

Buffering the Vampire Slayer  
Episode 5.17: Forever

[CHIME]

**Jenny:** Hey everybody! Uh, before we get started, we have some stuff to tell you.

**Kristin:** We do! As is often the case, we have some news. First, an update. Many of you know this already, but we're telling all of you here today, an update on our live events this summer. After a lot of thinking and talking and considering between us and the wonderful venues that we're working with in Chicago and New York City, we've decided to cancel both our live taping in Chicago scheduled for July 12th at Sleeping Village and our third annual Prom scheduled for July 31st and August 1st at Brooklyn's Bell House.

We know that life has been, like, super topsy-turvy and really scary and overwhelming and just generally a lot. And we don't at all want to make you sad, or ourselves. But we want to keep everybody safe and we know that there are ways that we can gather in a safe way while we wait for things to get safer for us to gather. And please know that the minute, as we monitor this, the minute that we can safely do that, we're gonna be back in your cities and we're gonna be back in each other's arms, doing the things that we do best as our Scooby community.

**Jenny:** Yes! And since we cannot currently gather physically, we will instead be... transforming into ghosts.

**Kristin:** [starts singing triumphant tune, abruptly stops] N— [laughs]

**Jenny:** We will instead be exiting this cursed, fleshy, mortal existence and ascending into—no. We will be, instead, gathering for our very first livestreamed, live recording of an episode together with you on Zoom!

**Kristin:** [sings triumphant tune]

**Jenny:** If you please. And we hope you will join us. We will be taping our episode for Season 5, Episode 20, Spiral.

**Kristin:** Yeah!

**Jenny:** You'll be able to see and hear Kristin and me, and perhaps a special guest, while we record the podcast. And you'll be able to type to each other in the chat bar. It's gonna rule! It's like, a regular taping but then you can also talk to each other while it's happening, which is kind of sweet.

**Kristin:** Yeah, it's pretty fun.

**Jenny:** It's kind of extra cozy. This is gonna be happening Saturday, June 20th, in the year 2020. [Kristin laughs] At 4PM Eastern, 1PM Pacific. Uh, what is that like? 9PM in London. Jolly old London. Tickets are available at [bufferingthevampireslayer.com/zoom!](http://bufferingthevampireslayer.com/zoom!)

**Kristin:** [laughs] Two o's in Zoom, despite Jenny's emphasis on the o's. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Yeah, yeah, just regular zoom.

**Kristin:** Zoooooom!

**Jenny:** Z-O-O-M. There's not, like, a mountain in the middle.

**Kristin:** [laughs] We're very excited. A lot of you are already—have already gotten your tickets and are super excited, especially people who, like, maybe never would have been able to see a live taping before. I know actually, Jenny, that the time in Australia is gonna be 5:30 in the morning, because I've seen some of our Australian listeners saying, I bought my tickets, [laughing] I'm getting up at 5:30 in the morning to watch this live taping!

**Jenny:** Yo...

**Kristin:** So—

**Jenny:** That rocks.

**Kristin:** Bless all of you. And I just wanna say one thing. Like, I know we talk about this community so much and how wonderful you all are. But of course, we put these tickets up and of course, the first two questions I got were the same, from different people, saying, "hey, um, I bought a few, I hope that's okay, I just really wanted to give some away to people who can't afford to get one." [Jenny groans] Ugh! You guys! Yes, of course you can give them to other people, and there's sort of new little instructions on how we'll do that. It's gonna be the first time we've ever done this. So we're excited and scared, it's gonna be so fun! You will see us like you've never seen us before.

**Jenny:** Hmm.

**Kristin:** It's like, you know, Gus and Sam and probably Frank are pretty excited 'cause they would have never gotten to attend the—

**Jenny:** Oh yeah. Finally, the spotlight where it belongs!

**Kristin:** [laughs] So again, [bufferingthevampireslayer.com/zoom](https://bufferingthevampireslayer.com/zoom). You can find out all the information you need. Chicago ticket holders and New York City ticket holders, you should have received emails Monday or Tuesday from Sleeping Village and The Bell House respectively on those refunds and cancellations. But if you need us, you can always reach us at [bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com](mailto:bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com) with any of your concerns or your questions.

**Jenny:** Another thing you can find on our calendar and schedule of events! In case you didn't already know, is our schedule of releasing episodes. We have an extra week off between this and next episode, and we will be back with Season 5, Episode 18, Intervention, AKA Jenny cries through the whole episode [Kristin laughs] on June 3rd! Between then and now, I'm gonna be... uh, I was trying to think of a very vacation-y thing that would still be quarantine appropriate. I'll just be wearing sunglasses a lot.

**Kristin:** I've seen photos of people tanning through their windows, sort of like, putting half their butt and—like, put—putting their like butt—

**Jenny:** No, *half* their butt?

**Kristin:** Sorry, their whole butt. Putting half their *body*—I just got distracted 'cause of their butts. [Jenny laughs] They put, like, their butt and their legs out the window to get sun. So you could do that, Jenny.

**Jenny:** Um...

**Kristin:** Sorry, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to bring up your butt here on this radio podcast.

**Jenny:** Yeah, what the hell?!

**Kristin:** [laughs] Moving right along to a topic that is not butts. This Saturday! This freaking Saturday, May 16th, 11AM Pacific, 2PM Eastern, we are going to be graduating all together. [Jenny gasps] We are going to be doing a live watch on our Instagram of Buffy's Season 3, Episode 21 and 22, Graduation Days Parts 1 and 2. [Jenny starts quietly singing the graduation march in the background] We will be there watching with you. It is a way for us to come together, and also a way for so

many of you who did not get to graduate, to graduate with us. Wear your caps. Frank—how's Frank's cap coming, Jenny?

**Jenny:** [sings graduation march louder] Um, Frank's—[laughs] Frank's cap. Oh my god. Of the 4200 stitches required—[Kristin laughs] uh, to be stitched by my nimble little fingers, I'm about 3600 stitches of the way through Frank's—

**Kristin:** Alright!

**Jenny:** Uh, uh, homemade—what's that... artisanal—[laughs]

**Kristin:** Okay, why don't you move along—

**Jenny:** Uh, bespoke—

**Kristin:** To the next part of this introduction? [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Graduation cap. Also, hey, you completionists. I know you're really concerned about the Sexual Tension Awards and the eventual brackets that will be running. And we want to make sure all episodes are represented, even somehow, The Body. So we have, uh, gathered among ourselves to decide that Dawn and Kevin are the winners of the Sexual Tension Awards for The Body.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** This is not up for discussion. Thank you for your time.

**Kristin:** [laughs] With that, let us please move along into Spooky News.

[SPOOKY NEWS jingle plays]  
Spooky news!

**Kristin:** Uh, Jenny, this Spooky News is—it's coming from—it's not coming from a credited source, in terms of being published in an article. It's coming direct from a 911 dispatcher who's part of our listenership. I credit that—

**Jenny:** Whoa.

**Kristin:** As a source. And I am—I actually think it's more source worthy than anything. So Natalie writes in, as a 911 dispatcher. This is a message that went across the 911 dispatcher boards that Natalie is a part of. [clears throat] "So, 2020 is getting weirder by the way." This is on—this is the news from the dispatch. "A dead man's cell phone called 911 nine times. When doing the voice challenge, press

a button once for yes, a button twice for no, still went through. It received immediate and accurate responses confirming address, phone number and the name of the deceased.

"We did not know that the owner of the cell phone was deceased until after the call. The only living person on scene stated they had just turned on the cell phone last night for the first time since the owner passed away [Jenny gasps] in an attempt to try to grab some of the pictures. They had been unsuccessful unlocking the phone, and left it on the coffee table when they went to bed. [Jenny gasps louder] The phone continued to call, even after both units were on the scene and had the only living person outside speaking with them. The responding units confirmed the phone was inside the residence, away from any living person, during the time the last few calls were made."

**Jenny:** Ghosts! They're just like us. [Kristin laughs] They can use a phone. Wow!

**Kristin:** Yeah!

**Jenny:** I love that.

**Kristin:** Talking about nimble fingers, Jenny. That's a ghost with some nimble fingers for you. Didn't even need the Patrick Swayze ghost training to learn how to use that fucking phone, just picked it right up [Jenny laughs] and beep-beep-boop, called 911. [laughs]

**Jenny:** I mean, I'm not ruling out that it was Patrick Swayze [Kristin laughs] doing mischief from beyond the grave.

**Kristin:** [laughs] That has been your Spooky News.

[SPOOKY NEWS jingle plays]  
Spooky news!

**Jenny:** Well! [cackles] It's time for me to remind you about—[both laugh] it's time for me to remind you about the Patreon Xena hang coming up on Saturday, March 23rd at 4PM Eastern, 1PM Pacific. For which I still have—[both burst out laughing] no concrete details! But I have—

**Kristin:** [laughing] You have *one* job! One! [both laugh] Just one thing!

**Jenny:** But I have made some progress. [Kristin laughs] And I'll be—listen.

**Kristin:** Oh, god.

**Jenny:** [clears throat] Whether this will be on Facebook or on another platform, I will be gathering—this week, I will be gathering all the official details. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Well. So you'll have to follow us on social media and Patreon to get those details. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Well, they'd be—

**Kristin:** Because we won't be back with a podcast until June 3rd.

**Jenny:** [laughing] I know, I know, I know.

**Kristin:** So Jenny, on our June 3rd return, you can let everyone know what happened at your Xena—[both laughing]

**Jenny:** How well it went? How incredible—how it was the best event ever? Yeah. [Kristin laughs] I'll be sure to let you know. Uh, I'll be posting all the details on our Patreon and also in the secret Facebook group. So, um. [Kristin laughs] So everybody who is a patron will have access to the info.

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** [laughing] I'm sorry that I'm such a piece of garbage.

**Kristin:** Before we roll into the episode, one last thing. We have new hoodies. The back of the hoodies say, "Why is Jenny." Just kidding, I'm just kidding. They say—

**Jenny:** What the hell?!

**Kristin:** [laughs] "Why are Men." They're pretty exciting, they're up in the store. Also, some Wow pins. There's other restocked items. There's croptops, we're trying to keep them in stock for you people who just are—man, you can't get enough croptops. Head on over there—

**Jenny:** Crop my top, you say. You demand.

**Kristin:** Bufferingthevampireslayer.com, click on Shop. [laughs] And that has been your news updates from your two hosts who are getting more ridiculous by the quarantine moment.

