

## Still Buffering: How to Poetry

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[theme music plays]

**Raleigh:** Hello, and welcome to Still Buffering, a sisters' guide to teens through the ages. I am Raleigh Smirl.

**Sydnee:** I'm Sydnee McElroy.

**Taylor:** And I'm Taylor Smirl.

**Sydnee:** Uh, sisters, I have an exciting new meme I want to tell you both about.

**Raleigh:** Oh?

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** You're gonna describe a meme to us?

**Raleigh:** Oh, you made fun of me for doing that, once. Go ahead.

**Sydnee:** Oh, no. It was a funny—

**Raleigh:** Go ahead.

**Sydnee:** Twitter thing that has generated a meme that I appreciate. So, I was never particularly a fan of Axe body spray.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Raleigh:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** Can't imagine either of you were.

**Raleigh:** No.

**Taylor:** No.

**Sydnee:** No, not really my thing. Always found it a little, like... it felt kind of bro-y, right?

**Taylor:** I think it was supposed to be.

**Raleigh:** It feels—yeah. And it's just... it's very aggressive at your nose.

**Sydnee:** Yes. So not really my thing. And so, it makes sense that I think because of that reputation of Axe, that when people were talking about uh, y'know how those ridiculous humans want to have a straight pride parade in Boston?

**Raleigh:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** And how ridiculous that is, and then, it was um, held up to much mockery on the internet, as it should be. There was someone who said, "What would you even have in a straight pride parade?" And one of the things they included was an Axe body spray float.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Pretty funny.

**Raleigh:** That's pretty funny.

**Sydnee:** Pretty funny joke. But Axe body spray on Twitter said, basically, no thank you.

**Raleigh:** Oh?

**Sydnee:** We'd much rather be part of a pride parade, and not a straight pride parade.

**Raleigh:** That's very good.

**Sydnee:** A real pride parade.

**Taylor:** Thank you, Axe... body... spray.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs] Weird.

**Sydnee:** And so, in response to that, someone on Twitter whose handle has 'Jill' in it, so we'll assume her name is Jill. Someone on Twitter came back at Axe body spray and was like, "Well, I will make sure that me and my son never use your products again, Axe body spray. 'Cause I'm a tool."

**Raleigh:** Gross, Jill.

**Sydnee:** Y'know, she said whatever she said. And in response to that, Axe body spray says, uh, "Well, gay rights are human rights, but you go off, Jill." [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs] That's pretty good.

**Sydnee:** So go off, Jill was trending for a while. And I really like that. I like that.

**Raleigh:** That's pretty good. That's good.

**Taylor:** That's good. I like that.

**Sydnee:** Alright. Go off, Jill.

**Raleigh:** That's a good meme.

**Sydnee:** I thought it was a good one. Thank you, Axe body spray, I guess.

**Raleigh:** Thanks. Well, I feel weird saying that in any context.

**Sydnee:** I don't know.

**Taylor:** Well, y'know what? I don't—like, that's fine. I'm not gonna use the product, it's not targeted at me, but I appreciate the support. It's okay to have... y'know, fine. I feel like, when a brand that maybe it behooves their target audience to sell to pride sells to pride, it's like, okay. But I don't know what kind of like, horse in this race Axe body spray has. So that's why I'm like, okay, thanks.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** That's a good point, though. Like, it really... I don't know, I don't want to make mass generalizations. But I have to assume that they got some flak for that.

**Raleigh:** Oh yeah.

**Sydnee:** Among users of their product.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** So...

**Raleigh:** That's like what happened with that Gillette ad. You see that?

**Sydnee:** Oh.

**Raleigh:** About like, y'know, going against toxic masculinity, and like, redefining gender stereotypes, and um, all those kinds of things. And all the people that responded like, "Never gonna use a Gillette razor again."

**Sydnee:** "I love toxic masculinity."

**Raleigh:** "I love toxic masculinity."

**Taylor:** "I love it when my son punches other kids and doesn't feel bad about it."

**Raleigh:** "My son doesn't cry. He doesn't make tears. That's for girls."

**Sydnee:** "Do you know how long I've had pent up negative emotions that I have no ability to express? My whole life." Thank you, society.

