

Buffering the Vampire Slayer  
Episode 1.06: The Pack

**Jenny:** Hey friends. Before we get started, we just wanted to take a second to remind you of where we will each be this Friday, October 21st 2016. [Kristin laughs] I will be in Chicago playing a show at Beat Kitchen and you can get tickets at [beatkitchen.com](http://beatkitchen.com).

**Kristin:** And I will be in New York City at Bluestockings bookstore in Lower East Side of Manhattan. You can check it out. It's an event for Intersex Awareness Day that I'll be speaking at and [bluestockings.com](http://bluestockings.com) has all of the information that you need.

**Jenny:** And that's it, here we go.

[Theme Music]

**Jenny:** Welcome to Buffering the Vampire Slayer, a podcast where we're watching and discussing every episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, one at a time. I'm Jenny Owen Youngs.

**Kristin:** And I'm Kristin Russo and this week we're talking about Season 1, Episode 6, "The Pack."

**Jenny:** Stay tuned at the end of this episode and every episode of our podcast for a brand new, all new, original recap song that we write and record for every episode. Weeee.

**Kristin:** Hatch-cha-cha.

**Jenny:** So, before we get into it, uh, we want to give a shout-out to Lucy on Facebook who has given us a fantastic suggestion. Lucy wrote to us saying, "Could you do me a favor and give a very brief recap of which episode you're talking about? I've watched the series a few times but will not be watching again as you go through, and it would be super helpful to have a quick reminder about what the episode is."

"The one where the substitute teacher is a praying mantis," is the example she gives, which is totally legit.

**Kristin:** Yeah, this is a totally great idea and so starting now, Episode 6, "The Pack," we're gonna start just doing a little– a little nudge for those of you who are so familiar with the series that you aren't re-watching with us but you know inside and out, you just need a little reminder. So, Lucy, this is for you and everybody else who needs it. The Pack, uh, as described on IMDB, is the episode where Xander and several other students are possessed by the spirit of a demonic breed of hyenas that wreak havoc at Sunnydale High School. [laughter] There you have it. That's fun. That's a fun read too.

**Jenny:** Okay, so that's what we're getting into here.

**Kristin:** Yup!

**Jenny:** Alright, here we go.

**Kristin:** Wow. Wow.

**Jenny:** "The Pack."

**Kristin:** This episode, everyone.

**Jenny:** It's really a thing.

**Kristin:** It's really a thing and we got to watch it two times, not one time, but two times within– what, three days, I think, we watched this?

**Jenny:** Yes, twice within 72 hours.

**Kristin:** I just wanna say, there's a picture up on Twitter. It's a little far past now, but you can go look and see what my first response was to this episode.

**Jenny:** Kristin was *not* pleased.

**Kristin:** I mean– I just– it just is so ridiculous. Like, there’s so– I mean I have a lot to say, don’t get me wrong. But there’s just a lot of very ridiculous– the moment in which, before we even get to the credits, and everybody’s eyes turn green. That’s the moment where I was like, st– what!? [Jenny laughs] Come on!

**Jenny:** Yeah, but let’s wind it back. Let’s work up to that, shall we?

**Kristin:** I just wanted to jump into the, you know, general mood.

**Jenny:** So we open on a field trip for high schoolers to the local zoo. [Kristin laughs] I can’t even suspend my disbelief for that.

**Kristin:** Yeah, that’s like a– that’s definitely, like, a fourth-grade/fifth-grade field trip, right?

**Jenny:** Absolutely.

**Kristin:** Yeah, I did it in fourth grade or fifth grade. I went to the Bronx Zoo, it was great.

**Jenny:** And that was perfect for when you were, what are you, ten? Or something.

**Kristin:** Ten, eleven, yeah, like, you know.

**Jenny:** High schoolers are not going to the zoo, I don’t think.

**Kristin:** Unless there’s like a specific reason, which definitely there’s not. Everyone is just meandering about the zoo, excited to not be in class, which I get. But also, Sunnydale High School, maybe you should think about the education you’re giving to your students.

**Jenny:** Step it up.

**Kristin:** Um, so, okay. So a lot happens at the zoo. I mean– a lot happens at the zoo, but I just mean in this moment, there’s a lot going on. One thing that I was really fond of is this moment when Xander and Willow run up and they’re like, “Buffy, you missed it! The zebras were mating.”

**Jenny:** Oh my words.

**Kristin:** "They both had stripes!" and both Willow and Xander are wearing striped shirts.

**Jenny:** They say it's like "the heimlich with stripes."

**Kristin:** It's like the heimlich with str- I mean, you know, I didn't quote the line. I'm just saying, they were like, this thing happened, zebras were having sex and they're both wearing stripes. Like, shout out to the wardrobe designer-

**Jenny:** So good.

**Kristin:** Whoever made those decisions, nice work.

**Jenny:** Totally. I love that when we first meet the foursome that we will see throughout the rest of the episode-

**Kristin:** You mean the "pack"?

**Jenny:** That's right. They come up to Buffy with the burn, "Oh, it's Buffy and all her friends," she's alone. Cordelia just used this burn on Buffy in the last episode. [Kristin laughs] But here it is again, just as effective. Also, the Paul Rudd/John Travolta mash-up of a person who seems to be the leader of the pack-

**Kristin:** Yes, "vroom, vroom."

**Jenny:** I wanted to let you know- yes- I knew he looked familiar and it's been bugging me and on our second watch I looked him up and realized that he was- are you ready?

**Kristin:** I'm ready. I told Jenny not to tell me until we were recording. Who is he?

**Jenny:** Well he, of course, is Piper Perabo's love interest on *Covert Affairs*.

**Kristin:** [gasps] Oh, man!

**Jenny:** She's always, like, sitting on the beach, holding a bracelet and having flashbacks to when she was dating him before he, like, disappeared or something.

**Kristin:** Yes! Yes! Wow, so for those of you listening, many of you probably do not know this about me but in 2010, 2011, I went through a very hardcore Piper Perabo obsession phase. Where I talked about her all the time, I religiously watched *Covert Affairs*. So, in case you're like, well, how do they know so much about this– [laughs] character in *Covert Affairs*? It's 'cause of me. [Jenny laughs] Um, okay, well that makes sense.

But yeah, this bullying moment, if you wanna call it that, is just so silly. It's like, first of all, it doesn't make any sense to me because Buffy doesn't give a fuck. Like, she *never* would care about something like this and she starts by not caring but like by the end of their ridiculous bullying–

**Jenny:** Once they get to the material of “you got kicked out of your school, careful, she might beat you up”, those are the lines that hit hard on her, which doesn't make any–

**Kristin:** I mean, the getting kicked out of school thing, I guess there's a little something there 'cause, you know, Joyce is always on her back about getting kicked out. But like, really? It just was a– you know, it was a moment that I found a little less than believable. I did not think that Buffy Summers would be affected by this gaggle of morons, you know?

**Jenny:** No, but I guess even the slayer has, uh, a teen experience–

**Kristin:** [sighs] I guess.

**Jenny:** Where her security levels are in flux.

**Kristin:** I guess. And you know, I have a larger theme thing that I think ties in here. Which is, we talked in episode three, “Witch,” about– I'm so proud of myself that I'm gonna start to know all the titles of the episodes. You're all going to start to really accept me as a genuine bonafide *Buffy* fan. Um, but season– or episode 3, “Witch,” we talked about how, you know, because

we're in this fantasy space, we can draw these very clear lines, and in "Witch" it was how a parent wants to be just like their child or wants their child just to be like them and that line was drawn very clearly by like a full-on body switch. And this episode does something very similarly with this idea of this animalistic pack, um, and pack behavior and high school culture, right?

**Jenny:** Mmm-hmm

**Kristin:** That this is what we see in high schools, that people are cliqued off, that it's pretty vicious, and you know, this sort of... metaphor? Is that the right word? Of like, you know, packs of animals hunting other packs of animals.