**Jenny:** I feel I'm thriving in quarantine! [Kristin laughs] I feel like I'm only getting better, like a fine wine in a cellar.

**Kristin:** Let us now move along into our episode. Thank you so much for sticking with us. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Hurray!

[Buffering theme plays]

**Jenny:** [clears throat] Hello! And welcome to Buffering the Vampire Slayer, a podcast where we are watching and discussing every episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, one at a time, spoiler free. Lately, I've been thinking a lot about how it's completely bananas that we have been making this show for as long as we have and that we will keep making it and that all of you are listening. I'm Jenny Owen Youngs.

**Kristin:** [laughs] It's like you get to say whatever you wanna say right before you get to the end of that little speech, you know?

**Jenny:** I always have the first word in this podcast, ha-ha!

**Kristin:** It's true, it's—[laughs] it's true. Except for that one time when we switched order because of Buffy and Faith, but that's—

**Jenny:** Right, right.

**Kristin:** Another story for another day.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** I am Kristin Russo and this week, we are talking about Buffy Season 5, Episode 17, For... ev... er! Sorry, it's not a funny episode. But do you know what I'm referencing?

**Jenny:** What the? [Kristin laughs] Uh, is it like, E.T. or something?

**Kristin:** No, I think it's like a movie about baseball. Uh, Little... something.

**Jenny:** Is it like an alien who plays baseball?

**Kristin:** No, it's a person. It's like a band of boys that play baseball. And the coach is like, "For... ev... er"—it's like, a closeup on his mouth and it goes really slow.

**Jenny:** Oh.

**Kristin:** I can't think of the name of the movie. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Is it The Sandlot?

**Kristin:** Yeah! The Sandlot! Yeah, that's what I thought—

**Jenny:** Well! Okay.

**Kristin:** Okay, wow, wow. We're feeling it here in this week's episode, which is not as joyous as we are right now. But we have to give a little balance, you know?

**Jenny:** Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** Emotional... balance. What you should do is stay tuned at the end of this podcast every other week for an original song written by Jenny. That's you.

**Jenny:** Hey.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Recapping the Buffy episode that we're discussing. And if you haven't yet started listening to our Angel podcast, Angel on Top, hosted by Brittany Ashley and Laura Zak, you should be doing that.

**Jenny:** You remember Angel. He's that guy who drops by the cemetery in this episode.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yeah, he does. Oh, I can't wait to get there.

**Jenny:** Forever was written and directed, just for you, by Marti Noxon and originally aired on April 17th, 2001.

**Kristin:** Do you want to know something about that date, Jenny?

**Jenny:** Sure, hit me.

**Kristin:** It is Kristine Sutherland's birthday. This episode aired—

**Jenny:** That's fucked up.

**Kristin:** [laughing] On Kristine Sutherland's birthday. Okay—

**Jenny:** It's also three days before 4/20, so.



**Kristin:** Okay, yeah, so I'm sure Kristine Sutherland needed to partake that 4/20—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** To try to figure out how to sort her character's funeral with her person's birthday. Very—a lot of stuff happening there. [laughs] Anyhow. This is the one, according to IMDB, where with some help from Spike, Dawn attempts to bring Joyce back from the dead. This episode goes pretty much hand in hand with The Body. A very different tone, we're a step closer to the Sunnydale that we know, but not quite returned to that place yet. But it is very much the moments after, right, like, these are the days after The Body.

**Jenny:** Yeah. It's interesting that they aired this episode after such a long break.

**Kristin:** Right? You'd think they would have done this one, then taken the break.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** But I'm sure that they had their reasons.

**Jenny:** Had their reasons, let everybody just sort of like, deal and breathe for a couple months.

**Kristin:** Yeah, perhaps they needed a break after creating that episode of television. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Ye—ugh. Yeah, probably. So, this episode starts with—I love this. Buffy is walking through a room that's full of coffins.

**Kristin:** Yeah. And—

**Jenny:** She's walking through a funeral home, but not in the usual way. And, [whispers] if I may—

**Kristin:** You may.

**Jenny:** We have these beautiful, creepy as hell tremolo strings going.

**Kristin:** Ooh!

**Jenny:** And the scene is scored, like a lot of this episode, in a way that those of you who watch horror movies will be familiar—it's very... very much leaned in the direction of the horror genre when it comes to the score of this episode. And... I'm

here to tell you, shame on me for not noticing sooner. But I was watching this episode and I was like, damn, this music is good. It feels... different. Why, you may ask! Well—

**Kristin:** I do, I do ask.

**Jenny:** Well, it turns out that seasons 5 and 6 are scored by a guy whose name on the page looks like Thomas Wanker. But he is Austrian, so maybe it's Thomas, like, "Vonker" or something. [Kristin laughs] No disrespect. So this episode, and this season, with the exception of The Gift, are all scored by Thomas Wanker/Vonker, not Cristophe Beck.

**Kristin:** Ahh.

**Jenny:** Now, notably, Christophe scores the finale of this season and The Body, though Thomas has the credit, The Body has no score.

**Kristin:** Oh, wow, look at you.

**Jenny:** I was—

**Kristin:** Almost like you're a musician or something.

**Jenny:** [laughs] I was really excited to learn that this season's score is coming from somebody else. All throughout—I have so many score notes in this episode—

**Kristin:** Right.

**Jenny:** Because the score is just so powerful and interesting and like, done in such a great way. And I love how we're, like—we're coming back into the world here with sonic cues telling us—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** That we are in the middle of—we continue to be in the middle of horror, even though it's—

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** A little different than the horror we're used to.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah, ooh, I love this. I'm so excited for your future score notes. I also—I know that that was a very beautiful delivery of very important information.

But I'm very excited about you continuing to say "Wanker/Vonker" because it's just a lovely combination of sounds. [laughs]

**Jenny:** I feel... so rude... not knowing the right way to say this guy's name.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Um, so—and like, on the non-score end of this. The visuals—and there's one in particular that I was like, almost fell off of the bed. I watch in a bed now, 'cause it's my couch, my bed—

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** It's a whole thing, anyway—

**Jenny:** It's everything.

**Kristin:** Yeah. A separate story for a separate time, but I am—was just bowled over by one of the visuals in this episode. But even beginning here, the lights are off. She's in there, and the lights are off. And it's so, like, notably shown because when Giles and Dawn and the, you know, undertaker—is that what you call this guy?—come in, they turn the lights on. I just finished watching all of Six Feet Under, probably about six months. And I just got, like, Six Feet Under memories from this, especially this dude who—listen. This is a funeral home in Sunnydale, so you'd think that the undertaker slash guy who works in the funeral home—

**Jenny:** Funeral home director?

**Kristin:** Funeral—yes.

**Jenny:** Would have his, like, bedside manner dialed in or something.

**Kristin:** Yes! Right?

**Jenny:** [imitating] "It speaks of your deep feeling for the deceased." Sir...

**Kristin:** Right? Like, I mean—

**Jenny:** Fuck you.

**Kristin:** I guess this guy doesn't have to do much to keep a job in Sunnydale, but still, get it together, man.

**Jenny:** True.

**Kristin:** Love—I love Giles' eyeroll at this guy. [laughs] That like—

**Jenny:** Uh-huh.

**Kristin:** Even though we're in a very serious moment, Giles is like, oh my god. And um, we get—so we get the word "forever" many times.

**Jenny:** We get the first occurrence of "forever" here. Dawn says, "what if Mom would have liked some other coffin better? She's the one who has to be in it forever."

**Kristin:** Forever. And you know, that's like the first look at—I mean, we look at forever in so many ways in this episode. And I don't—you know, I'm sure we'll talk about it as it goes on as well. But just to touch on it a bit, it's like, death as forever. This show is a show that has dealt for a long time with life as forever. I think that there's—I talked a bit about this in The Body with childhood and the loss of childhood, like, childhood not going on forever, and I think there's some of that—Angel coming back. There's just a lot of different ways in which the episode looks at the concept of, not only linear forever, but sort of like, circle of life forever, as it continues.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** So. But before that—[sings Buffy theme, Jenny adds sound effects]

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** [laughs] You know, something that we didn't talk about, Jenny, in the discussion of The Body is that the scene that happens both in I Was Made to Love You and The Body starts with Buffy picking up the card from Brian to Joyce. And she calls Joyce—she calls her mom "flower-gettin' lady." Which is just, like, painfully ironic because she's referencing the fact that Joyce is getting flowers because she's gone on this date with this guy. But truly, Joyce is then getting, you know, all of these flowers because she's not alive anymore.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** So when—I forgot to mention that and I think it's sort of underlined in the beginning of this scene, where Giles is talking about the price of flowers.

**Jenny:** Yeah, this whole scene with, like, the horrible mundane?

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Like, all of the practical matters that have to be dealt with, so exhausting. Also the fact that, you know, Mr. Summers, the Summers dad—

**Kristin:** [inhales sharply] Ugh!

**Jenny:** Totally absent.

**Kristin:** Ugh!

**Jenny:** Number's no good, not getting in touch. This really, really sucks. One beautiful moment in this scene that I—that really sang to my heart was that, delivering a zinger from beyond the grave, we learn [Kristin laughs] Joyce didn't want a wake because she said, "potlucks are depressing enough as it is." [Kristin laughs] Seriously, Joyce! Seriously.

**Kristin:** "Delivering a zinger from beyond the grave" is just a fantastic Jenny Owen Youngs sentence. Thank you for that. I would like to, with your permission, play the Patriarchy jingle for Mr. Summers, who is possibly the worst dad ever.

**Jenny:** Bad dad.

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

**Kristin:** Contrasting, of course, with good dad. Who is helping Buffy sort out all of the details. He's taking the phone calls, he's thanking people for flowers. Giles is—I mean, he's been Dad. But like, for me, this moment in the series is where it goes from like, Dad, capital D lowercase a-d, to DAD, all caps. All caps DAD.

**Jenny:** Yeah, with a cape and there's a fan blowing up from the ground.

**Kristin:** [laughing] Yeah.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Giles is rocking in this episode. We love to see it.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm. Should we play Giles' jingle?

**Jenny:** Hit it.

[GILES jingle plays]  
Giles! Hot dad!  
When you were younger you were real bad

But now you're older, you got glasses  
That help you watch over us!  
Thank you, Giles!