**Taylor:** And Gillette was, I think, also very much "go off, Jill," because then they came out with another really cute commercial where a father is teaching their son to shave for the first time, but their son is a trans man. So I think that's really...

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** I hadn't seen that. That is good.

**Taylor:** Gillette's like, "Okay." [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs] Gillette's like, "Y'all can use our razors or not. We're fine."

**Taylor:** "I think you're still gonna use our razors. I'm gonna just call your bluff."

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** It's a hard—it's a hard question, right? Because like, on one hand, you have to assume somebody is doing market research, there. And you could write it off as kind of pandering. But on the other hand, representation matters, and if you have a platform, using it to say, like, this is the side we're on. We're on the right side. We're on the good side. I mean... I don't know. I'm not gonna hate it.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** I also like that um, that Smash Mouth felt the need to tweet against the straight pride parade.

**Sydnee:** What? Yes.

**Taylor:** They said, "Straight pride parade? F off!"

**Sydnee:** Oh, that's good.

**Taylor:** And then like, these are our allies. Axe body spray...

**Raleigh:** Axe.

**Taylor:** The internet's been tweeting a lot about that combination of like, I will take it. I will absolutely take it.

**Raleigh:** Axe body spray and Smash Mouth.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] I did not see that coming, but it's 2019, so...

**Raleigh:** Expect the unexpected.

**Taylor:** It's the most bro-y, straight man who's against all this is just like, crying right now. "All of the things I trust are betraying me! Ahh!"

**Sydnee:** Well, and I felt bad, like... poor Brad Pitt got dragged into it. He was like, named their mascot. And then his representatives came out and were like, "Whoa, no, no, no, no. Wait, no, hey, no. No, Mr. Pitt has nothing to do with this and wants nothing to do with this, and this is not his scene."

**Taylor:** Oh, man.

**Sydnee:** "I don't know where you got the idea, but Brad Pitt has no part in this." Which I mean, thank goodness.

**Raleigh:** Right.

**Sydnee:** Otherwise, I'd have to go back... I'd have to build a time machine, go back in the past, and tear that Legends of the Fall poster right off my bedroom wall.

**Taylor:** Yeah. I just hope, 'cause I think it's gonna happen, and I mean, hopefully... I don't know, it's not a... it's stupid. It's incredibly stupid, this

straight pride parade. But y'know, I think it's been approved. I just want nothing more than just a bunch of queer people to show up and just treat the straight people like straight people, the worst – not all of them – but like the ones that don't really get that pride parade represents something. It's not a parade, it's commemorating, y'know, an act of rebellion.

I just want the queer people to show up and treat the straight people that way. Like, take their pictures, act like they're a spectacle, like, just... y'know, like, ask them if they can watch them make out. Like just, y'know, just treat 'em like the worst straight people treat us at pride, and it'll be... maybe that's the best we can do.

**Raleigh:** See, I kind of was hoping they would—that people in the um, in the actual pride community would just show up and just treat it like a pride parade, and just, y'know, just bring all the music and the dancing and the rainbow flags and everything that upsets all the people in the straight pride parade. 'Cause they hate all of it, obviously. Anything that has to do with pride, I just want all of it to be there and just interfere with their gross straight pride parade.

**Taylor:** I want that as well. I just also don't want anybody to get hurt.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I think the best thing that can happen is if it gets absolutely no attention, 'cause that's what it deserves.

**Taylor:** Well, that too.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Just no nothing. I mean, 'cause you know... that would be my plea to anybody who has a voice in the media. Don't cover this.

**Raleigh:** Hey, this is a—

**Sydnee:** This is garbage.

**Raleigh:** This would be a good time, if we're trying to work on like, y'know, getting the best people to represent our country and to like, make all the

decisions and get the bad people out. Can we just like, make kind of like, a little like, bear trap? Like the ones that have a big net that hide under the leaves in the woods that kind of spring up and capture someone? Can we build a big one of those and just anyone who goes to the straight pride parade, just kind of like, scoop, and they all go in the big net, and then they all get taken somewhere.