**Jenny:** Totally, preying on the weak.

**Kristin:** Preying on the weak. Exactly!

**Jenny:** Very high school.

**Kristin:** Very high school.

**Jenny:** Were you- in high school, were you strong or weak?

**Kristin:** I was probably more the Buffy- I mean, she's strong. But in the high school hierarchy, she's sort of like in this weird middle space where, you know, she gets along with Cordelia but she hangs out with Willow and Xander. She's getting picked but, I just don't- [laughs] I wanted to say she's getting picked on by, like, the popular kids but like, who are these people? Who is this pack? I don't- anyway.

**Jenny:** We don't have any reason to think they're popular.

**Kristin:** Yeah, I guess that's true.

**Jenny:** They're just mean.

**Kristin:** They're just mean. Um, so I guess I would lean more towards like, the weak end, if you were looking at the high school structure

stereotypically. But I was like Buffy in usually, like, not giving a fuck, you know? Like, I didn't– I don't know. I wasn't bothered by the popular kids laughing at me, or things of that nature because I had a really solid group of friends who I loved and I was like, these people are ridiculous.

**Jenny:** Right, right, right.

**Kristin:** Maybe that's why I got so disappointed in Buffy for feeling sad. [laughter] What about you? Strong or weak?

**Jenny:** Uh, well I feel like I was, hmm, 50% didn't care, 50% care, probably. Like, right down the– like a little black and white cookie. Um, there were definitely a lot of, like, jocky, mouthbreathy types who would walk by class as I was in and cough an insult.

**Kristin:** Ugh. Lord.

**Jenny:** [laughs] But also I wasn't like, wow, I wish they really liked me.

**Kristin:** Yeah, and you know, there's something about all the slayerettes, to be honest, Willow and Xander included, who have this element where they kind of see right through that shit. And I feel like that's how I felt in a lot of moments in high school, where it was just like, are you really– like, *really*? Like, you're gonna cough an insult? What is this? A poorly written sitcom, you know? Which is hilarious 'cause I do feel like that is sometimes the reaction that Willow and Xander and Buffy have. They're like, come on.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And they are in a sit-com. Well, I guess it's not a sit– is this a sit-com?

**Jenny:** No.

**Kristin:** What is a sitcom?

**Jenny:** Well, a sitcom is like a situational comedy

**Kristin:** Situational comedy, right.

**Jenny:** So I mean there's plenty of laughs, but there's a lot of drama and dark energy.

**Kristin:** I was using the word sitcom to mean any television show that's 30-60 minutes and like–

**Jenny:** With a joke.

**Kristin:** Yeah, no, no, I just forgot what it stood for. [laughs] Credentials revoked!

**Jenny:** [laughs] So let's move down to the hyena house because... wow, that one string of caution tape and the lone flashing orange light and the sign that's just the thing you put up after you've mopped a floor to let people know that it's wet. But instead of "cuidado piso mojado," it says: "No Admittance, Keep Out"

**Kristin:** Right.

**Jenny:** Very effective deterrent, I'm sure.

**Kristin:** And caution tape, right? There's caution–

**Jenny:** One piece of caution tape that is at chest height, it's very easy to duck under.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yes, as we see 'cause they all go– I did wanna give a shout out– you know, we've had a lot of issues with Xander. We're going to continue to have some issues with Xander. But, you know, Xander has a nice moment here where Xander's like, you know what, guys? I'm gonna go take care of this, I'm gonna go defend Lance from this pack of mean kids.

**Jenny:** Very cool of Xander.

**Kristin:** And he doesn't hesitate, he ducks right under that one flimsy piece of caution tape and runs after them. And I just wanna take a moment, 'cause I thought that was prime Xander, good Xander.

**Jenny:** Very cool of Xander.

**Kristin:** We need to highlight the good in addition to the not so good.



**Jenny:** Also when he trots on down that path, Willow looks *very* impressed. [Kristin laughs] She has got a face on her like, "my hero!"

**Kristin:** Yes. Well, I mean, this episode, we finally get to actually hear them talk about Willow's feelings for Xander, right? 'Cause we've heard her say *things*, kind of off the cuff things, but nobody's ever had a direct conversation about the fact that she has a crush on Xander.

**Jenny:** Right, right.

**Kristin:** And we get that in this episode.

**Jenny:** Just in the very next scene, after we meet the super intense zookeeper.

**Kristin:** Yeah, and before we get to that scene with Willow and Buffy— besides— the zookeeper, listen. We've all seen the episode now so we all know the zookeeper doesn't wind up being our friend. But I wanna say, I *loved* the zookeeper in this first moment.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** He like— I think also he was, like, the only adult in this scene apart from Flutie— who I also kind of love. I think that might make people upset with me or something, I don't know, I just love Flutie's rid— just, he— I don't know.

**Jenny:** He's just so overblown and I feel like they really go out of their way to make him more likeable in this episode.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Right before they kill him.

**Kristin:** Right, well he's just so enthusiastic and he talks to the kids in this like "hey kids!" kind of a way, which is, I think, what's set up in contrast to the way the zookeeper talks to Willow and Buffy in this moment. Because— it's like, they're on equal playing ground. And he's like, "listen, this is the deal, these hyenas are kinda dangerous and here's a crazy spooky story." [laughter] I really liked him. I really liked him in this moment.

**Jenny:** Yeah he's great. Okay, so we cut to The Bronze and it's DJ Night No Cover, of course.

**Kristin:** Yeah, well, hold on, actually. Because we did mention the moment when everyone's eyeballs turn green, but I just want to take another moment with it.

**Jenny:** Oh, right.

**Kristin:** We are *in* the hyena house. And this thing happens where the– you know, a predatory moment occurs with bullied Lance and they all look slowly into the hyena, which by the way... what?

**Jenny:** Oh my god, that hyena is maybe the worst practical effect I've ever seen in my life.

**Kristin:** Why couldn't they just get a hyena?

**Jenny:** Or just, like, make a hyena that didn't look like that.

**Kristin:** It looks like a muppet, like–

**Jenny:** It looks like a total muppet

**Kristin:** It's a muppet hyena and its eyes turn green. And then of course everybody else's eyes turn green. Then Kristin sits on the couch, laughs hysterically and says, "what is happening?"

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** But then we see that Xander– right. Xander's eyes are green. Xander is possessed by the hyena spirit and I gotta say, I think I like– um, Nicholas Brendon? That's his name, right? His acting as–

**Jenny:** He's great.

**Kristin:** He's phenomenal, he's phenomenal. His difference between regular Xander and evil Xander is spot on. I was super into it.

**Jenny:** Totally.

**Kristin:** Alright, now you can talk about boots and DJ Night No Cover.

**Jenny:** Okay. DJ Night No Cover at The Bronze. Why does Willow know what Xander's blood pressure is? Is my first question. Why? Under what circumsta– how? [Kristin laughs] Um. Yikes. Okay, but right we see Willow and Buffy have this total girl talk moment where they're just like, "I have a

crush on this boy," "I have a—" well, actually it's more like, "*You* have a crush on this boy."

**Kristin:** Yeah

**Jenny:** "You have a crush on *this* boy."

**Kristin:** Yeah, they call each other out, big time.

**Jenny:** Unfortunately, we don't get to look at Angel in this episode. What a bummer.

**Kristin:** Ugh, we think we do for a moment in time. I mean, I did, 'cause it's the first time I've watched this episode. So when Buffy was like "Angel?" I was like "Angel?" Yeah. I was right with her.

**Jenny:** Yeah but false alarm, unfortunately.

**Kristin:** I was right with her. Also this is just— oh, an unfortunate line happens in this conversation where Buffy finally does admit to finding Angel attractive by saying, "He's a honey."

**Jenny:** Oh, lord.

**Kristin:** So, I wish I didn't have to hear that. I don't like it.

**Jenny:** That's not what we would hope for.

**Kristin:** I don't like it. But you did say that we saw the— as we enter The Bronze, we see this scene, right? Like, the scene that Kate talked about last episode?