**Kristin:** So. Dawn is upset. And rightfully so, I will say—

**Jenny:** Yes.

**Kristin:** For our Dawn. Dawn is sort of the last one to find out about a lot, and I don't think that this is uncommon for sort of a family dynamic like this, where there's like, an older sister of Buffy's age and a younger sister of Dawn's age. She is—Buffy's the one that Joyce talked to about funeral arrangements and made jokes about potlucks with. And Dawn is just feeling—even if she weren't a mystical Key and even had she not found that out just a handful of episodes ago, she's just feeling like, "she's my mom too, why am I taking the back seat to all of this?"

**Jenny:** Yeah, well, you know. [sighs] It makes sense, of course. And maybe Buffy's just used to having the weight of the literal world on her shoulders all the time. But like, Buffy is clearly exhausted and traumatized. And maybe it's good for her to have—yeah, I mean, it's definitely good for her to have something to distract her. But like, it's so clear that she is—it's not like Buffy's in some position of power or something, even though that seems to be, like, a little bit of the way that Dawn is perceiving it, that like, Buffy has more access or something—

**Kristin:** Right. Right.

**Jenny:** To... all the details.

**Kristin:** Yeah, and I—I don't think that Buffy's doing anything wrong either, at all. And I'm very excited to get to the final scene of this episode, because I—I identify with so much of the dynamic between these two and like, what's said. But yeah, I think that, you know, they both are going through something. And as often happens—and I think that we talked about this in our discussion of The Body. The sort of fact of death doesn't always bring people together. It often can sort of, like... break people apart. And you know, that doesn't ultimately happen here, with Dawn and Buffy, but in the beginning of this episode, we're seeing ways in which that can happen in families, that you just are missing each other in the way that you're processing.

**Jenny:** Yeah. And feeling this, like, dis—like, Dawn's reaction to this discomfort and sense of distance is to say that she wants to go to Willow's after the funeral. Willow fields this very diplomatically—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** But ultimately, that's what's gonna happen.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah. So Willow and Xander leave the Summers' household and they have this, like, fun exchange about, like, Willow's gonna maybe check in and say hi to her mom. And Xander's like, "I think I'm gonna go say hi to your mom too."  
[both laugh] "'Cause my family sucks." And who shows up? We missed you, buddy, we missed you so much, you're back.

**Jenny:** My *favorite* thing! My *favorite* thing, Spike rolls up with flowers! And Xander is a fucking douche-nozzle and—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** A lot of people thinking Spike is doing things in this episode for credit. And this is the first occurrence of that. Spike is like, hey, fuck you.

**Kristin:** Right.

**Jenny:** The flowers are for Joyce, this is not about Buffy. She was decent, she treated me well. I'm just observing human custom—human decency custom.

**Kristin:** Yeah, yeah. "She always had a nice cuppa for me," he says.

**Jenny:** He does! And, uh... this disgusting display. [laughs]

**Kristin:** I mean, you know. You want to hate Xander. The scene is sort of set up for you to be like, Xander, come on, man! But in all honesty, like, lest us not forget where we left Crush. Like, they are just doing what we've kind of been asking them to do for the entirety of this season, which is to remember that Spike is not on their team. And I think, you know, heightened emotions and all that stuff, like, I actually don't fault Xander for much past his hairstyle in this scene.

**Jenny:** Oh, so bad in this scene! Whew!

**Kristin:** It's a lot of hair, but I understand, you've been grieving. But it's time to get a haircut, I think.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Just a little bit. Just—not that I need it short—

**Jenny:** It's not like you're, I don't know, sheltering in place for two months or something, Xander. [Kristin laughs] Get a haircut!

**Kristin:** But on the flip side, this is Spike breaking our heart. This is like the fucking definition of Spike. It is the reason that, like, Spike is so dear to so many of us, is because it's just like, you want to hate him. He almost wants to hate him. But he has this, like, other piece of him that he can't figure out what to do with and all he knows is that Joyce mattered to him. And he needs to, like you said, Jenny, pay his respects. And it's very, very sad when he leaves and Willow is just like, there is no card. Like, he wasn't doing it for Buffy. He truly was doing it for Joyce.

**Jenny:** William the Poet strikes again.

**Kristin:** Aww. So this is the moment that I almost fell off my bed, because of the gorgeous entry into the funeral for Joyce Summers. It is this, like, one long camera shot where Buffy is sitting on her—speaking of beds. Buffy is sitting on her bed in her room, Dawn is sitting on her bed in her room. And these walls that I'm—I wanna say we've never seen before, but I know that—

**Jenny:** All these photos in the hallway, we have not seen.

**Kristin:** Yes. Right? And it's all these, like, old photos. These are black and white photos, these are, we want to imagine, grandparents, great-grandparents, you know. The sort of Summers history going back in time. And there is just something so stunning about starting on those photos, seeing Buffy, the older sister, alive in her room in this house that has lost somebody. More photos, seeing Dawn, alive in her room, somebody who has lost someone in the house. We were three, we are now two. And then sort of like, fading right from that pan into the funeral.

And it's just very—you know, unfortunately, I can never say circle of life without, like, singing it in my head, which kind of undoes the [laughs] gravity of what I'm trying to say. But it is very, very circle of life here, of just, we lose people, people come into the world, we lose people, people come into the world. And that goes on forever, you know?

**Jenny:** Mmm. Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** So just, chef's kiss to how we got into the funeral scene.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Also... Xander's hair looks a lot better at the funeral. I know that's what this scene is not about, but... [both laugh] Beautiful, haunting piano theme here. Again, Thomas Wanker/Vonker, just absolutely crushing it and it melts into



strings as we're having these sort of like fade-in, fade-outs from the overhead shot to closeups of different people's reactions.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Very commonly read words at funerals. But also, they have I think even extra meaning, especially ending on "dust to dust." Since there's this contrast, and the contrast exists for the whole episode as well, of Buffy, what we knew, and Buffy, what she's dealing with now. We're in the cemetery. This is literally where the entire show takes place. And yet it feels that we are in not that place at all.

**Jenny:** A totally new place.

**Kristin:** Yes, exactly. And, um—

**Jenny:** Because of the context. It's like Jen Malkowski was saying in your conversation with them, that this show has served us up countless deaths that meant nothing. And now, here is one that means something and it just turns the world inside out.

**Kristin:** Right. Right. And we—I mean, you know, all these metaphorical reasons of why it feels different and what have you. But also, it's daytime. And we don't go to the cemetery in the daytime. We go there to kill demons, we go there to kill vampires, we go there when everybody can join us—

**Jenny:** You know—

**Kristin:** All of our vampire friends and—

**Jenny:** [cheerfully] I can think of one time that Buffy went to the cemetery when it was daytime.

**Kristin:** When was that, Jenny?

**Jenny:** Well! [Kristin laughs] There she was, taking a test. [both laugh]  
Dot-dot-dot.

**Kristin:** Oh, boy. Okay, so something else that happens during the funeral is that Buffy and Dawn are really, you know, painted in contrasting tones, very much so. Buffy pretty much has the same expression on her face for the entirety of the funeral. She is stoic, she is "strong," I say that in quotes. And Dawn, we see her crying. We see her sort of like, turning away from the scene and burying her face in Buffy's neck. Very, very emotional in an outward-facing way, whereas Buffy is just

sort of like, shutting it all down, holding it all together, needs to be there, needs to get shit done. That's her way.

**Jenny:** [sighs] You ever just... [sighs]

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yeah, I mean, I think that you and I, as the hosts of this podcast, are entitled to unlimited [sighs] for this episode and the prior one.

**Jenny:** Thank you.

**Kristin:** So, yeah. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Thank you.

**Kristin:** So everyone, again with the cross-fading, right? We see the passage of time. Everyone's leaving, one by one, two by two. Tara and Willow and Buffy and Dawn are left and Dawn goes over and says she's ready to leave. Tara is just—um, if you listen to the conversation last week that I had with Brittany Ashley. Brittany talks about how, you know, Tara has been through this and so is able to sort of handle a lot of things much more smoothly than a lot of the other people here. And you can see it again here, right? She comes up to Buffy and she says, do you need us to stay? This is what Dawn has asked for, we will do what you need as well. Like, really just presenting everything clearly for this person who is standing at the grave of their mother.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** And Buffy stays for a long time.

**Jenny:** Yeah, she does. She stays long enough for this kind of effective filter-fade, day to night, thing to occur.

**Kristin:** I'm here for it. I'm here for it. Yeah. I am.

**Jenny:** It's like... it's getting the job done. [Kristin laughs] She just remains motionless for hours, not peeing. Doing nothing.

**Kristin:** I mean, she could have peed. We don't *really* know.

**Jenny:** Yeah, I guess we'll never know. [both laugh] And then we see her legs, joined by a pair of...

**Kristin:** Large feet.

**Jenny:** Large feet that look somehow brooding.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Somehow, even in shoes alone, we can sense the brood.

**Jenny:** Angel just rolls up right next to her and they hold hands.

**Kristin:** This is so beautiful and so wonderful for so many reasons. Angel returning. Of course Angel is going to return. And I think, of course, Buffy is knowing that—or maybe she doesn't know. But there's just something in this that, like, I hadn't really explored on previous viewings, where I was just thinking—and it's 'cause of our conversations, Jenny, right. That like, we've talked about how Buffy's in this headspace of, you know, all the men in her life leave her. Her dad isn't at—her *dad... isn't at her mom's funeral*. Okay?

**Jenny:** Ugh.

**Kristin:** She has just been left by Riley. Angel left. Like, this is an ongoing theme, and so, there's something incredibly powerful and healing about the fact that Angel comes back. Like, Angel, for all of his Angelisms, understands the value that they have to each other and understands that when it is a matter of life and death, everything else, you put it to the side and you go there—

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** And you hold this person's hand, like he does.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Good boy, Angel.

**Kristin:** And of course, we never get to use it, so he, *I* think, stealthily entered the scene. Let's give him his jingle.

[DETECTIVE ANGEL jingle plays]  
Detective Angel!

**Jenny:** Okay so, I know that there are extenuating circumstances. But when you were in college, did any of your friends have a 14-year-old come slumber party in their dorm room?

**Kristin:** [laughs] Um, well no, but my sister was 14 and I feel like it wouldn't have out of the question for her to stay in our room with us.