**Sydnee:** I was gonna say, what do we do with them once they're in the net?

**Raleigh:** Just take them and put them over there. [laughs] Not here.

**Taylor:** Where is 'over there'?

**Sydnee:** I don't know, I don't want any other country to have to have them either.

**Raleigh:** Um...

**Sydnee:** Yeah, there's no solution.

**Raleigh:** There's no solution. Can we just keep them hanging up there for always?

**Taylor:** No, I don't think that's... that's not very humane.

**Raleigh:** No?

**Sydnee:** We'll just move them all the New York or California where their votes won't count.

**Taylor:** No thank you!

**Raleigh:** Hey, there you go.

**Sydnee:** They'll be drowned out by all the blue.



**Taylor:** No, no, no! No, no, no. No, no, no. Maybe California. It's bigger, you could spread them out. But not here.

**Raleigh:** Sprinkle them over California.

**Taylor:** Yeah, just all over the place.

**Sydnee:** Um...

**Taylor:** I don't know much about Boston. I've been there once. And I'm not gonna insult Boston, but I was talking about this with some co-workers. And one of them who had lived in Boston said, "Yep, Boston would do that." And that was it. That was the statement. [laughs] I was like, "Oh, okay."

**Sydnee:** It's very New York of you to insult Boston.

**Taylor:** Well, y'know...

**Sydnee:** Uh, so, that wasn't what we were gonna do an episode about.

**Raleigh:** No.

**Taylor:** No.

**Sydnee:** I don't have a transition, here.

**Raleigh:** Just... it's okay.

**Sydnee:** Hey, I got—I know what it is. I got Charlie a new book.

**Raleigh:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** One that, Taylor, you may remember from our youth. It is called Uncle Shelby's ABZ Book.

**Taylor:** Oh, yeah. Shel Silverstein.

**Sydnee:** Yes. Now, for those of you familiar with this book, you are thinking, "That's inappropriate for a four year old." And you are correct.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** Isn't S for serial killer?

**Sydnee:** I think S is for serial killer. I know—as I have—I'm only halfway through reading it with Charlie, and I am now—

**Raleigh:** No spoilers.

**Sydnee:** I have now remembered that K is for kidnapper. So... that was an intense one. Um...

**Taylor:** There was definitely... maybe it was that, but I think it was like, they only come on certain days or something, or certain nights. Like, I think it was the serial killer? There was some illusion to somebody that was going to come kill you, but they only came on certain days of the week. And that's stuck in my child brain, and whenever it was that day of the week, I was like, "Ohhh no."

**Raleigh:** Ohhh it's Tuesday. [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs] Might die. Might die.

**Sydnee:** I'll check it out. It's been so long...

**Taylor:** Maybe skip that page.

**Sydnee:** I might not read that one. I've... my memory of it was... 'cause she's really into the other Shel Silverstein books of poetry. Of poetry. That's the topic.

**Raleigh:** Yes. Of poetry.

**Sydnee:** And uh, I've read her—

**Raleigh:** Thanks for naming the topic. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** --all of uh, A Light in the Attic, and uh, Where the Sidewalk Ends. I've read her like, every poem in both of those multiple times. At bedtime, we'll read a handful of Shel Silverstein poems. She really likes them. She likes that they're funny, she likes the pictures, she likes them.

And so, I was remembering that I had that book when I was younger, and of course, this book is really aimed at adults. It's supposed to be like a funny... it's a not kid book. And I said, y'know, it's got funny tricks in it, like it tries to trick you into cutting your daddy's hair when he's asleep on the couch. And it tries to trick you into throwing eggs at the ceiling, because there's a genie named Ernie who will reach down and grab the egg when you throw it, so they try to get kids to... so it's supposed to be funny.

And she said, "Oh, it's like a trick book. Like those food prank videos on YouTube that I love so much." And uh, I said, "Yeah, it's like a trick book."

**Raleigh:** What a comparison.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Troom troom. And uh, I said, "Okay, well, we'll get it." And then I started reading it to her. It arrived yesterday, and I started reading it to her, and I was like, "Oops."

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs] Oops.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Yeah. Um, it's funny. It's very funny. I love Shel Silverstein, but...