**Jenny:** Yes, yes.

**Kristin:** The lamé pants are there, the "DJ night: no cover" sign is there. I hope we get to see it again. I hope that it's a few times cause it's pretty—

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah.

**Kristin:** Now it's a fun little...

**Jenny:** We'll have our eyes out for it.

**Kristin:** What do you call it?

**Jenny:** Easter egg?

**Kristin:** An easter egg, yeah.

**Jenny:** So Xander shows up, he's acting weird, we get the first... sniff.  
[Kristin laughs] He does his first sniff of Buffy's hair.

**Kristin:** Oh, god.

**Jenny:** And informs her that she has taken a bath. Which she cannot deny.

**Kristin:** Right, which he is– he's gonna *forgive* her for taking a bath, by the way. [Jenny groans] Yeah, yeah, things get pretty creepy, pretty fast here. And then the moment the pack enters, too, is hilarious to me.

**Jenny:** Oh, yeah, their eye contact.

**Kristin:** It's, like, silence for like ten seconds and everybody just sits and looks at everybody else.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah

**Kristin:** Everybody feels weird. And then, I don't know, then some stuff happens. We have the training session happening, right, I know that–

**Jenny:** Giles is winded.

**Kristin:** Giles is very tired by the training session which– you exclaimed during our watching, like, "Just in the library! Just in plain day!"

**Jenny:** Just during school hours? Fine.

**Kristin:** Fine, nobody goes in the library, as we know.

**Jenny:** Then we go to pig cam.

**Kristin:** Yes. Oh, I love the pig cam.

**Jenny:** And we meet Herbert.

**Kristin:** Ugh! R.I.P, rest in power, Herbert.

**Jenny:** We hardly knew ye.

**Kristin:** Ugh. What a sad thing. We'll get there, we'll get there. For now, let's appreciate Herbert.

**Jenny:** He's very cute.

**Kristin:** Yeah, he's very– but see, they got a pig. Why couldn't they get a hyena? You know what I'm saying?

**Jenny:** Great point. Well, pigs are probably a little easier to manage than a hyena is.

**Kristin:** [laughs] I guess. My next big moment here is, oh my god, it rains in Sunnydale? So I don't want to skip anything that you have to say, but there's this scene with this lightning bolt and the gym coach is like, "well, it's raining, so everything else is cancelled, we must play dodgeball."

**Jenny:** Yeah, first of all I don't buy the rain 'cause they're in southern California.

**Kristin:** I know but it– well, it happens every once in awhile.

**Jenny:** I guess. The gym teacher just *loves* dodgeball.

**Kristin:** Oh my god, I love the gym teacher.

**Jenny:** He's so into it. He's so into his whistle. He's watching so– there are so many cuts to him while they're playing. It's so funny.

**Kristin:** Yes and he also, he has a great line where he tells them they're playing dodgeball or whatever and he says something along the lines of, "You know how it works: ya dodge." [laughter] I wrote down "ya dodge" 'cause I love it. I love it!

**Jenny:** So a couple important things that we get out of this scene. The first to me, is that we see Xander spike Willow, right? Which–

**Kristin:** Nice choice of words there, Jenny.

**Jenny:** [laughs] Thank you. Which definitely gets our sort of collective hackles up because we don't ever like to see Willow get hurt.

**Kristin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Jenny:** And this is a rough episode for that. So that's, like, very telling that this change is really happening, taking hold. And then the– when it's down to just Buffy on one side of the line and the pack and Lance on the other side of the line. And they all look at Buffy, recognize that she's strong, realize that they have a very weak party on their line and all spike Lance together.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Kinda brutal. Kinda ridiculous, kinda brutal.

**Kristin:** It is pretty brutal and then cut back to the gym teacher who says, I love this game, or– right? [laughter]

**Jenny:** [in a gruff voice] "God, this game is brutal. I love it."

**Kristin:** [laughing] Yes, yes.

**Jenny:** Also, one other thing about the dodgeball scene. I love so much in film and TV when, in gym class, the students have their school col– it's like, they have specific clothes they have to buy for gym that you could get at the school store that are like the school colors. And there's all these variations but everybody is like maroon and gold, right? Like, tank tops, T-shirts, ringer tees, whatever.

**Kristin:** Totally!

**Jenny:** I wanted that so bad when I was in high school. That would have made gym class, I think, feel worthwhile to me.

**Kristin:** I had– when I was in elementary school, I went to Catholic school in elementary school, up through sixth grade. So of course, you know, we had uniforms for everything. But we did have uniforms for gym, so everybody was in– it was– we were blue and gray, I think.

**Jenny:** Oh, me too.

**Kristin:** Yeah, so... those were your school colors? Blue and grey?

**Jenny:** Yeah, blue and grey.

**Kristin:** Oh, nice.

**Jenny:** Wow, I'm still learning things about you, even to this day.

**Kristin:** Aww, so sweet.

**Jenny:** I just want to step back really quick... and talk about when Flutie is walk– Flutie and Buffy are walking Herbert back to Herbert's room. And he has this great little monologue where he's saying, "When I was your age, we cared so much about school spirit and we were really into our football team and their scores and school rivalry and that comradery and stuff." And then he says, "But also, when I was your age, I was surrounded by people my age telling me how much better it was when they were my age." And that is so beautiful. I love that moment so much and it really, really cements Flutie, I think– he's been an antagonist to Buffy the whole time we've known him, up to this point. And this episode just makes him so much sweeter.

**Kristin:** Yeah, and their relationship is very different too, in this episode. Because he says that to her– I mean, he's opening up to *her*, not just to anybody. And she's– you know, they have a moment. She's hearing him, as much as she can, as a high school student, hear her principal talking about, you know, his inner workings. But it's a really sweet moment. And he loves

Herbert. This is such a sad... I hate this arc. [sighs] And speaking of sad things, actually my next note is about Xander and Willow 'cause this happens. This is the moment that happens right after that which is that Xander just rips Willow apart in the hallway in this moment.

**Jenny:** Rough.

**Kristin:** He sets her up. He's not even just mean– I mean, he is just mean. But like, he sets her up for this expectation of he's gonna tell her how he feels about her and it's different than he feels about anybody else.

**Jenny:** Right, right.

**Kristin:** And then everything comes crashing down when he says he won't have to look at her pasty face anymore.

**Jenny:** No, like, I appreciate the artfulness of architecting that set-up, you know? Making her think one thing is coming and then another thing ends up coming. But... pasty face? Like, are hyenas bad at insults, is that what we're meant to understand here?

**Kristin:** [laughs] I don't know, it worked on me. I mean, it wasn't the most–

**Jenny:** It's pretty bland, I think.

**Kristin:** I guess but, Willow!

**Jenny:** I know.

**Kristin:** Her tiny face, it just crumples. I hate this, I hate it. I'm one of the humans, one of the many humans who can't stand to see Willow crumble and she *does*. I mean, we see her later crying with Buffy when they're talking about how Xander is being horrible. And it's just... it's so sad. But I think before we get to them talking, we get to a very special scene.

**Jenny:** Oh, boy.

**Kristin:** Don't we?



**Jenny:** We sure do.

**Kristin:** Well, so we're outside, and at the picnic tables are many Sunnydale students as the pack approaches because they smell...

**Jenny:** Hot dogs.

**Kristin:** Hot dogs. And we meander with the pack over to the table they've chosen to pick on, whereupon they steal a hot dog from a character named-

**Jenny:** Adam

**Kristin:** Adam, played by who, Jenny?

**Jenny:** Played by, your friend and mine, Mr. Steven Smith.

**Kristin:** Yes! His second time in the *Buffy* series.

**Jenny:** You may remember him from Episode 2, "The Harvest," where he's in the computer lab with Cordelia and Harmony.

**Kristin:** Yes, he pops up from behind a computer screen ever so gracefully. And now we're seeing him again. He has a few lines this time and we are lucky enough to have Steven as a guest on today's show.