**Jenny:** Hmm.

**Kristin:** You know, like—

**Jenny:** Oh yeah, didn't you get your sister drunk at college one time?

**Kristin:** [high-pitched] Um, yeah, it wasn't—yep—I did. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Okay. [laughs]

**Kristin:** I was 18, okay?! You can't judge me now for what I did—

**Jenny:** Okay so, technically neither of you was of age, so.

**Kristin:** Right. She just was 12, so...

**Jenny:** Oh my god! [Kristin laughs, Jenny groans]

**Kristin:** Moving right along. Don't pause to look at 18-year-old Kristin's sins. We will go to Dawn, who is very angry. And you know, Tara and Willow are—they're trying their best to sort of explain to Dawn. But I want to—I feel very defensive of Dawn in this entire episode. And I understand, like, why they are treating her the way that they're treating her, but I think that they baby—I think that everyone is babying her too much and I don't think it's fair to her. I think that, like, she just lost her mom and was almost killed by a naked morgue-pire. Like, she's a Key. Like, talk to her like she is older than 12, you know? Because she—I mean, she is 14—

**Jenny:** I think...

**Kristin:** But—yeah.

**Jenny:** I think Tara is fucking knocking it out of the park—

**Kristin:** Tara, yes.

**Jenny:** "You make a place for her in your heart, it's sort of like she becomes a part of you." Tara knows, Dawn! Listen to Tara!

**Kristin:** Yes. But everybody else treats her like a baby.

**Jenny:** Willow—Willow, not doing a great job. [laughs]

**Kristin:** No. I mean, Willow—Willow's obviously going through her own shit, right? Like, we see that Willow wants to be there for Dawn, but I think Willow also wants Joyce back. Like, you know, this is not just about being there for Dawn for Willow.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** There's too much happening for her that—I think that she's sort of threaded through this as well.

**Jenny:** Yeah. And all Tara and Willow want is to help and to want to do something—they wanna make Dawn happy. And finally Dawn settles on something she'd like to do. She has an idea. "I'd like for you two witches to bring my mom back from the dead."

**Kristin:** Mmhmm. Which... I mean, we're all in Sunnydale.

**Jenny:** Sure.

**Kristin:** It's not that shocking.

**Jenny:** A follows B follows C, sure.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Like, of course somebody is gonna wanna bring Joyce back. Like, one of the crew, for sure, was gonna wanna bring Joyce back. So it's Dawn, makes sense. And you know, they're—we cut, but they're obviously like, uhh, no? Especially Tara, but we'll get there. Before we get there, let's talk even more about [sings] the circle of life! [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Yes?

**Kristin:** Anya and Xander are doin' it. They are doin' it in a way that is different than how they've done it before. And Anya says, "It's because of Joyce." And Xander's like, hmm?

**Jenny:** Uh... [laughs]

**Kristin:** Uh, mmhmm? Do you think that for a sec—

**Jenny:** Xander's like, "I'm pretty sure I never told you about that dream."

**Kristin:** [laughing] Right, I was gonna say. Do you think that for a second, Xander was like, uhh, did you know about that dream I had where I was in the bathroom and Joyce was wearing red silk? Oh my god, okay. Uh, but yeah. Anya has this, you

know, really compelling sort of journey where she's piecing together that sex is not just two bodies smushing together. That like, sex is something that can be bigger and grander and more intense, because of its connection to life and therefore its connection to death. And I mean, god, if anything's gonna make sex intense, I guess that's it. [laughs] That's pretty intense.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Anya, again, taking on the—taking the reins on the big philosophy moments.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** As we continue—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** To explore death and loss. This feels, like, appropriate and beautiful and, you know, poignant.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Well, I was just thinking about it because obviously, you know, as queer women, I think there's—as anyone who is perhaps having sex or has had sex in a way that could not result in a human life form, I was thinking about it. Like, well, this is interesting and blah blah blah. And I came to the conclusion that, like, regardless of your fertility, right? Like, regardless of like, what the outcome is, there is something about the act of this that still contains that power. And you can disagree with me if you would like, but I just—I just felt like, yeah, this isn't really rooted in, like, heterosexual, fertile sex. This is just, like—the act of this has this connection to life. No matter what.

**Jenny:** I was not offended.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Great. No, and past just being off—you know, I just was thinking about, like, this act and like, regardless of the bodies involved, you know? That like, there is something rooted way back in our beings that I think connects it to something intense.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm, mmhmm.

**Kristin:** End... monologue... on... doin' it.

**Jenny:** [sighs] Thanks?

**Kristin:** It's not just about smushing. It's about life. Anya Christina... uh...

**Jenny:** Emanuella.

**Kristin:** Emanuella Jenkins. Thank you very much for your wisdom.

**Jenny:** Tight. Yeah. Love stressed-out Xander. "What do you mean?!" [both laugh]  
"Making life? Right now?"

**Kristin:** I know, and Anya's really good. She's like—she like, laughs with him and she's like, not now. Like, you know, get your panties out of a bunch, Xander, and cut your hair. We're not having a child right this minute. I'm just telling you what I feel.

**Jenny:** Yes!

**Kristin:** You know who else is telling somebody how she feels, is Tara in this next fucking scene. This is—listen. I am attract—if there are many versions of Tara, I am least attracted to eyeshadow Tara.

**Jenny:** Ha!

**Kristin:** I am most attracted to very, very stern Tara.

**Jenny:** You're most attracted to "we don't mess with life and death" Tara.

**Kristin:** [laughing] Yeah! I just love how fucking—she is like, rooted—this is kinda like how I feel when I'm like, activated on a queer topic I know—like, I have a history with and I know a lot about, you know? It's like, all of a sudden, my feet sort of like root to the ground like a tree and I'm like, I got this shit! Tara has this shit. She's like, I can explain to you why we don't it, I've got books on it—

**Jenny:** Yep.

**Kristin:** I've done the fucking research. You know? [laughs]

**Jenny:** Yep.

**Kristin:** She's—you don't mess with life and death.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Willow, wishy-washy as hell. Tara, very serious. Ultimately, they land in a "we can't, it's too dangerous" place, and Dawn huffs down onto her sleeping bag. Thank god that Willow has a dorm room that's all her own with a twin bed in it and then just a space where a twin bed would go, which is perfect for a sleeping bag. Meanwhile, Tara has her, like, goth suite somewhere, still, with the gossamer

canopy hangings and whatnot and painted-black walls, somewhere on campus. Who knows why.

**Kristin:** Don't forget the crystal dildo.

**Jenny:** I... who could ever?

**Kristin:** [laughs] So yeah, I mean, right. Willow—wishy-washy Willow is a great way of putting it. She's sort of like, well, but well—and Tara is like—

**Jenny:** No!

**Kristin:** Not. Today. [both laugh] But Dawn picks up an important piece out of this whole conversation, which is, so if they took an oath—if Wiccans took an oath not to mess with it, that fucking means, by my Dawn logic, that they can do it. Which is correct. And whoops, probably shouldn't have let that slip, but they did. So she's on the case, Harriet the Spy is on the case.

**Jenny:** Uh-huh.

**Kristin:** Um... so, the cemetery. With Angel. This is a beautiful scene. They are sitting together by the tree. And Buffy very poignantly says that she's worried more about tomorrow than anything else, because this was the journey through. And now tomorrow, there isn't a funeral to plan. There isn't—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** You know, like, all of the arrangements have been made, so now what the fuck?

**Jenny:** And Angel says, tomorrow, the stuff of everyday living resumes. And David Boreanaz's line delivery on this is so, like, weirdly buoyant? [laughs]

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah, he's very... I guess, you know, when you're told that you're like a 250-year-old vampire—

**Jenny:** Oh my god.

**Kristin:** Who had a soul and then didn't have a soul and then had a soul and then didn't have a soul, and you've been through revolutions and you've killed people and you've been killed and you got to hell and you went—it's kind of a lot, probably, for an actor to sift through to try to figure out how to talk about death. [laughs]



**Jenny:** Yeah. I guess he's sort of like, well. I—

**Kristin:** Right, this is—yeah.

**Jenny:** I've died and come back and gone to all kinds of hell dimensions, so. Meh.

**Kristin:** Right. Right. And you know, this conversation kinda like pivots, turns into the beginning of what we'll see played out really dramatically and beautifully at the end of the episode. With Buffy saying, like, people think I'm so strong. And I'd love to play a little bit of this monologue that she has, Jenny, if that's okay with you.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

[Clip from episode plays]

**Buffy:** Everybody expects me to know how to do it because I'm so strong.

**Angel:** You just need some time. I'm sure everybody understands that.

**Buffy:** Time's not the issue. I can stick wood in vampires. But Mom was the strong one in real life. She always knew how to make things better, just what to say.

**Angel:** You'll find your way.

**Jenny:** "Mom was the strong one in real life!"

**Kristin:** Oof! Yeah. Oof. And this is, you know—I think it's really notable that Buffy is not saying these things to anyone else. Like, this is why it's so important that Angel came back. Because—I was just talking to somebody about, like, the first people that we fall in love with. And like, what kind of roots they have in your psyche, over—you know, forever. Like, it doesn't matter how far you get away from it. That first experience is just so rooted and, you know, I think that there's something so beautiful about the fact that those—some of those ways in which Buffy was with Angel just immediately return for her, and she knows she can be weak. I mean, weak is maybe not the right word, but vulnerable.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** That she can be vulnerable with him, that she can—that she can be honest with him, that she can fall into his arms. And notably, this is something that she was never able to do with Riley.

**Jenny:** I was just thinking that. I wonder if, because of everything that happened between Buffy and Angel, she was—perhaps subconsciously—reluctant to go back to that place with somebody else.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Jenny:** Also, I'm kind of shocked that Riley, although I know he's in a jungle in South America or something right now, I'm kind of shocked that Riley didn't figure it out—

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Find out, steal a helicopter.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** But, you know.