**Raleigh:** Also, are we sure Charlie wouldn't cut Justin's hair when he's asleep?

**Taylor:** Well, if she would, she'd get that genetically, I think, from her mother.

**Sydnee:** That's true. Did I cut... I did cut your hair, didn't I?

**Taylor:** What? Like you—oh, you just said that like, “Oh, I kind of forgot.”

**Sydnee:** I did kind of forget. You stuffed cheese in my mouth while I was asleep!

**Taylor:** You tried to feed me a Cadbury egg when I was less than a year old!

**Sydnee:** That was delicious and you loved it. I woke up with pieces of cheese stuck to my teeth.

**Taylor:** You hid me in the laundry basket.

**Sydnee:** ... This is true.

**Taylor:** [laughs] My one act of retribution was the cheese, and I didn't even think it was retribution. I just thought you looked hungry when you were sleeping.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I think you were just trying to dispose of the cheese you didn't want to eat, but also didn't want to get out of bed and go put in the trash can.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** No, no. I mean, I very distinctly remember thinking, for some reason, that if I just pulled the cheese apart into pieces that are exactly sized to your teeth and laid them over your teeth, then no one will know, and you won't be able to tell the difference between the cheese and your real teeth. That's the truth. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Well, we could all tell the difference. [laughs]

**Taylor:** You're right. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Sometimes I'm like, "Man, I wish I would've known what it was like to grow up with siblings around the same age." And then I'm like, "No, I'm chill. I'm good."

**Sydnee:** Uh, well, I am carrying on the tradition of terrifying and scarring Charlie with Uncle Shelby's ABZ Book. But it did get me thinking. I remember discovering the other Shel Silverstein books, the poetry books, when I was a kid at Mawmaw and Pawpaw's, our grandparents' house, in their immense bookshelves and their gigantic collection of books. And uh, reading them and becoming obsessed with them, because, well, one, there isn't a lot of... well, at least at the time, it was rare for me to find a book of poetry that was aimed at a kid.

**Rileigh:** Right.

**Sydnee:** Y'know?

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** So that was very exciting. After I expressed that interest, I discovered very quickly that there were many, many books like that. Because everyone gave them to me.

**Rileigh:** Right.

**Sydnee:** But it also got me thinking that like, during my teen years, the idea of poetry and like, creating that kind of art became very important to me, and I feel like there... a lot. Not all, necessarily, but a lot of teens go through that.

**Rileigh:** I agree. I mean, I definitely... I remember times my angsty teen self that still... I mean, I still am an angsty teen. But like, y'know, your prime angst years when you're like, 13, 14, 15 maybe. I remember like, sitting there whenever something would make me sad, I'd feel extra emo that day, and pull up my little notes app on my phone and just angrily type out some poetry.

**Sydnee:** On your phone?

**Raleigh:** On my phone. On my notes app.

**Sydnee:** So that is... would you... hm. That's really interesting to me that you say that. I thought, uh, I went... we did a reading of our book at one of our local bookstores, The Inner Geek, of the Sawbones book. And while we were there, everybody was invited to come up and do some readings if they had stuff they wanted to share.

And so, there was some other readings from books and short stories. And then, uh, one person got up and shared some poems she had written, and they were very good. But the only thing that struck me as odd is that she read them off her phone, and she was like, "Hold on, let me get my notes open," and was like, reading them there off her phone. And I thought, "What a strange way to..." I don't know, for me, I wouldn't be able to do that.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Well, I mean—

**Sydnee:** But perhaps that is now...

**Raleigh:** It's with you all the time, so like, if you're writing and you're a writer, sometimes you just have a thing where you're like, "Oh, that's good." Or just like, a thing pops into your head, and you want to write it down, and it's easier to pull out your phone and type it in your notes app than carry around a notebook with you or something to actually write down all the time.

But also, for me, because I have social anxiety, it doesn't look like I'm writing if I'm just on my phone typing something. I could look like I'm just like, texting someone. Y'know, I'm tweeting. I'm not like, writing writing. Like, if I pull out a notebook in a middle of a class that I'm... well, class is a bad example because you're supposed to be writing in class. Um, but y'know, like...

**Sydnee:** If I actually look like I'm taking notes in class...

**Raleigh:** If I look like I'm taking notes... but I don't know, if you're just somewhere and you pull out a notebook and start writing something down,

people automatically look at you like, "What's going on over there?" But if you just pull out your phone and start typing...

**Taylor:** What's going on over there?

**Raleigh:** What's going on over there? You got secret diabolical plans you're writing down in a little notebook.

**Taylor:** That's words, now.

**Sydnee:** You know what's really funny is that, it's just a... that lag of technology and like, the age, people catching up with it. When I go to meetings at the hospital, and I have had to since I was chief resident, go to various meetings with lots of adults talking about very serious things.