**Jenny:** Yeah, we were so excited to talk to him a little bit about his experience with this show.

[music cue]

**Kristin:** The first story we want to share with you from Steven is how he became a part of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* to begin with

**Jenny:** We are so excited to be talking to you, Steven Smith, pillar of the rock and roll community. [laughter] General dreamboat and, much to my delight when I first learned this fact, actor in Season 1 of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

**Steven:** You're very kind and very generous [Kristin and Jenny laugh] with a lot of those descriptions of me. Even the term "actor" is very kind and generous. If you saw that, but yes! A thousand years ago, did *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

**Kristin:** How did this happen? How did you– what was the audition process? How did you come to the show? Tell us.

**Steven:** Yeah, back in the day, pre-interwebs– they still do it this way but, you know, an agent gets a breakdown and it'll say, "we need white dudes."

**Kristin:** Very rare!

**Jenny:** So rare to see a call for white dudes.

**Steven:** Back in the 90s. It's– I mean, it's nice that they're trying to help us out. [laughter] We– as a white male, I'm kinda sick and tired of people just kinda– well, "the man," really. And by "the man," I mean everyone not me. [laughter] I auditioned for the part that Eric Balfour played in "The Harvest."

**Jenny:** Ohh, Jesse?

**Steven:** Yes.

**Jenny:** You auditioned for the part of Jesse?

**Steven:** I auditioned for Jesse and he got Jesse.

**Jenny:** I wish that you had been Jesse.

**Steven:** Well he's– I've met him before. He's done a lot of stuff, he's a good actor. He's like– you meet him and you're like, oh, tall and tan, *that's* what you wanted, I got it. [laughter] *Sunnydale*, that makes sense. You don't want pasty and long-haired at the time. [laughter] And my hair was in, like, three different colors and chunky and all kinds of just, buckets of bad. So I went in and the call back was going in to meet with Joss and he had a piano in his office.

**Jenny:** Really?

**Steven:** And he was just playing away, doing something. And I was like, that's kinda cool, he's kind of a musical guy.

**Jenny:** What?

**Steven:** Never thought about that again until Dr. Horrible.

**Jenny:** Right!

**Steven:** So when that came out, I was like, the hell– oh, of course, duh! [laughter] Yeah, musical guy, this is great, this is perfect. So he– I met with him very briefly and was like, nice to meet you, whatever. And I didn't get the part of Jesse but they wanted me to end up playing one of Xander's friends who would come back every once in awhile.

**Kristin:** The fact that when you walked into Joss's office, he was playing the piano!

**Steven:** Right!

**Jenny:** Is really something.

**Kristin:** Is *really* something. It's just like a very– I can picture it in my mind, you know, where like normally there'd be a dude in an office stirring a cocktail or, you know, doing something– but I love that he's–

**Jenny:** Right, right, or just like, typing furiously.

**Kristin:** Right, and I love that he was like, "oh, ahem, excuse me. I was just playing some piano." [laughs]

**Jenny:** Playing some piano, just tickling the old ivories.

**Kristin:** Yeah, oh my.

**Jenny:** [to the listener] We also knew a fun fact about Steven's role in Episode 2, "The Harvest," where he appears in the computer lab with Harmony, Willow and Cordelia.

**Jenny:** [To Steven] In episode two of *our* podcast, I do an impression of you in that scene. [Kristin laughs] And what's really peculiar–

**Steven:** Do it!

**Jenny:** Is that you don't sound like yourself and there's, like... you're like, "what?! Yeah!" but your voice is lower than I can make my voice, you know what I mean? And like, what's up with that?

**Steven:** I guess the reason is, after watching how awesome Charisma and I were in that scene, they decided, you know what? He sounds terrible. [Kristin and Jenny laugh] Let's overdub his voice with someone else who's not him.

**Jenny:** First of all, I can't imagine you being terrible. Second of all, it's just such a– it's like the surfiest, stoneriest– like, I'm sure you sounded plenty stoned.

**Kristin:** I know, that's my thing is like, how different could it have been? Like, the overdub thing.

**Steven:** Here's the funny part: when we were doing that scene, they– I said, "do you want it like a surfer guy?" And the director said, no, not at all, we don't want that, just be you.

**Kristin:** Ohh!

**Steven:** Don't be the surfer. So when the episode came out, I guess they were like, uh, we didn't do the surfer thing so– and this is a kind of a common practice. Rather than pay me another rate to come back in and loop my voice as a surfer... I've seen it happen. They probably– the sound engineer probably was like, "I'll do it." [laughter]

**Kristin:** One last story we loved from Steven was his telling of an experience he had at a Comic-Con a few years back, involving the hot dogs we see in this scene in "The Pack."

**Steven:** I ended up at MTV a few years later. And while I was at MTV, I worked for a website called MTV Geek, which was, outside of the rock show, the most fun I've ever had– the best job I've ever had.

**Kristin:** Cool.

**Steven:** We would go to nothing but comic book conventions, and we would do livestream shows like this and just talk to everybody– had a, you know, fairly decent production value for that. But there was just a revolving door of people coming in. So one year, they said, "Xander's coming." And I went, "Here's what we're gonna do..." [laughter] We're not gonna tell him and we're gonna roll the footage of him throwing the hot dogs at me and see if he remembers.

**Kristin:** Oh my god.

**Jenny:** Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god.

**Steven:** And it was all set up and he was coming in. And when you have so many– when you have the conventions, the convention assigns– not really a handler, but just kind of a helper, which can be someone in PR or can be someone who's just a fan walking you around. So we showed up and I said– and I reintroduced myself, didn't say anything, and I said, "hey man, we're gonna show this short clip" and he went, "Oh, of me throwing hot dogs at you?" [Jenny and Kristin laugh] And I immediately looked over at this poor young lady and I went, "you told, didn't you?!" And she went... she cowered and dropped her head. I went, "You screwed up. That would have been funny, and you blew it."

**Kristin:** Man! I'm so sad that that didn't happen. I'm mad at that girl, retroactively.

**Jenny:** Curse her!

**Steven:** Yes.

**Kristin:** This has been a joy, you are the best

**Jenny:** Seriously. Truly.

**Steven:** You guys are the best, congratulations, continued success with the rest of it. Jenny, I just noticed you're wearing a *Fahrenheit 451* shirt, that's amazing.

**Jenny:** Thank you so much, Kristin got this for me for my 30th birthday. Like, five years ago.

**Kristin:** Oh really, I didn't remember that it was for your 30th birthday.

**Jenny:** I love *Fahrenheit 451*, I love Ray Bra- agh, Ray Bradbury's so great.

**Steven:** If they give you ruled paper, write the other way.

**Jenny:** Dude! You don't know how many fucking notebooks from high school that I have that I like wrote that vertically on! [laughter]

**Steven:** Oh yeah.

**Jenny:** Help!

**Kristin:** Oh, wow, that's very special.

**Jenny:** I love you.

**Steven:** And then my other favorite line is- they talk about all the books and then it says, "and somehow, the comic book survived"

**Jenny:** Oh my god.

**Steven:** That was my other favorite line of *Fahrenheit 451*. I was like, yes, of course! [laughter] Of course the comic book survived, it is the ultimate art form! [laughter] You make the pictures do what you want, you read and tell the story, you can go backwards, it's up to you!

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

**Kristin:** Oh my gosh. Well, Steven, can you tell the good people here where they can find you and find more of your wonderful self?