**Kristin:** I mean, and I think—

**Jenny:** [quietly] Guess he's just really gone.

**Kristin:** I think in the univ—in the actual universe, Riley would have also come back. I think that just in the television universe, there's only so much room—

**Jenny:** [simultaneously] We've got, you know, 45 minutes.

**Kristin:** For so many shoulders. I mean, how could you possibly? [laughs]

**Jenny:** Especially when they're all so broad, you know? [Kristin laughs] Hmm.

**Kristin:** So, um... Angel says to Buffy, like, you are strong, right? And, um—and he say—he does some really incredible things here, by way of support. He's, like, not—he's not worried about anything except for being here for her. "I can stay in town as long as you want me to." And then we get this word again, right? "How's forever?" Uh, you know, and she immediately—because she has an emotional intelligence about sort of like, where she is, as much as possible, says, you know, that's obviously not possible. I'm feeling very needy right now and what have you. But like, the want, the desire to have these arms around you to hold you, this person who you can let go with, this person who you feel safe with. Just wanting them to stay forever, regardless of any of the consequences, makes total sense.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm, mmhmm.

**Kristin:** And then they kiss. Jenny? I don't know how you felt, but I was simply delighted to see such a wonderful, passionate kiss on the screen. [Jenny laughs] Because it's been a while. [laughs]

**Jenny:** It's like—the kiss was okay, but I'm pretty sure both her boots stayed on, so... [Kristin laughs] how good was it *really*?

**Kristin:** [laughs] Oh, god. I was just like, right, kissing! Look at that! Look at them go.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Yeah, well, you say that but then it very quickly—

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** Ramps right the hell up.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Angel's off to Boner Town. [Kristin laughs] Buffy's like, you gotta go back to LA, bud.

**Kristin:** And then, just making us remember—so rude!—I Will Remember You. You know, he's like, I have a few minutes until I have to go.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And they sit there, you know, as the sun starts to come up. And we know that he's gonna go back to [sings Angel theme and laughs]

**Jenny:** Yeah. Also, hey, speaking of melodies, I just wanna say one more time—

**Kristin:** I can't believe—

**Jenny:** The score here is beautiful.

**Kristin:** That you didn't give me more credit for just whipping the Angel theme—

**Jenny:** No, that was—[laughs] that was really great. And to your—much to your credit, the melody of the Angel theme is kind of obscure.<sup>1</sup>

**Kristin:** [laughs] Right?

**Jenny:** It's not, like, as intuitive and like, singable as the theme for Buffy. So I salute you.

**Kristin:** Thank you.

**Jenny:** And I also salute Thomas Wanker/Vonker [Kristin laughs] for scoring this scene so beautifully. I think it's a callback to the Buffy and Angel theme, but his—

**Kristin:** Mm.

**Jenny:** Rendering of it is so beautiful.

**Kristin:** Cool.

**Jenny:** Unless it's not a callback to that theme and it's something totally new and his rendering of this new thing is so beautiful. Sorry. [Kristin laughs] Okay, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa! Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

**Kristin:** Yes. Yes.

**Jenny:** Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa—

**Kristin:** Oh my god.

**Jenny:** Buckle up, universe! We... see Ben run into Jinx. And Ben says— [Kristin giggles] Kristin, are you ready?

**Kristin:** I'm ready!

**Jenny:** Ben says, "Tell my sister I'm sick of running into her Jawa rejects. [Kristin laughs] Kristin! Do you get this reference now?

**Kristin:** Yes, of course I do! I am a card—

**Jenny:** Oh my god! Mark your calendars—

**Kristin:** Card-carrying member of the Star Wars fanclub.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** I can picture their red, little, beady, little glowing eyes and their hoods. [Jenny laughs] They're always throwing things off of things, they're in the sand, they're—yeah.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Of course I do.

**Jenny:** I think they're cuter than the minions.

**Kristin:** Uh, they're—well, I mean, to be fair, do we—do we see full Jawa faces?

**Jenny:** Hmmm.

**Kristin:** [laughs] They are cuter—

**Jenny:** They're cuter in their little robes.

**Kristin:** Yes. So—but just maybe—just maybe the minions should just keep their hoods up a little bit more often. [laughs] So. This is a big deal. This is a tiny little moment in a big episode, and it's a big deal, because Ben says, "I would never do that to an innocent." [makes car screeching noise]

**Jenny:** No! Ben!

**Kristin:** Ben—here's the thing. I'm not gonna blame you, Ben, for slipping. But I'm gonna blame you for not making sure that Jinx was dead.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Dude.

**Jenny:** Commit. Commit.

**Kristin:** I mean, you're gonna stab somebody, stab 'em right, as I always say.

**Jenny:** I always say that too. And for some reason, Ben just doesn't listen. [Kristin laughs] He says, "do you understand how many people are gonna die if she finds the Key?"

**Kristin:** Yeah. A little math here. Um, because this is—this is, like, the most linear Ben-to-Glory, Glory-to-Ben situation. I feel like—like, Ben leaves the hospital. Jinx has been sent by Glory. By the time Jinx gets to the hospital, Ben is leaving the

hospital. [Jenny laughs] Jinx is like, "Ben, you can't bliggity-blah, I need to bliggity-blah." Ben's like, boom, knife in the stomach. And then Jinx is like, oh no, and runs back to—hey! Glory's there. [both laugh] I just—I just... there's a lot of switchin'. A lot of changing out of dresses, putting on scrubs, a lot of putting on scrubs, cha—it just—that's all. [laughs]

[HELLMATH jingle plays]  
Hellmath!

**Kristin:** Anyway.

**Jenny:** Whew.

**Kristin:** Willow and Tara... need to go to the dining hall.

**Jenny:** [sighs] We're headed to the dining hall where all the college students hang out. Would you, a 14-year-old, like to come be our dining hall buddy?

**Kristin:** You're very upset about a 14-year-old hanging out on a college campus. I don't think it's that—

**Jenny:** I just—have you seen what happens on college campuses, Kristin? [Kristin laughs] Because I have. I've done most of it, and it's no place for a 14-year-old.

**Kristin:** I just—

**Jenny:** Especially one who just lost her mom.

**Kristin:** [laughs] It's just—I just feel like it's a marker of us continuing to age, that like—

**Jenny:** Mmm.

**Kristin:** You know what I mean? Like, I just—I'm just looking out for you, Jenny. You're showing your stripes over here. [laughs]

**Jenny:** How dare you. [Kristin laughs] Okay, so... they're leaving. Dawn's like, "you guys go, I'm not hungry, I might not be here when you get back." And Willow abracadabras a book off the shelf for Dawn. [tsks]

**Kristin:** She straight up, like, "Accio History of Magic."

**Jenny:** Yes, and—and—and we have yet another amazing piece of score. This sort of, like, classic horror movie piano figure that actually kind of reminds me of, I think, The NeverEnding Story. [Kristin gasps] It's sort of like [sings melody].

**Kristin:** Ooh!

**Jenny:** That's The NeverEnding Story figure. But I think the one that happens here is fairly close to that.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** And it's very effective and great. I just love this guy's work in this episode, it's so beautiful.

**Kristin:** Yeah! Um, I didn't—I want to watch it all over again 'cause I feel like I didn't pay very much attention to the score in this episode, so I'm happy to hear more about it. You know what else I'm happy to hear more about, Jenny, is Giles' feather duster. I keep watch on it—

**Jenny:** Sure.

**Kristin:** I always point out when we see it again. Because the first time we saw it, it went into his teeth. And I've never forgotten about it. So—

**Jenny:** [laughs] Oh, true. Is this the same one? I think this is a different one.

**Kristin:** No, it's the same feather duster.

**Jenny:** Hmm.

**Kristin:** Don't—

**Jenny:** Do you think feather dusters do a better job than, like, a Swiffer duster?

**Kristin:** Literally, no. I've never understood a feather duster. I feel that they are not effective.

**Jenny:** It's like, don't feathers just seem kinda already dirty to you? [Kristin laughs] No offense to birds. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Okay, before we get any further into feather duster territory, why don't we hear a brief word from some of our sponsors?

[AD BREAK]

**Kristin:** Hey Jenny, something else having to do with birds... um... are chicken feet, which come up again. In the Magic Box here with Anya.

**Jenny:** Well! They're a hot item.

**Kristin:** They are. They, um, they appeared first in our Buffy conversation with Anya and Willow way back. That was, I think, how we got—Doppelgangland?

**Jenny:** Chicken feet?

**Kristin:** Remember? They were standing in the classroom and she was like, chicken feet—they were fighting about chicken feet? But then they did the spell together and they made the Doppelgangland?

**Jenny:** Oh. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** Chicken feet have been around for—

**Jenny:** Right, okay.

**Kristin:** So, um, Anya's feeling super threatened. [laughs] By Dawn.

**Jenny:** Love it. Love it.

**Kristin:** Who is gonna maybe take her job.

**Jenny:** Sure, for free.

**Kristin:** For free. And Dawn is, like, literally Harriet the Spy'ing all over the place. Just like, "so, um... so where do you keep the resurrection of mom stuff?" [laughs]

**Jenny:** Oh my god, dude! "Uh... uh... mmm... where, um..."

**Kristin:** "If I was gonna..."

**Jenny:** "Just to—let me know where the most dangerous books and potions are so I can, um, you know, stay away from them."

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Jenny:** "Just so I can steer clear."



**Kristin:** "Yeah, I just wanna be really careful." Giles, come on, man. You should see right through this 14-year-old.

**Jenny:** Bro.

**Kristin:** Please. Also, Dawn literally—so Giles is like, uh, yes, the dangerous things are upstairs, so thank you so much for asking and let me know if anybody needs anything, I'll handle it. And then Giles, like, goes into the back room, and Dawn isn't even—like, you'd think Dawn would be like, now I know where they are. I'll sort of, like, wait 'til there's a quiet time, I'll sneak in at night, I'll whatever. She just goes—

**Jenny:** Yeah, right? No, she's like, I'll just pop—scurry right up this ladder. "Giles, I just wanted to get a really good look at where all the forbidden items are so I can definitely make sure to stay away from them."

**Kristin:** [laughing] Right. But like, also, there's something about the fact that, like, I would try to do it secretly that probably would be me getting caught. I think there is something very bold about Dawn just being like, I'm doing it and I'm doing it fucking now. And I think to be a true, like, criminal, you really have to be minded like that. You know, you have to be willing to, like, jump right into the fire.

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

**Kristin:** Anyway. Dawn gets the big book that she needs, which somehow, she knows exactly where the fuck it is. And a blue bottle that she puts in the bag. And gets up and down those stairs without being found out.

**Jenny:** Incredible.

**Kristin:** Nice work.

**Jenny:** I love that she—she's just like, looking at all the bottles like, hmm, not—not this one—oh, it's this one, it's definitely this one. None of them are marked.