And if I pull out my phone... 'cause I tried to do that once, pull out my phone to take notes. And this is when I was still a resident, so I was not in charge. I remember getting a very stern look from one of the attendings like, one of those like, "Put your phone away," kind of looks. You know what I'm talking about.

**Raleigh:** Right.

**Sydnee:** The furrowed brow--

**Raleigh:** The teacher look.

**Sydnee:** And the tilt of the head that says like, "Put that away."

**Raleigh:** Put that away, what are you doing?

**Sydnee:** Because the idea that I would be using that to take notes would not have occurred to anybody, because everyone else in the room pulled out their, like... everybody has one of those zip-up binders with like, the very nice legal pads in them. And they like, unzip them and start taking notes. So I got in the habit of always bringing a little note, like, physical notebook and pen to meetings, even to this day. Because people will think, if you're on

your phone in a lot of places with those of us who are old, people will think you're just like, messing around if you pull your phone out.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** That's true. I've been in similar situations, and I use my phone for notes a lot. Like, if I'm in tastings. If I'm in—for our weekly meetings, and I've been reprimanded on it. It's like, "Well, it's notes." But y'know, I get the confusion.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, 'cause there is this idea that if you're looking at your phone, you're not paying attention. But it's like, well, that's a... you're right. It's a much more efficient way of keeping... what am I gonna do with these notepads? This notepad that I have with my notes from various meetings, it just sits in my work bag, useless, forever.

**Raleigh:** Well, I will say, I do have certain like, teachers and professors that say that we can't use phones to take notes, just because even if you are taking notes on your phone, the temptation for distraction does not exist in a notebook. There's nothing to get distracted by in a notebook. But like, if you're taking notes on your phone, and all of a sudden, a little notification pops up, like, oh, let me just take a quick detour over to Instagram real quick. But then you're on Instagram and you're not paying attention to the lecture.

**Sydnee:** Unless...

**Raleigh:** Unless?

**Sydnee:** Unless you love to write poetry. In which case...

**Raleigh:** Unless you love to write poetry.

**Sydnee:** That notebook would provide a huge distraction for you, because you will use it to compose beautiful, angsty poetry.



**Raleigh:** Well, there have definitely been times I have been writing things that are not for class, distracted by things I am writing. Maybe angsty poetry that are not for class.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** See, I'm a little jealous that y'all both go to writing when your mind starts wandering in class, because I always want to doodle. And that's way more obvious.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** That is true, but Tey, you're an adult. You can do that if you want, now.

**Taylor:** Doodle while taking notes?

**Sydnee:** It is totally—here's why I tell you I think it's okay. Uh, one of the doctors I work with who I respect a great deal and admire, at every meeting I've ever been in with him, and I've been in lots of meetings with him, he takes notes and doodles the entire time. I watch him sit there and draw pictures the entire time. And he's engaged, and he's listening, but he's gonna draw pictures, too. And nobody's gonna tell him he can't. And you can too, Teylor.

**Taylor:** Well, I mean... it just—

**Raleigh:** Sydnee's PSA.

**Sydnee:** I'm declaring it. You can. If you're engaged and paying attention, and your hand wants to draw a picture, you do it.

**Taylor:** See, that's what I want to tell them. The benefit of me taking notes on my phone is that that's what I'm gonna do. But once I have like, a pad of paper there and a pencil, it's like, I will spend like, y'know, an evening where I'm like, "I should draw something. I should draw." And I'm just like, "No, I won't, I won't do it!" But as soon as I have that pencil in my hand,

and I've got a pad of paper, and I'm supposed to be writing words, I'm like, "What I want to draw is a super hero. Or a bird. Or whatever."

But like, it's the temptation is so strong when I'm in a situation where that's the one thing I shouldn't do.

**Sydnee:** I think... see, millennials are redefining what it means to be an employee every single minute. We see think pieces about it constantly. Old people are very upset about it. I think millennials can redefine what it means to take notes.

**Taylor:** I'm gonna take notes my way. Maybe I need to get up and sing in the middle of them. I'm a millennial. We do what we want.