**Steven:** Yeah, um. The short answer is nowhere.

**Jenny:** Nice, nice.

**Steven:** I have graduated from working steadily to being a full-time stay-at-home dad.

**Kristin:** Nice. That's rad.

**Jenny:** That's so cool!

**Steven:** So the one place you can semi-consistently find me is the podcast *Going Off Track*.

**Jenny:** Hell yes!

**Steven:** Which Jenny Owen Youngs has been on multiple times.

**Jenny:** Mm-hmm!

**Kristin:** Oh, wow. No big deal.

**Steven:** And is, as far as I'm concerned, a permanent guest host, like, any time you want to come back on, you can.

**Jenny:** I'd be honored.

**Steven:** Kristin, that invite is now open to you as well.

**Jenny:** What!

**Kristin:** [gasps] Wow! This marriage is really helping me out in the world.

**Steven:** Yeah, not only do you get half her shit and put her on insurance, but now you get to a part of a podcast. [laughter] The box is checked.

**Kristin:** Well, thank you very much!

**Steven:** So, *Going Off Track*, [goingofftrack.com](http://goingofftrack.com), you can check that out. I do tend to mouth off on the twitter @StevenSmithSays which you can go and listen to my incessant ramblings, which have taken a thankfully non-political bent of late.

**Kristin:** Well, Steven, thank you again so much for taking this time out to be here with us.

**Jenny:** Yeah, thank you!

**Kristin:** This is so exciting,

**Jenny:** So great.

**Kristin:** Got to learn about you, got to learn about *Buffy*...

**Jenny:** Got to learn about Joss's office piano.

**Kristin:** Right! So great.

**Steven:** Isn't that cool? That was so cool, I never forgot that. Thank you guys, congrats on everything. Make some T-shirts and please sell them.

**Kristin:** Yes, yes, we're on it. We're all over it. That's happening.

**Jenny:** Radical. Okay. Thanks, Steven.

[end music cue]

**Jenny:** So that's just an excerpt of our conversation with Steven, who was generous enough to spend some time talking to us about his experiences on the show. If you wanna hear our entire conversation, you can go over to [soundcloud.com/bufferingthevampireslayer](http://soundcloud.com/bufferingthevampireslayer), where we'll be posting the whole interview.

**Kristin:** Yes, and there's some really fun stories in there that we didn't include here so I would head on over if I were you. Do be warned, and we'll say this at the start of the soundcloud episode, that there are some spoilers.



**Jenny:** There are spoilers.

**Kristin:** There's a couple of small spoilers for those of you who are journeying with us. You might need to wait to visit that episode until we're done. Okay, so... let's talk about Herbert, shall we?

**Jenny:** [sighs] Herbert!

**Kristin:** Ugh, this is just– I have a couple of confusing moments here. First of all, they stay so clean, right? So they don't eat the hotdogs, they hate the hot dogs, they go and they eat Herbert.

**Jenny:** There's no blood anywhere.

**Kristin:** There's no– there's one moment when one of them wipes the side his mouth. There's nothing on it, but he wipes it. But other than that, I was like, damn! And later, we see the bones of the pig.

**Jenny:** Let me tell you something, that bone that Buffy steps on is too big to have been inside of that pig.

**Kristin:** [gasps] Ohh.

**Jenny:** I'm sorry.

**Kristin:** No, I'm impressed.

**Jenny:** I know it has to be a certain size to be sort of recognizable as a bone or whatever.

**Kristin:** One of the many reasons that I married you, Jenny, is that you would notice something like that. I think it's fantastic. Yeah, I guess pig bones are small, huh?

**Jenny:** I mean, that pig was tiny.

**Kristin:** Yeah, that was a tiny little piglet. Okay, so yeah, another–

**Jenny:** That bone like half the length of that pig's body.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Another inconsistency. But something else here is that, you know, Flutey comes out– Principal Flutey comes out. He sees the pack, minus Xander, just the four of them sitting at the table. And he's like, "I've had it in for you and I know you did this, detention forever!" And I'm– my question here is, they ate a live pig!

**Jenny:** Is detention the answer?

**Kristin:** They get detention? [laughs] I feel like, we're obviously dealing with something that probably, yet again, could stand the use of law enforcement or at least a counselor of mental health.

**Jenny:** Get somebody involved.

**Kristin:** Something's going on with these children that they have eaten a live piglet, Flutie. I don't think detention is the answer.

**Jenny:** That ain't right.

**Kristin:** And we find out that detention surely isn't the answer. [Jenny laughs] This is the w– this is a really hard scene. I mean, I started by talking about, like, ugh, this episode is so ridiculous. But even though this is one of the most ridiculous episodes, I think, of the series, if everybody informs me correctly. There's still these moments that are like, fuck! Like, they legit just jump on top of Flutie and they *eat* him.

**Jenny:** Yeah. The blond guy hyena's leap– that sort of really sets the real attack off– was a pretty great looking leap. Also, the way that the brunette girl stares at him with wide eyes and is like, "I'm sorry."

**Kristin:** Yeah, she does a good job of terrifying me.

**Jenny:** But neither of them are your favorite hyena.

**Kristin:** No, my favorite hyena is the girl hyena with blond, shaggy hair.

**Jenny:** You love her.

**Kristin:** I love her! I love her. Her makeup is done better than any of the other hyenas, in my opinion. Her eyes are red underneath and her haircut is just on point. I love her. I loved her the first viewing and the second viewing, I watched for her. She's my favorite hyena, now you know. But yeah, so Flutie– and then there's also, in this scene, he's got the scratch on his face.

**Jenny:** Ugh, poor Flutie.

**Kristin:** So it's very real and very sad. And the pan– the pan out of the attack down to the picture of smiling Flutie.

**Jenny:** Oh my god, he just has a picture of himself facing out on his desk. What?

**Kristin:** [laughing] It's so good

**Jenny:** Yeah, it's really good.

**Kristin:** So this moment is happening, which I think is a very rough moment, at the same time as an incredibly rough moment. But first, we're in the library. Giles and Buffy are talking, right, and Buffy is saying, "I think something's up." This is before the pig even dies. "I think something's up, Giles. Xander's acting weird, he's being really mean, he was mean to Willow, something seems like it's up." And Giles– go ahead, Jenny. I see that you have things to say.

**Jenny:** I mean, Giles is like, "oh, it's devastating, he's turned into a 16-year-old boy. Of course, you'll have to kill him." Anthony Stewart Head just crushing the delivery here, so good.

**Kristin:** Yeah, he's really good at the sassy comments.

**Jenny:** And I love– is the first time we've seen Buffy say "something's going on here," and Giles doesn't– right?

**Kristin:** Not believe her, yeah.

**Jenny:** Usually Giles is leading the charge, right. But Buffy is saying something's going on here. Giles doesn't believe anything that he doesn't have circled in red Sharpie in one of his death papers.

**Kristin:** In one of his death papers. He doesn't have a death paper *yet*. He will tomorrow.

**Jenny:** Yes, for Flutie, maybe Herbert?

**Kristin:** Yeah, and his comment here, right? He says, "it's testosterone, boys can be cruel." I hung my head in this moment because I believe that Giles is better than this, than to say these horrible things about how it's "just the testosterone." I mean, he's essentially giving the "boys will be boys" speech here, which was very upsetting to me.

**Jenny:** Because the patriarchy!

**Kristin:** There it is, there it is. And it's just rearing its ugly head in this moment. But luckily right as Giles is like "meh meh meh" about testosterone. In comes- is it Willow?

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Yeah, in comes Willow to say, "hey, by the- "

**Jenny:** "They found Herbert!" Which nobody knew Herbert was missing. Thank you, Willow!

**Kristin:** [laughs] He was eaten, he was eaten. And then Buffy has a great moment where she looks at Giles and she says, "So, it was the testosterone, huh?" or whatever, you know?