**Kristin:** [laughing] None of them.

**Jenny:** They're just different colors and shapes.

**Kristin:** Maybe they were marked on the bookcase. Like, maybe like, there were labels like taped to the case itself.

**Jenny:** [doubtfully] Mmm...

**Kristin:** It said—[Jenny still making doubtful noise] "looking for something to bring Joyce back? Blue bottle!" [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Oh my god. [deep voice] "Need something?" In Skyrim, every time you like bump into certain characters—

**Kristin:** Uh-huh.

**Jenny:** Or if you, like, go into a shop, the guy will be like, "Need something?"

**Kristin:** [laughs] Um...

**Jenny:** Just—just letting you know.

**Kristin:** Okay, so. So Dawn has snuck out to the cemetery. She's hanging out by the freshly, um... dirt'ed... gravestone.

**Jenny:** The freshly turned earth.

**Kristin:** Yes, the freshly turned earth, thank you. And Spike is like, uh, hope it's just dirt that you're after, 'cause I fucking literally recognize that book. I know what you're doing and instead of telling on you, I'm gonna help.

**Jenny:** Spike!

**Kristin:** I know! Because as he says in the next minute, he can't bear to see Summers women take it so hard on the chin.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Oh god!

**Jenny:** Dawn also thinks Spike is trying to, like, do this to get in good with Buffy. And he's like, if you tell Buffy I'll fucking make sure *you* end up in the ground.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Little bit. Also, in the middle of these two—

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Spike-Dawn scenes, there is [laughs] just a scene of Giles listening to rock music. That's parenthetically indicated by the closed captioning, "rock music."

**Kristin:** Uh, it's not just rock music, Jenny. It is Tales of Brave Ulysses by Cream. And it is the same song that he listened to with Joyce in Band Candy before they had sex. [Jenny gasps] On the hood—

**Jenny:** Oh my god!

**Kristin:** Of the police car. You're welcome.

**Jenny:** Giles! You—Giles!

**Kristin:** So why don't you go cry and you can let me know when you're ready to keep taping the episode?

**Jenny:** Oh my god, that's *fucked up*! [Kristin laughs] That is deeply fucked up. I watched this and I was like, what a weird... he's listening to that music he likes again. [Kristin laughs] And... drinking scotch and like, he's sad, but this just seems like such a non sequitur, sort of like—

**Kristin:** Right. No, it's—

**Jenny:** Just a strange little moment. But oh my god! [Kristin laughs] How dare they!

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah. It's, um, it's a lot. And it's—I think it's actually, like, so important—I mean, it's gutting, of course. But it's also I think really important because, you know, we talked about it a little bit in The Body. That like, Giles is probably the singular character who is able to be both practically there and present for them, and also emotionally there for them. And I think that he is also the character that is equally impacted, like Buffy is, with the logistical needs and also the emotional weight.

**Jenny:** Ugh!

**Kristin:** Like, he—we don't get to see that much of Giles' processing of the loss of Joyce. And we didn't explore too much of their relationship. Obviously, Band Candy was a peak of, like, so much fun with the two of them. But they've been in each other's lives as the parental figure for years and, you know, Giles was doing babysitting. Like, Giles is part of this fucking family.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And so, this is a tiny scene, but I think—I love that it's here to just give us a tiny little window into the fact that Giles is grieving too.

**Jenny:** Oh... my god.

**Kristin:** I'm—I can—I'm never as delighted as I am when I get to reveal something like Britney Spears, uh—[both laugh] but this was extra special. This was fun.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** [sighs] Anyhow. Jinx is getting blood all over Glory's carpet. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** Dude, I love his, um—mortal wounds are—are, uh, cutting off his [unclear] at the knees. He's like, "you're most... you?"

**Kristin:** [laughing] "You," yeah. [both laugh] "The—you—good... one."

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** He's like—he cannot get a Glorificus nickname in to save his life. At all.

**Jenny:** Uh, no. But he indicates that the Key is innocent and Glory is *all* hopped up on it.

**Kristin:** Oh my god. But she—and she goes from, like, zero to a hundred in a half second in this scene. She's literally pulling her hair out of her head, screaming, "I hate you, I hate you, I hate you," throwing a full tantrum about Ben. Do you think that Ben also lost hair in that? Like, how does that work? [laughs]

**Jenny:** I guess we'll have to wait until we see him next.

**Kristin:** Yeah. And then, she is basically back to her jumping around, celebratory self. Because now she knows it's not a bicycle pump, you know? That's a big deal.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm! Yeah, you can put all those bicycle pumps back.

**Kristin:** [laughs] Yeah, you can stop testing them for their Key DNA. Actually, DNA is a particular choice, isn't it? Because I had questions about this next scene.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** Where we get the wonderful—the *wonderful* Joel Grey.

**Jenny:** Yeah. This—wow, this guy playing Doc, Joel Grey.

**Kristin:** Ugh!

**Jenny:** He was in the original Cabaret.

**Kristin:** Yes.

**Jenny:** He was the original, like, wizard in Wicked.

**Kristin:** Yes. Yes!

**Jenny:** He—like, what a—what a storied history. And like, usually, I feel like James Marsters is, like... not that he's, like, acting circles around people, but I feel like—

**Kristin:** Mmm.

**Jenny:** He's at, like, the top tier, with Sarah—

**Kristin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Jenny:** Of like, the great performances. And we've been seeing Michelle Trachtenberg turn in some really, really amazing stuff recently. And to see this guy—

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Just fucking... I mean. Michelle and James are doing amazing, but to see this guy come into this scene and just fucking, like, lap them infinitely.

**Kristin:** Ugh!

**Jenny:** Like, he's just so fucking good! Like, immediately. We get like two minutes with this guy and you'll never forget him. He's amazing.

**Kristin:** Yeah, he's phenomenal. You—do you know who he is the dad to, Jenny?

**Jenny:** Oh, he's Jennifer Grey's dad, right?

**Kristin:** Yeah! Nobody puts—

**Jenny:** He's the—

**Kristin:** His baby in the corner.

**Jenny:** Exactly. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** But yeah, he's wonderful. And so they are there because this guy is purportedly the guy who is gonna tell you all the dark magic secrets that you need to bring somebody back to life. And he—the reason that I connected this with DNA that I just said, not even on purpose, is because he sort of yanks a piece of Dawn's hair out of her head. And says, well, you know, based on looking at this piece of your hair, it seems like your mom would have pretty strong DNA. Which gives you pause, right? 'Cause it's like—we've talked about it before. Like, what is Dawn's DNA? She's a mystical—

**Jenny:** Well, she's like—

**Kristin:** Key but she's a person, so—just—

**Jenny:** Right.

**Kristin:** You know, is he seeing the strength of the Summers' DNA or is he seeing, like, Key shit?

**Jenny:** Mmm.

**Kristin:** Joel Grey is humming a song, Jenny, in this scene.

**Jenny:** Uh-huh.

**Kristin:** It's Peter and the Wolf—

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And I was wondering if you know the story of Peter and the Wolf.

**Jenny:** [pauses] Gosh, I can't remember. What happens?

**Kristin:** Well, why don't you—maybe you should, you know, just see if you remember any—what do you *think* happens in Peter and the Wolf?

**Jenny:** Uh, is it like, Red Riding Hood-y at all? Is it—

**Kristin:** A litt—uh—[makes negative noises] I guess, a little. There's a wolf.  
[laughs]

**Jenny:** Okay. Oh, you're trying to prompt me so I can do one of my incredible retellings [Kristin laughs] of, um—

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** A story from the global canon.

**Kristin:** Of course. The minute I saw there was, like, a fairy tale—

**Jenny:** Um, yes, okay, so—

**Kristin:** I was like, ooh, goody!

**Jenny:** So there's a guy named Peter.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** And there's also a wolf.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Now does Peter hunt the wolf? I think so.

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** Peter's hunting the wolf, but then it turns out that the wolf is actually hunting Peter. But then somehow, Peter wins. And we all live happily ever after, how'd I do?

**Kristin:** Um, you know—

**Jenny:** And she sold all the matches. [Kristin laughs] And lived happily—yes.

**Kristin:** Yeah, I mean, so Peter lives with his grandfather. And he goes out and he leaves a gate open, and so the duck that lives there gets out. And whatever, I won't tell you the whole story, but essentially, Peter gets in trouble because he left the gate open. The duck is out there, and Peter's grandfather is like, yo, there's a fucking wolf, dude! Like, you can't fucking just leave gates open around here. Peter's kinda pissed, but then he sees the wolf come out and he sees the wolf eat the duck from inside of the pond. And Peter's like, oh, fuck no! And so he, like,

throws a rope out the window and he goes outside. And he catches the wolf and it's amazing because the whole village has been afraid of the wolf forever. And then somehow, I'm not exactly sure how this happens in the story, but everybody's really excited and they put the wolf in a zoo and have a victory parade. Uh, and there's also a bird and a cat involved.

But anyway, the thing that I wanted to say, 'cause—because obviously there's some thematic reason that we've chosen Peter and the Wolf, right? "In the story's ending"—I'm reading the little description on Wikipedia—"the listener is told, quote, 'if you listen very carefully, you'll hear the duck quacking inside the wolf's belly, because the wolf in his hurry had swallowed her alive.'" End quote. So, you know. Peter and the Wolf. Joyce. Alive in the belly of death. Resurrect her.

**Jenny:** Ohh.

**Kristin:** Right? I don't know, that's what I thought. Write into—

**Jenny:** Ohhh!

**Kristin:** Us at [bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com](mailto:bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com) and please correct any of my inconsistencies. I've not experienced Peter and the Wolf, but what I read—obviously, very—

**Jenny:** You're not a natural storyteller like some hosts of this podcast.

**Kristin:** Um, excuse me, I think that my rendering—you know what kind of storyteller I am, really? I think that when I get really going on a story, I'm closer in theme to, like, Drunk History? Like, I think that—

**Jenny:** Uh-huh.

**Kristin:** You could use my brand of storytelling to, like, put it over people saying the lines, as I tell the—anyway. You know what? The point is... it's here for a reason. We're your hosts and sometimes we don't know everything. But like, just write us an email and tell us what you think the reasoning behind putting this fairy tale song in this episode is.

**Jenny:** I was wondering if based on what happens a little bit later, like right at the end of this scene, if perhaps this was to indicate that Joel Grey's character is the wolf and Dawn is the duck that better be careful.

