episode and said "I was all ready for

Kristin's jingle and she didn't play it. Do you know why?" [laughter] I don't play it every episode, but since I offended you so, I will play the jingle.

**Jenny:** Please, remind the people.

**Kristin:** Yes.

[KRISTIN NOELINE jingle plays]  
Kristin with an I  
N-O-E-L-I-N-E

**Kristin:** Yes, that is how you spell my name and find my website. I do work with LGBTQ communities. I've been recently doing Skype calls with middle school and high school GSAs. You can check my Patreon—my personal Patreon out to see how you can support that work, because I am donating those talks. And it's been really amazing. And I also have another podcast that is, oh, one or two episodes away from being over. Joanna Robinson and I went through each of the 19 episodes of My So-Called Life on The Boiler Room. So go and check that out if you haven't. It's a nice little series to go through, it's very powerful and we've had a good time making it. So. How about us? How about our podcast, Jenny?

**Jenny:** Buffering the Vampire Slayer is on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, @BufferingCast. You can drop us an email at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com. And you can leave us a voicemail at area code 216, that's Cleveland, 30-BUFFY.

**Kristin:** Ah, you can support the work that we do in a few ways. You can go on over to our website, bufferingthevampireslayer.com. You can become part of our Patreon family. You can rate and review us on iTunes. You can purchase merchandise in our store. And right now, we told you this in the intro, but we do have the Be the Thing that Monsters Have Nightmares About t-shirt for sale, which is raising money to help those affected by the fires in Australia. All of that and more, bufferingthevampireslayer.com. And if you've already rated and reviewed us, you can rate and review Angel On Top 'cause they love your love as well.

**Jenny:** Hell yeah. And... hey. Till next time!

**Both:** Awwwooooooooooooo!

**Kristin:** [whispers] Queller demon.

**Jenny:** No! [Kristin laughs]

[Jenny performing "Listening to Fear" off the album Songs from Season 5 by Buffering the Vampire Slayer. [Lyrics here.](#)]