**Jenny:** Ha-ha!

**Kristin:** Ha-ha, *man*! Ha-ha! I can't say it again, only one time per episode.

**Jenny:** Just the once.

**Kristin:** Just the once, but you know what I'm thinking. But I think that this moment is– I mean, I'm laughing and it's a funny moment. But then, as Flutie– as we have this scene with Flutie being eaten by the pack, by the four members of the pack, we have this other scene happening with Xander and Buffy. [Jenny groans] Right, in the room where Herbert had been kept. Actually, it's the scene where you're very upset about the bone choice for the pig– that's really upsetting. Where, obviously, it has this safety on it because Xander is possessed by a hyena, Xander is an animal. But this is a very violent scene. Buffy actually refers to it as a sexual assault in the scene that follows it. Where Xander is saying– I mean, Xander is saying these lines that we hear again and again. "Is this what you want? We both know what you want." And then he has this horrible line, "The more I scare you, the better you smell."

**Jenny:** Ugh. Bleghh.

**Kristin:** Which is– you know. And the thing– the only reason– I mean, this scene is upsetting. It's troublesome. Buffy throws a desk at him. But the reason that I want to pay special attention to this scene is because the way the episode ends, right– 'cause I want to take this full arc with this moment– is really bizarre. Because Xander is back to being Xander, and Giles comes around the corner– you know, 'cause Xander pretends he doesn't remember anything that happened. And it's kind of talked about at the end of the episode, like, Buffy and Willow are laughing about it. And Giles is like, "your secret's safe with me." And I know in that moment, what they're talking about is that Xander has a crush on Buffy and he let it slip.

**Jenny:** Right, right.

**Kristin:** But it's just like, really totally brushed over that this thing happened that was messed up. And if Xander remembers it, you'd want Xander to at least acknowledge it and apologize for it. Giles doesn't even know about it, so I don't know what Giles was talking about at the end of this episode.

**Jenny:** Giles is just there for us to have a laugh– to allow us to have that laugh at Xander.

**Kristin:** To allow us to have that laugh and you know. I don't wanna stick in this too hard and not allow us to have the larger piece of the episode. But

this is a real thing, and the decision was made and consciously made 'cause we hear again Buffy, in this next scene, say, "oh yeah, Xander—" You know, and she makes a joke of it too, like Xander doesn't wanna— what does she say?

**Jenny:** He tried his hand at felony sexual assault.

**Kristin:** Yeah, but she says, like, "yeah but he doesn't like Yanni or—"

**Jenny:** Uh, his idea— let's just say his animalistic idea of wooing doesn't involve a Yanni CD and a bottle of Chianti. Sidebar— [Kristin laughs] *whose* idea of wooing involves a Yanni CD and a bottle of Chianti?

**Kristin:** Oh, I love her.

**Jenny:** Maybe Joyce Summers, maybe that's where Buffy is getting this reference.

**Kristin:** Maybe. Oh, man. I love Buffy's quips, they're so good! She's the best. But yeah, I mean— I think that the question that I'm left with— well, there's two parts of this, right? One is that I wanna obviously call it out. I mean, I think we have to acknowledge that it's happened and think about the way that it was handled. And then I think the question is: is this positioned the way that it's positioned in this episode because it's saying this is so messed up? Like, the fact that this happens, that people do these things to other people, is so messed up. Because this is something that is on an animalistic level, which I think would be a positive viewing of this. Or is it troubling because this happens and then later isn't addressed? Or is it both because *Buffy* is a complicated universe. [sighs] Yeah, maybe we should— where can we go to lift the mood a bit, Jenny?

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, let's bring it up a little. You all might remember from last week our dear friend, Kate Leth, who joined us for "Never Kill a Boy on the First Date." Well, big news, Kate is joining us on this episode and future episodes with installments of Buffy Fashion Watch. So let's see what her keen eye has observed about this episode.

**Kristin:** I really hope it includes a neckerchief.

[Jenny performs the opening jingle for Buffy Fashion Watch]  
It's time for our friend Kate  
To give you the Buffy Fashion Update!

**Kate:** Welcome, everybody, to the first installment of Buffy Fashion Watch. I am so excited to be here and doing this, although it is kind of hilarious to me that we're opening with "The Pack," as it's one of the only episodes that has no Cordelia and, oh my god, is her absence felt here.

This whole episode centers around this group of characters who are supposed to be really dangerous and sexy and cool, and yet every single thing they wear is so astonishingly forgettable. [laughs] It's like Old Navy clearance rack, it's Target bargain bin. Everything is jeans, T-shirts, collared shirts, cardigan. There's nothing to it except the one girl with the short hair which, I mean, hey.

Outside of that, Buffy's opening look here is pretty good. She does have on the green dress from "Never Kill a Boy on the First Date." I'm not 100% sure that it's the same one, but it really looks like it, underneath a thick camel coat, which might be corderoy. I'm not totally positive on that one. But she has paired it with a patterned green neckerchief and a green camo print messenger bag and of course, her stylish yet affordable knee-high brown leather boots. Which come back later in The Bronze when she's talking to Willow who points out that she's wearing Angel's jacket and Buffy says, "Well, it goes with the shoes." And it's like, Buffy, you have *one pair of shoes*. [laughs]

Another thing that I do wanna say very quickly is that when Xander sort of transforms, Buffy and Giles are talking about how he's different lately, you know, he's *dressing* really different and... like, *is* he? The only difference to me is that his hair is slightly down and his collared shirts over his T-shirts are dark brown instead of like, green. It's really funny to me, Xander trying to be suave and sexy and this is so great.

So I mean, come back next week where Cordelia will have returned and saved us all. I'm so excited to talk about her for so many episodes in the future. And until then, see you at the mall.

[Jenny performs the closing jingle for Buffy Fashion Watch]  
That was our friend Kate,  
She gave you the Buffy fashion update!

**Jenny:** Wow, thank you so much, Kate, for that very relevant and topical discussion of important stuff.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Oh, we cannot wait to hear from you on so many future episodes. There is so much fashion to dissect and you know what, Kate, we *will* see you at the mall.

**Jenny:** Mm-hmm. I'll be at Things Remembered.

**Kristin:** [laughs] It's your favorite. It's your favorite store to reference.

**Jenny:** I love engravables.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Did you hear that, everyone? Stay tuned for our mailbag episode next week where we let you know what our P.O. box is. [Jenny laughs] You can send Jenny all the engraved things that she's ever wanted.

**Jenny:** Oh, dear god. Alright. So once Xander is successfully locked up in the library cage, which is seeing its first prisoner.

**Kristin:** Yeah, that's not the last time we'll see that library cage, although they'll have to rebuild it, I guess 'cause it was-

**Jenny:** Yeah, they're always rebuilding that thing. Why is there a cage in the li- ? Regardless.

**Kristin:** You know what it looks like? 'Cause there's a slot in it that looks like it's for book returns...

**Jenny:** Oh!

**Kristin:** So I don't know if it's supposed to be where the special books are kept so they don't want- it's very weird, but continue.



**Jenny:** So Giles comes in and lets them know that– he breaks the news that Principal Flutie has been devoured. And I feel like Anthony Stewart Head is doing such an amazing job in this scene. He’s so distressed in such a cool, sort of like– he kind of looks like he’s dissociating a little bit. And I think he just does a really great job.

**Kristin:** Yeah, and that’s a thing with this episode, which is what I was saying about these moments, is that even though some of the surrounding information is packaged a little bit silly-ly, this moment when he comes in– it is very apparent that a human being has died. A human being who they all know has died in a really, really graphic and horrible way. And you’re right, he– I mean, I felt all those feelings. And even then Buffy and Willow, Willow like sits down. You know, they have a moment. And then they leave Willow, Willow’s like, “I’m gonna stay with Xander.” And something that I really enjoyed about Willow’s time in the library with Xander is how much hyena footage she has found on the internet.

**Jenny:** I literally wrote down the same thing. It’s like, every time you cut back to Willow– she’s there for who knows how long. She’s just watching hyenas eat stuff.

**Kristin:** I know, like, what is she– and it never– there’s not a scene later where Willow is like, “oh, well, this is what they do” and “I solved the case by all this footage.” It’s just, what are you doing? I mean, I guess she’s just– maybe she’s just trying to understand Xander, you know? Like, because...