**Kristin:** Mmm. That makes more sense. [laughs]



**Jenny:** I like it both ways.

**Kristin:** Okay! That is what she *said*.

**Jenny:** Ayyo. Yo. [laughs] She's like, you got a bathrobe? Chill. You got a tail? Chill. Let's do this. [Kristin laughs] So, Doc has a tail.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** He also has loads of info about how to do this spell. You need to steal a Ghora demon egg from a Ghora demon, which is apparently very dangerous. You gotta make a sacred circle, you gotta put all the stuff in the center with a pic of your mom. If you need to reverse the spell, you gotta rip up the photo. It might take time, but she *will* come to you.

**Kristin:** And she might be a little off. Just so you know. And—

**Jenny:** And Dawn says, "she'll still be my mother, won't she?" And he says, "more or less."

**Kristin:** Yeah. He's so good at being so creepy. Oh my god, I love him.

**Jenny:** Yeah.

**Kristin:** And yeah, then she offers him some money for the, you know, instructions. And he says, keep your money and she mistakenly is like, sweet old man! You know? [laughing] And he growls as he smiles and his eyes turn all black.

**Jenny:** Dude. *Terrifying*.

**Kristin:** So terrifying, so effective. Standing ovation for fucking Joel Grey, so glad you're here.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Really incredible.

**Kristin:** So they go to the Ghora demon. I hate this scene, I'm so upset for the Ghora demon. The Ghora demon never did anything to anybody, it's just fucking laying down there with its three fucking heads and its babies. Why you gotta fuck with it? I don't like it. I don't know how you feel, Jenny.

**Jenny:** Yeah, uh, I feel like the Ghora seems to be keeping to itself—

**Kristin:** Right?

**Jenny:** Down there in the sewers. Just like... live and let Ghora, as I always say.

**Kristin:** As you do, you *a/ways* say that. [both laugh]

**Jenny:** And they have this whole bit where, like, Dawn's gonna grab the egg and Spike's gonna distract the demon. And it works! But then, oh no! On the way out, Dawn drops the egg—

**Kristin:** [laughing] Fucking butterfingers.

**Jenny:** Yeah, Butterfingers Summers over here. And then... [Kristin laughs] and then Spike's like, okay, it's too danger—come back, what are you doing?! And Dawn's already back in there. And then, Spike gets bit in the torso and this—in this moment, I am Spike and the Ghora demon is Frank, who is teething [Kristin laughs] and cannot stop biting, me and everything else. I feel Spike's pain in this scene.

**Kristin:** Ohh my god! Sorry, I just pictured Frank dressing up as a Ghora demon for Halloween. I'm just saying!

**Jenny:** Well, yes, with a little graduation cap on top. [laughs]

**Kristin:** Of each head.

**Jenny:** Uh-huh.

**Kristin:** You have to make two other Frank heads.

**Jenny:** Yes, of course.

**Kristin:** But yeah, they get this egg and good for them. But I just—I just—every time I see this scene, I feel so sad for the Ghora mom. You know? It's just like—she's just—she's just trying to look out for her babies and they're so mean to her. And they, like, put an ax in her. I just—you know, justice for Ghora.

**Jenny:** Ugh. I'm sure she makes a full recovery though.

**Kristin:** Yeah, she probably does.

**Jenny:** She looks real tough.

**Kristin:** And also, like, where do all the Ghora demons go? 'Cause there were a lot of eggs in there, so if they're all having eggs and the eggs are hatching into more

Ghoras, so—anyway. Moving right along. Is this Dawn's blood that she's making a circle with? Because it's a lot of fucking blood, if it is.

**Jenny:** Oh, fuck.

**Kristin:** It's a lot, right? And I was like, um, that's a lot of, like, bright red blood. And I don't know if it's supposed to be hers or if it's supposed to be from, like, the innards of the Ghora egg or like, what, but—

**Jenny:** Or maybe it came from that jar that she eyeballed and then snatched.

**Kristin:** Ohh, yes. Maybe it did. Jenny, before we get too far past the eggs here, I just wanted to say that I think that these eggs might be considered...

[Clip from the song "Bad Eggs" plays]  
Bad eggs!

**Jenny:** Hell yeah! [Kristin laughs] [half-singing] It's been a while since we saw some Bad Eggs! So here they are!

**Kristin:** Yeah, uh—just a—just a sampling of our song from—

**Jenny:** Ooh!

**Kristin:** Season who knows, episode who knows, Bad Eggs. Uh, speaking of eggs. You know, some of them are bad in this episode and some of them are good.

**Jenny:** Some of them are *good*. Nice.

**Kristin:** Willow is really, really into Tara's eggs, if you know what I mean. [laughs]

**Jenny:** Ugh! Um, yes. Willow has started a breakfast journal.

**Kristin:** [laughs] She's like, I don't—I need to remember everything about my entire life, because I've just realized that I could also die.

**Jenny:** It's like, Willow, you're gonna—eventually, this journal is gonna be a snake eating its own tail because she's gonna be writing about how she just spent an hour reading [Kristin laughs] about all of her breakfasts. [both laugh]

**Kristin:** So she—right, she's recording her bagel or whatever she had. And she remembers that Tara had eggs. Over easy, because she remembers that they were wiggling at her like little boobs. Great—

**Jenny:** Nice.

**Kristin:** Great line. Thank you, Marti Noxon, for that line and thank you, Alyson Hannigan, for that delivery. [laughs] Tara—

**Jenny:** Okay, great.

**Kristin:** Catches a whiff of a book slot open on the shelf. And is like—

**Jenny:** Yes, and is—

**Kristin:** What has happened?

**Jenny:** She's like, where's that book, History of Witchcraft? And Willow's like, "what book?! Do we have a book? Oh, we have that book, of course, yes, but wait, it's not there! [Kristin laughs] Where could it be? I certainly don't know! Do you?"

**Kristin:** [laughs] Willow's like, "A book?! What is a book? Does it have pages and print? I have never heard of such a thing! Ah!" [both laugh] She's, uh... I mean, it's been a minute since we've gotten a really good, like, Willow lying moment. So I'm very, very excited.

**Jenny:** Yeah. I'm happy to see it. I missed—I missed this horrifying display.

**Kristin:** God, Alyson Hannigan does a lot of things right, but her ver—her rendition of lying Willow has gotta be among the top [laughs] achievements.

**Jenny:** Yeah. It's very good.

**Kristin:** So they immediately come around, thank god, to "let's just call Buffy and tell her what's what." But of course, they only have some of the information. They only have the information about what she's doing. They actually don't have the information of how to stop it. Only Dawn has that information. And Spike, I guess, and Joel Grey.

**Jenny:** Yeah. Okay, so Tara makes a call. At the end of this scene and the beginning of the next scene, we see Buffy come home and answer the phone, the phone is ringing, it's Tara, oh my god! Then she runs into the room where—where, uh—

**Kristin:** Oof.

**Jenny:** Or then Dawn comes down the stairs?

**Kristin:** No, no, Buffy goes into the room where Dawn is.

**Jenny:** Okay, Buffy goes into the room and is like, what have you done? Who knows what you've raised? Tara told me people come back wrong!

**Kristin:** Yeah. Ooh. And this scene... I would like you to know that the zombie Joyce legs are not played by Kristine Sutherland.

**Jenny:** I didn't think so. They seemed... off.

**Kristin:** Right? They—yeah. And um, this—

**Jenny:** But in a good way.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** Like, in a convincing way.

**Kristin:** This moment of seeing her, like, little feet shuffling across the grass reminds me—and I think has always reminded me of this, Jenny—reading Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*. And right in the beginning of that book, the character's wife—he has sort of—either he's resurrected her—somebody's resurrected her.

**Jenny:** Mm.

**Kristin:** And it's just so vivid in my mind, that scene, and it reminds me of this visual, of this person who just like Joel Grey said, is a little off. And she is—she has gotten out of her grave and she is walking towards the house. And... this is a pivotal moment for Dawn and Buffy. It is the moment that their paths finally collide. And it's because Dawn is finally saying what she feels, and that breaks open in Buffy the ability to say what she's truly been feeling. They finally access each other on an equal plane of loss and grief and pain, you know. And it's so beautiful.

[Clip from episode plays]

**Buffy:** [crying] Dawn. I've been working... I've been busy because I have to.

**Dawn:** [crying] No! You've been avoiding me.

**Buffy:** I'm not! I have to do these things, 'cause... 'cause when I stop, then she's really gone. [sniffles] And I'm trying. Dawn, I'm really trying to take care of things. But I don't even know what I'm doing. Mom always knew.

**Dawn:** Nobody's asking you to be Mom.

**Buffy:** Well, who's gonna be if I'm not? Huh, Dawn? Have you even thought about that? Who's gonna make things better? Who's gonna take care of us?

**Kristin:** Ugh!

**Jenny:** This is... wild—they've just been missing each other like ships in the night, looking for different things from one another. You know, Buffy is just barreling through, trying to adhere to what she always does, which is what needs to be done, right?

**Kristin:** Right, right.

**Jenny:** And Dawn is just looking for a sense of family, when—in the wake of losing their mother, right?

**Kristin:** Mmhmm.

**Jenny:** And—and Buffy just like—you know, is being crushed under the weight of these questions. Like, what are we gonna do, who's gonna take care of us? You know?

**Kristin:** Mm!

**Jenny:** And they finally are able to reach across this void and touch, just as the knock comes at the door.

**Kristin:** Ugh! God.

**Jenny:** And this moment is amazing, because right at this moment, like, Dawn has gotten what she needs. Like, she knows that she still has a sister.

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** And Buffy—but at the same time, Buffy is faced with the reality of: whatever version of my mother Dawn brought back is at the door right. She's reduced once again to, "Mommy?"

**Kristin:** Yeah.

**Jenny:** She's reduced back to this childlike, "oh god, my mother, can I... run to her?" And as she runs to the door, thank god, like, their total role reversal, right?

**Kristin:** Ugh.

**Jenny:** Like, Dawn responsibly, just in the nick of time, rips the photo. Buffy opens the door, there's nothing there.

**Kristin:** There's nothing there. And they... the way that Michelle Trachtenberg and Sarah Michelle Gellar execute this last moment of "she's"—I have the ch—I, like, literally have full-body chills right now, right?