**Raleigh:** Gen Z.

**Sydnee:** That's right.

**Taylor:** You don't understand anything we do.

**Raleigh:** We don't take notes. We just show up.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs] Unprepared.

**Raleigh:** Unprepared!

**Taylor:** That's life. Living it.

**Raleigh:** We just tell you we're listening. That's it.

**Sydnee:** I'm an xennial, I'm just trying to keep up with both ends here. I don't know. I understand everybody's perspective and I'm just trying to make it all work.

**Raleigh:** That sounds about right. This is about right.

**Taylor:** I feel like we just like, need to keep pushing that boundary. Because if like, old people don't get... I say old people. We're old people. But like, millennials are old. Millennials are adults, y'know? But still, if they're never gonna understand anything we do that we're doing for perfectly logical reasons, I think we should just stop worrying about being logical and just pass it off as like, oh, this is how I learn best. Oh, this is how I work best. It's my generation.

**Sydnee:** It's a generational shift, y'know?

**Taylor:** See what we can get away with. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Uh, I want to... we've got to... I have a lot more poetry to discuss.

**Raleigh:** We do.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** As I am a published poet.

**Taylor:** Yes.

**Raleigh:** Ohh.

**Sydnee:** In the loosest sense of the word, published. I'm going to share what that means. But before I do that...

**Raleigh:** Let's check the group message. I have a sponsor I want to tell you about.

**Sydnee:** Aight, go off, Jill.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Still Buffering this week is brought to you in part by Mod Cloth. We've talked a lot about Mod Cloth before. We all love Mod Cloth. We all

know Mod Cloth. And you can start your summer plans off right this year with breezy tops and jump suits made for adventuring, head turning prints that bring the heat, and size-inclusive swim wear designed for cooling off.

They have swimsuits in sizes double XS to 4XL for all your H2O engagements. Whatever you need for this summer, they have all of those sizes available, because they believe fashion should celebrate all women. And that's why they're expanding their size range for their clothing to sizes double zero to 28. And if you have questions about a fit, their team of mod stylists can hook you up with complimentary sizing and styling help.

I know that's always a problem for me when I'm online shopping, like yeah, maybe I'm a medium in this brand, but how does this fit and what does this look like? What is this gonna look like on my body as opposed to the pictures online? And they have people there, designed to help you answer all those questions.

**Sydnee:** And they're really good about... I have a good sense. I've been using Mod Cloth for many, many years, and I have a good sense now of how everything is gonna fit on me, and I can always expect a certain level of quality, and I love Mod Cloth.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. So we want you to love Mod Cloth like we love Mod Cloth. So Teylor, if our listeners want to check out Mod Cloth, what should they do?

**Teylor:** Well, you should head on over to [ModCloth.com](https://www.modcloth.com). That's [ModCloth.com](https://www.modcloth.com), and uh, if you have a purchase of \$100 or more, you can get 15% off. Just use our code BUFFERING at check out. This offer is only valid for one time use, and it expires on October 5<sup>th</sup>, so get on over there.

**Raleigh:** Get on that.

**Sydnee:** Uh, our other sponsor this week that we'd like to tell you about is Zola. So, Zola is gonna take the stress out of wedding planning with free wedding websites, your dream wedding registry, affordable save the dates and invitations, and easy to use planning tools. Which is wonderful, because planning a wedding was so stressful, I chose not to really do it and let my mom do it for me.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** But what if I was getting married right now? Mom has adenovirus, and she wouldn't be able to help me very much, 'cause she's very sick. She's o—she's gonna get better. She's fine. She's getting better. But like.

**Raleigh:** But she's really sick right now.

**Sydnee:** Right. She's really sick right now, then I would be on my own, and then, I'd never get married, and then what if I'd never had my two children?

**Raleigh:** Well, Zola's gonna help.

**Sydnee:** That was a very scary rabbit hole I just fell down! But Zola's got me, because they have over 100 beautiful wedding website designs to choose from, and they fit any couple's style and every type of wedding. They have an FAQ section that helps address things like, do I have a plus one? Or, can I bring my kids? Hey, by the way, please say yes to that, as someone with kids. Please say yes to that. Do you know how many more social engagements I would love if they just like, made them kid friendly?