**Jenny:** Maybe...

**Kristin:** Maybe, oh, but I just love– where is she, on hyenas.com? You know?

**Jenny:** Yeah, right?

**Kristin:** Where is she find–

**Jenny:** Hyena Cam.

**Kristin:** YouTube doesn't even exist yet. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah. I love when the other four members of the pack show up and they're sort of- their faces are up in the high window and they're saying, "Willow..."

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** "Willow..." and that's sort of, like, calling back to the way that the zookeeper explains the mythology that they're referencing in this episode. Which I didn't find- I did just a cursory Googling and didn't find anything about this particular strain of hyena mythology. Although I would highly suggest you all check out the folklore section of the hyena article on Wikipedia because there seems to be a lot of hyena folklore that's greatly varied from all over the world. It's really interesting, but I didn't find anything about this particular thing. But I like this story. I like this myth, the idea that hyenas follow you around during the day, learn your name and then call it at night. And then we see them do this to great effect.

**Kristin:** Yeah, it's really beautiful. Yeah, and I think, so- I wrote down just a couple words that were used when we first hear about primals and what their philosophy is, if you will, you know, because I find it really interesting, right. Their philosophy is that humanity and consciousness is this very un-pure thing. That our consciousness as human beings takes us away from the state that we were meant to be at. And they want to get back to that pure state, that pure primal state. Which, you know, I mean, certainly I wouldn't sit here and condone eating Principal Flutie. But I do think that there's something very interesting about that. It's not this- it's an argument that I think has some- a line to it that I can follow, I guess. You know?

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, I think it's super interesting, and actually, it just reminded me of something that we can't talk about yet because it's a spoiler. [Kristin laughs] But I'm gonna try really hard to remember to reference back to this episode when we get there.

**Kristin:** Okay, maybe everyone will help you, everyone who just knows what you were talking about. I have something on equal importance level to most of the things we've talked about in this episode which is, where in the hell is Cordelia!?

**Jenny:** [Sings] Where's Cordelia?

**Kristin:** Where is Cordelia and why is she not involved with this episode? Did she need a day off? Like, what's going on here? I'm not thrilled about it.

**Jenny:** She's still in the credits.

**Kristin:** Kate was not thrilled about it. We're all suffering from a very big Cordelia lack and I'm putting in a formal request that we do not exclude Cordelia from this episode of our podcast. Jenny, will you please play the Cordelia song in honor of our missing Cordelia?

**Jenny:** Hit it!

[Jenny plays the "Cordelia" jingle]  
Cordelia (ah-ahh)  
I love you, Cordelia (ah-ahh)  
You're perfect, Cordelia (ah-ahh)

**Jenny:** Oh, that song. I just wanna listen to it all the time. If only there was a way.

**Kristin:** If only there was a way. There *is* a way because on iTunes, you can purchase the Cordelia ringtone for yourself. And I wanna tell you, Mom, I'm super sorry I have not answered your calls for the last two days, partially because I've been very busy and will call you back. But also because every time you call me I get to listen to the Cordelia song and it's awesome.  
[laughter]

Anyhow, we're rounding the bend towards the end of this episode, but there's a moment here that is kind of inconsequential in the grand scheme of things, but that I love so much. And it is this moment where the pack is like– they need somebody weak so they get up and they're looking for a weak person. And lo and behold, this couple and their child is leaving a party and like whatever with them wanting to eat the child, blah blah blah. What I care about is the line that the husband is saying to the wife when they leave: "I didn't say she looks better than you, I said she looks better."  
[laughs] And then they have this back and forth–

**Jenny:** And meanwhile, the door of the house that they're leaving is not even closed yet. Whoever they're talking about is probably still in earshot.

**Kristin:** Oh, it's just so good! It's just– I just have a lot of appreciation for the decision to make this the line that this couple is discussing as they leave. It's great!

**Jenny:** Also, he gets in the car and then says, "Where are the keys?" Is Sunnydale the kind of town where people just leave their keys in the car? What?!

**Kristin:** In the ignition? I know! [laughs] Another amazing moment– so they all follow Buffy to the zoo. We're back at the hyena house. Soon to be referred to as the hyena hideout. We do know that in the song that you're about to hear, we don't call it the hyena house. It's 'cause hyena hideout sounded better, so deal with it. [laughs] But Giles goes in and has this kind of "ah ha" moment, where he's like, "Wait a minute, if this painting was on the floor already then somebody must have– oh god!" But before he has this moment, he's calling for the zookeeper. [laughter] And he walks into the empty, like, hyena house and he goes "Doctor?" Beat. And then he goes, "Zookeeper?" [laughter] I just love it so much, like he doesn't know his name and he's just trying to think of any title that this man would respond to. [sighs] So, okay. Do you have things that you want to talk about before we get to the zookeeper having the hyena back in him? 'Cause that's my next moment.

**Jenny:** No, I feel like that's really– I mean, Willow just lets him tie up her hands?

**Kristin:** I get that. I get that.

**Jenny:** So much is happening. She also doesn't blink at his facepaint.

**Kristin:** Right. I mean, I feel like she's– like, they're really in it, you know? They're like, we have to do this. I mean, this is a crazy thing that they're doing and I feel like she suspended–

**Jenny:** Yeah, I guess, don't stop to ask questions when somebody's life is in danger.

**Kristin:** Right! And that's why she's a great slayerette, 'cause she doesn't stop to ask the—

**Jenny:** Oh, Willow!

**Kristin:** Right, 'cause she's, like, in. She's 100% committed, she has 100% trust for Giles and Buffy. And she just believes that, like, this is what's supposed to happen because they're at the helm. Which is what makes her so wonderful. And also, you know, she says when he like puts the knife to her throat, "Oh right, there's this part where you have to—"

**Jenny:** "Do a predatory act." And he's like, "heh-heh-heh."

**Kristin:** Yeah. And so we have the big reveal here— or not the big reveal, but we have this big moment here where the hyena spirit is transferred back into— [Jenny laughs] yes, you're already laughing at the moment in which he drops it— thank god he decides— thank god the hyena possesses him because then he's like, why would I use a knife? I'm a hyena. I'm going to instead eat Willow. And he drops the knife and he roars and stretches his mouth out towards her face—

**Jenny:** To just bite into her cheek we assume?

**Kristin:** I guess, which like, should be disturbing but just winds up hysterically funny. And you know— and then everything goes back to the way it once was.

**Jenny:** Right, well, we love to see that Xander's first action— his first instinct upon regaining his actual self is to protect Willow.

**Kristin:** Yes, absolutely.

**Jenny:** That happens *instantly* and we're all very satisfied and that makes us feel better about Xander. And what a great death scene for the zookeeper, pulling himself up on the enclosure bars. Very Jurassic Park. So good.

**Kristin:** Yes! And there's a moment of seriousness even in this chaos where Buffy— you see Buffy seeing him die, and she's, like, definitely fucked up about it.

**Jenny:** Sure.

**Kristin:** 'Cause I had a moment in the second viewing where I noticed it even more, because I think that, like, there is something to the fact that Buffy is witness to these incredibly violent, graphic things.

**Jenny:** With this and often the purveyor or... an actor or—

**Kristin:** Right, like she— it's her hand that kind of tosses it into motion.

**Jenny:** Yeah. She's regularly ending lives, even though most of them are the lives of the undead.

**Kristin:** Right. But she's just so close to death all the time, right? I suppose they all are, but Buffy has this very unique relationship to it, I think. And so again, this sort of silly scene, he falls over the bars but then they give us this moment with Buffy that's like, wow. This is a— you know, she's supposed to be what, 16? 17? Which is a hard time to kind of wrap your head around life as it is.

**Jenny:** Let alone death.

**Kristin:** Let alone death. And let alone being that close to it so often. So... [sigh] this is why we love this show everyone!