**Jenny:** Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** 'Cause she's gone, she's gone, you know—

**Jenny:** Forever.

**Kristin:** In this sense again, but right. This is—

**Jenny:** This is the final occurrence of forever as a concept in this episode.

**Kristin:** And it is, I think, for—you know, we watch these episodes now, most of us, as people who have seen them already. But this also, I think, as an audience watching the show is when you realize... that Joyce is gone forever.

**Jenny:** For real.

**Kristin:** Magic isn't gonna bring her back. We're really doing this. We are *really* doing this. And Buffy and Dawn just hold each other and collapse on the floor. And they are sobbing like—a million years ago when I was in college, I did a performance. I was a theater major and I did a performance of Electra, and I was just in the chorus. But the people who played the lead roles, they actually came from Greece. It was like this really cool state university of New York exchange—it was cool. Whatever, that's besides the point. They really got deep with us on, like, Greek tragedy and they weren't afraid to, like, reach down to these—I'm gonna use the word, like, animalistic, even though I feel like that's even cheapening what I'm trying to say. But these, like, guttural cries.

And I remember in that production, the woman who was playing Electra just, like, crying to the point on stage where, like, snot would fly out of her face, you know?

Which—[laughs] but it was so effective, it was so devastating. And it was just like, the complete loss of yourself in grief. These calls that, like, go back centuries upon centuries upon centuries of, I have lost what I love and this sound comes out of my body. Like, that is what we see in this final scene with the two of them collapsing. It is so devastating and so powerful. And like, also so... [sighs] like, hopeful? For them? Because they are—they have each other in the doorway, right? They're not alone, they're together.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm, mmhmm.

**Kristin:** And that's really beautiful too. But ee-yah! God. Give me something fun or funny. I gotta, like—can we be done now? [laughs]

**Jenny:** Well! Almost. There's just one last detour we have to take. [Kristin laughs] Come with me, get in the car. Let's ride together down Innuendo Avenue all the way to the Sexual Tension Awards! [Kristin laughs]

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]  
Sexual tension award!

**Jenny:** For your consideration. In the first slot—heh—we've got Anya and Xander because they actually had sex.

**Kristin:** Yeah! They had circle of life sex, baby.

**Jenny:** They had circle of life, we're part of something bigger than ourselves type sex, so. [Kristin giggles] If that's what you're into, vote #1! Then in the second slot... of a pod fave, a listener fave, uh, hope and love spring eternal from this deep, dark font, it's Buffy and Angel!

**Kristin:** If you ever wanted forever, you got it right there with those two, everybody.

**Jenny:** Uh-huh.

**Kristin:** Slot 2, Buffy and Angel. In the third slot, uh, we have of course—how could we leave them out? Willow and Egg Boobs. That's Willow and Egg Boobs in Slot 3.

**Jenny:** [makes triumphant jingle noise]

**Kristin:** She was really into them, they were wiggling at her. [laughs]



**Jenny:** Oh yeah.

**Kristin:** And in the fourth and final slot, we have—we always love a throuple. And you know what I love to see is the beloved, the long-sustaining love that springs eternal from a throuple that has one shared body, three heads and can still procreate: the Ghora demon. The fourth option for your voting is Ghora, Ghora and Ghora.

**Jenny:** Oh my god, is the Ghora demon just down in there in the sewers, like, self-producing eggs? Without a mate?

**Kristin:** I think the Ghora demon is doing that thing we talked about that sometimes sharks do, you know?

**Jenny:** Ahh.

**Kristin:** They just sorta like boop out another little shark clone. Boop. That's—that's what it's called, boopin'.

**Jenny:** [doubtfully] Mm... [both laugh] Well! Um, I think—nobody check the science on that last bit. But, um, if you'd like to participate in our beautiful, sexy democracy, you can find the Sexual Tension Award poll for this and every episode on our Twitter account, @BufferingCast. The poll will be live for one week. Cast your vote and make your voice heard.

**Kristin:** Woo! That has been your Sexual Tension Awards.

[SEXUAL TENSION AWARD jingle plays]  
Sexual tension award!

**Kristin:** Alright. So, we're coming around the bend. We've finished the episode, ish. We've done Sexual Tension Awards. But I just—I know that you did me the great favor, Jenny, of cheering me up after I got sad, with the Sexual Tension Awards. But I wanna say... something—and we talk—we talk about this. This is Buffy, this is the core of Buffy. But I do just wanna, like, talk for a minute about this experience that she has that I know I identify with and I think a lot of our listeners probably identify with. Maybe you do, I'm not sure. You can tell us.

But this idea of the fact that, like, she's being asked to hold so much stuff, right? She has to keep it together. So she does the thing that she's being asked to do, keep it together. But then the world sort of looks at her like, she's okay. You know, and she's like, I'm not okay—I don't know which one to do. Like, I'm supposed to hold it together but I'm not okay, but if I tell you I'm not okay, then I'm not holding

it together. And it's this sort of like dyad that she's always in. Which is why I think she breaks so hard in this last scene, is that she isn't okay but she's not allowed to remind people that she's not okay. That doesn't really exist in her world.

And I think that a lot of us—you can say for Buffy that perhaps that's literally true. But I think that for Buffy as well, it's a bit self-imposed. And I know that like for me and for probably a lot of our listeners, it's self-imposed, right? You think that you have to hold it together, and then you don't know how to ask for help when you need it. And I think that this scene is just such a great example of that break and the fact that, like, often when you do break, there is somebody there that's gonna catch you. It's just real hard to get to that break sometimes.

**Jenny:** Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

**Kristin:** So those are some of my personal feelings. [laughs] That I wanted to add on—

**Jenny:** Ten out of ten, great episode, wow.

**Kristin:** Yeah. Wow indeed. And... [sighs] just a huge thank you to everybody who kind of journeyed with us through The Body and, you know, got us thinking about grief and death and, um, I don't know. It's just been a—it's been a good journey. And it's been really nice to do it together with you, Jenny, and together with all of our wonderful listeners.

**Jenny:** Hell yeah.

**Kristin:** And now we get to jaunt off into the grand unknown. What the hell is gonna happen in the rest of Season 5? Holy shit!

**Jenny:** No idea. [Kristin giggles] Well! I know what happens in the next episode, but. I'm really excited about it.

**Kristin:** [laughs] The next episode? The next episode, literally—here's what I will say. This is not a spoiler, but I will tell you that Jenny—all you have to do is ask Jenny to describe what happens in the next episode, and she bursts into uncontrollable tears, like, happens to no other episode, including The Body. I've never seen you cry so hard.

**Jenny:** Let me live! [Kristin laughs] Let the artist work.

**Kristin:** [laughs] So see you in a few weeks with our discussion of Intervention.

**Jenny:** 'Til then... I'm Jenny Owen Youngs and when I'm not watching Buffy, I am writing songs and recording songs. You can learn more about me at [jennyowenyoungs.com](http://jennyowenyoungs.com). You can give me a shout on Twitter @JennyOwenYoungs. You can listen to me talk about another blond, petite protagonist over on my other podcast, Veronica Mars Investigations. You can listen to my latest EP Night Shift on all digital platforms, and if it's not untoward to say so, this month is the 11th anniversary of my second album. [Kristin gasps] Which is called Transmitter Failure and to celebrate—

**Kristin:** Aww.

**Jenny:** I'm doing a little streaming show for all my Jenny Owen Youngs patrons.

**Kristin:** Aww!

**Jenny:** So if you happen to be one of those people or you wanna get on board, even just, like, for one month, I'll be doing a livestream show of all those songs on May 26th, which I'm really looking forward to and excited about.

**Kristin:** Oh, that's so fun! Are you going to cut bangs for yourself before you do the streaming concert?

**Jenny:** Maybe I'll get a bangs wig. [Kristin laughs] Maybe I'll cut myself some quarantine bang—quaran-bangs.

**Kristin:** 11th anniversary of Transmitter Failure and 11th anniversary of the most ferocious Jenny Owen Youngs bangs you've ever seen in your life.

**Jenny:** [laughing] Ferocious.

**Kristin:** [laughs] That's so fun! I am Kristin Russo. I don't have any 11th anniversaries coming up, but I do—

**Jenny:** Heh!

**Kristin:** I do some other stuff besides watch Buffy the Vampire Slayer and talk about it here on Buffering the Vampire Slayer. You can learn more about me on my website, [kristinnoeline.com](http://kristinnoeline.com), K-R-I-S-T-I-N N-O-E-L-I-N-E. Use that spelling to also find me on Twitter and on Instagram. I do a lot of work with LGBTQ communities, middle school and high school GSAs, it's a whole thing. I also have another podcast that I do on Patreon. It is just available for our patrons here at Buffering the Vampires and the patrons over at The Storm podcast, because I do it with Joanna Robinson. It is called Feels Like the First Time and I watch movies I have somehow

never seen before, because they are iconic and classic, and then we talk about them, one at a time. It's been very fun.

**Jenny:** Hell yeah. Buffering the Vampire Slayer's on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @BufferingCast. You can email us at bufferingthevampireslayer@gmail.com or leave us a voicemail at area code 216-30-BUFFY.

**Kristin:** You can support the work that we do here—many of you do, thank you so much—by going on over to bufferingthevampireslayer.com. Just click on Patreon, join our Patreon family. There's a lot of things happening over there these days. The podcast that I do with Joanna, you get advanced music, we're doing—we're just learning how to do Zoom hangouts now. There's some fun shit. So join us, if you will. It's fun for you and wonderful for us 'cause it keeps us keeping on. You can also go to our store, also found on that website. Purchase yourself a dad hat or a baby onesie or perhaps a beer stein with an ale wife on it. There are a lot of choices for you. If you don't wanna spend any money, we get that too. You can go to iTunes and rate and review us.

**Jenny:** And, um... 'til next time...

**Both:** Awwwwwoooooooooooooooooooooo!

**Kristin:** Joyce Summers forever.

[Jenny performing "Forever" off the album Songs from Season 5 by Buffering the Vampire Slayer]

It's not forever  
until it is  
Can't remember  
an ache like this  
Wish I could wake up  
to see it fade

Just keep in motion  
So my limbs stay numb  
Trying to let go  
of what's been part of everything that you know  
I don't know  
I don't know

Fire burning though the wreck

I don't know what's next  
And I don't want to

Forever is a truth  
that I can't take  
Forever is a promise  
I can't make