**Jenny:** So good.

**Kristin:** We don't have to tell you. You're all here 'cause you love it too.

**Jenny:** Yeah. [laughter] Now we already talked about the troubling aspects of this closing scene, but what we didn't talk about are, um... Buffy's beanie!

**Kristin:** Oh my god! Yeah, Kate! Kate, where's your beanie commentary? [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah. Also, "Shoot me, stuff me, mount me?" Xander says to Giles. That kinda misses the mark for me.

**Kristin:** It's a weird moment. I mean, the whole- I talked about it for a minute but like, Giles come out of nowhere. He hasn't even heard the conversation and he just jumps right into it.

**Jenny:** He literally was just like, "I heard I had a line coming up."

**Kristin:** Yeah! [laughs] Exactly, exactly. But yeah, this was a good- and you know, one other thing about this episode is that it really- I think it also set the tone for this trio of Xander, Buffy, Willow very clearly. I skipped over that part, but there's a moment where- I mean, they call it up a couple of times, right? Willow says, up with Buffy, like, "Maybe there's not room for three of us." And then Xander kind of plays on it when he's locked up and he says, "Wasn't it better before she was here? It was just you and me." And I think that's something that we're gonna see come back again and again with this sort of triangulation of crushes and feelings and... yeah.

**Jenny:** [sings] Yes! What a delight! I mean, all in all ridiculous episode, but still had plenty for us to sink our teeth into... mwahahaha!

**Kristin:** [laughs] That closing will work for literally almost any episode. [laughter] Jenny!

**Jenny:** Kristin!

**Kristin:** We almost forgot-

**Jenny:** Something very important.

**Kristin:** [sings] The Sexual Tension Awards!

**Jenny:** That is a great little jingle.

**Kristin:** I just wrote it, just now, myself. I think you're influencing me positively.

**Jenny:** That's so great.

**Kristin:** Maybe *I'm* the songwriter in the family.

**Jenny:** Maybe you are.

**Kristin:** I have an award. I don't know if you have any thoughts.

**Jenny:** I've got some thoughts but, please go forth.

**Kristin:** Okay, well, my– where I would see it going, this episode, is to– I'm gonna call him Male Hyena #2 and Xander because– so Male Hyena #1 is the one that's always in the front. He seems to–

**Jenny:** The brunette?

**Kristin:** Yeah, the brunette. And then the one with the sandier hair is Hyena #2.

**Jenny:** [sings] Yes.

**Kristin:** And– or Male Hyena #2. And he has this moment right after they break the whole thing in the library, that is now gonna have to be rebuilt, that cage–

**Jenny:** Right, right.

**Kristin:** Xander gets released and Male Hyena #2 just sniffs him *so* sexually.

**Jenny:** Yes, it is *sensuous*.

**Kristin:** Yes, it is a moment of animalistic sexual tension, to Xander and Hyena #2. Jenny what do you got?

**Jenny:** Well, I have two Sexual Tension Awards for this episode.

**Kristin:** Well, we can't give out three. I think we have to discuss and then vote here. [laughs] Between the two of us, we have to vote.



**Jenny:** [laughs] Alright, well, my two nominations then are a five-way Sexual Tension Award between all of the hyenas.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Okay, okay, okay.

**Jenny:** Because there's a lot of like, sleeping toge- ugh, spooning in the dirt-

**Kristin:** Yeah, spooning in the dirt.

**Jenny:** And so much sniffing and prolonged dramatic eye contact. You know?

**Kristin:** Mm-hmm, yeah, that's fair.

**Jenny:** So there's a lot going on there. And then my other nomination is Giles and the zookeeper, just when they're discussing the ritual that effectively enacted the trans-possession.

**Kristin:** Right, when Buffy is like, "Boys," and has to break it up?

**Jenny:** Yes, exactly. They're like, mmm, books, mmm, ritual.

**Kristin:** So really the Sexual Tension Award there would actually be going to Giles, the zookeeper, and books.

**Jenny:** [laughs] Yes! Books are part of that love triangle.

**Kristin:** I think that, like, if we're gonna have a sexual tension meter, it has to go to the hyenas in some capacity.

**Jenny:** Yes, yes.

**Kristin:** As much as I would love for books to win. [Jenny laughs] I think it goes to the hyenas and I'm comfortable letting it go to the pack of five.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah. They earned it.

**Kristin:** They did. They worked very hard at that level of sexual tension.

**Jenny:** For sure.

**Kristin:** Okay, we did it.

**Jenny:** Glad we sorted that out. Well, thanks so much for listening to us here today on this beautiful day. We will be back next week with a mailbag episode.

**Kristin:** Yeah! So next week, we'll be on the tail end of traveling so we're gonna have a mailbag episode. That'll be October 26th and then we'll be back on November 2nd with Episode 7.

**Jenny:** "Angel."

**Kristin:** Oh boy, that's the Episode 7? I didn't even know. Okay, I'm very excited now.

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah. Super pumped about that.

**Kristin:** Any episode titled "Angel" has to signify that Angel is in it which is good news. Great. Great, great, great.

**Jenny:** Very good news

**Kristin:** Oh, see you then. Actually, see you next week with the mailbag, but whatever! [laughter] See you for "Angel."

**Jenny:** I'm Jenny Owen Youngs and when I'm not making this podcast, I'm usually writing and recording songs. You can learn more about me and hear a playlist that I've curated just for you guys of some of those songs over at [jennyowenyongs.com/buffering](http://jennyowenyongs.com/buffering), or you can give me a shout on Twitter at @jennyowenyongs.

**Kristin:** I'm Kristin Russo and you can find my personal chatter and feminist rants over on Twitter at @kristinnoeline, K-R-I-S-T-I-N-N-O-E-L-I-N-E. Thank you, Mom, for that middle name. When I'm not podcasting, I work to

bring advice, resources and laughter to LGBTQ young people and their families over at [everyoneisgay.com](http://everyoneisgay.com) and [mykidisgay.com](http://mykidisgay.com).

**Jenny:** Buffering The Vampire Slayer is on Twitter at @bufferingcast and we're also on Facebook at [facebook.com/bufferingcast](https://facebook.com/bufferingcast).

**Kristin:** If you like what we do, you can now support us by heading on over to [bufferingthevampireslayer.com](http://bufferingthevampireslayer.com) and clicking on the "Donate" button.

**Jenny:** 'Til next time...

**Jenny and Kristin:** Awooooooooooooo!

[Jenny feat. Kristin performing "The Pack" off the album "Songs from Season One" by Buffering The Vampire Slayer]

The pack the pack ... the pack the pack (4x)

[Spoken] Hey Buffy, heard there was a big mess in Sunnydale last week. Word has it there were zoo creatures and teenagers all mixed up. Do you know about it?

Well I was hangin' at the zoo on a field trip  
Which didn't seem particularly age appropriate  
These kids were being rude and I don't know why  
Sometimes I wish that it was cool to slay my own kind  
Oh no, oh no

Well I watched them head to the hyena hideout  
Even though it's quarantined  
But this zookeeper, he really cramped our style  
And wouldn't let us in to seeeee

The pack the pack ... the pack the pack (4x)

[Spoken] Oh my, a hyena hideout you say? And bullies on the loose? Buffy, that sounds horrible! What happened next?

The razorbacks have got a brand new mascot pig

But he'll be lucky if he makes it to ninth period  
Xander's bein' mean to Willow and that's not like him  
And have I mentioned that Cordelia seems to be absent?  
Oh no, oh no

Bid a fond farewell to Principal Flutie  
Victim of the savage beasts  
Then we quick transferred the hyena spirit  
Straight into the old zookeep

He went in head over heels  
Hyena finally gets a meal  
from

The pack the pack ... the pack the pack (4x)

[Spoken] Wow, Buffy, sounds like that zookeeper was a real  
zoo creeper  
I guess like they say, it's the circle of life  
By the way I simply love that neckerchief