**Raleigh:** So many.

**Sydnee:** Anyway. Uh, you can put your Zola registry on your wedding website, so guests can get all the details they need and buy your wedding gift in one convenient and beautiful place. Teylor, if our listeners want to check out Zola, what should they do?

**Teylor:** Well, you can start your free wedding website, and also get \$50 off your registry on Zola. You just have to go to [Zola.com/StillBuffering](https://Zola.com/StillBuffering). That's [Zola.com/StillBuffering](https://Zola.com/StillBuffering). Start your free website, get \$50 off your registry, have an awesome wedding.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Do that.

**Sydnee:** Alright, so as I alluded to, I have been published in two poetry books.

**Taylor:** Tell us more, Lenore.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I don't think I used my nom de plume. I don't think I did. I may... I may have. So, I don't know if this is still a thing that happens. But you used to be able to enter your poems into... they were sort of like contests, kind of. You could mail in your poem, and a significant amount of money, and if they judged it worthy, you would get published in these collections of American poetry anthologies or something. Y'know, some generic title that meant like, we took your money and put your poem in a book and then... Sold you the book. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah. So we just took a lot of your money.

**Sydnee:** That's exactly what it was. And uh, I fell for that. I mean, I have to assume mom and dad helped, though. Twice in my life. So those books exist with my teenage poetry offerings...

**Raleigh:** Oh, Lenore.

**Sydnee:** Uh, and it's such a racket. I hope that still doesn't happen. Does that still happen?

**Raleigh:** I have never seen anything like that.

**Sydnee:** Nobody buys books anymore, right? You're all on your phones.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. All the books are on the phones?

**Sydnee:** I guess, I don't know. Justin has a Kindle.

**Raleigh:** [laughs] The world's falling apart. Justin has a Kindle.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] But uh, 'cause I really thought... I don't know what it is about poetry specifically, but it felt like something that, once I started reading poems... because I didn't just read like, Shel Silverstein or other

poems that were a little more kid friendly. I also just uh, our grandfather, our mom's dad, Pawpaw, had just tons of poetry anthologies from various countries and various points in history.

And so, I was exposed to just tons and tons of poems, and I would read... I would just sit there and read them and read them and read them. And for whatever reason, that felt like something I could do. They're short sometimes. Is that why?

**Taylor:** Yeah, it's not a lot of commitment.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** There's some rules to follow sometimes.

**Sydnee:** Rhyming is fun.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Well, I mean, it's like those, um... oh, uh... Milk and Honey, and The Sun and Her Flowers... those poetry books by Rupi Kaur that are very popular online amongst the teens.

**Sydnee:** I don't know these. Please tell us more.

**Raleigh:** It's a poetry book.

**Sydnee:** Uh-huh.

**Raleigh:** And it's designed for young adults and teens. It's like the same uh, niche as John Green readers, I would say.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** But I mean, it just—it's like each poem is like a little, like, probably at the most, ten line thing on one page, and they each have a tiny little pencil illustration to go along with them that's very simple. But I mean, you could read one of those, easily, in like an hour. So you can just sit there and read an entire book in an hour, like, well, I just read an entire book. But also like, y'know... did you? [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I mean... yeah, that's true.

**Raleigh:** But I mean, it's still the same kind of idea. It is, because it's individual little poems, and I mean, the first one, Milk and Honey, has little sections. These are all about this, and these are all about this. And they're very—they're good, and I have read both of them. I'm not gonna sit here and talk about these people that read them like, "Oh, those people." Like, no, I own both of them. I have read both of them.

But they're honestly like the kinds of poetry that you write when you're an angsty teen. Like, they're all centered on like, y'know, like...

**Sydnee:** But is that really why we engage with poetry so much when we're younger, because sometimes it's short and it seems like we could probably do it sometimes?

**Raleigh:** I mean, probably.

**Taylor:** I don't know, maybe.

**Raleigh:** That's probably part of it, right?

**Sydnee:** 'Cause a book takes a long time to write, so...

**Raleigh:** But I feel like poetry is kind of like, um, the daily horoscopes in the newspaper. Like, they're so kind of like, the themes are kind of general that like, you could probably relate to them really well. Like, they're broad, general themes kind of in all sorts of poetry that could probably fall under any like, three categories that, y'know.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, I mean, you can find that.

**Raleigh:** You can find something to relate to, probably in most poems you'd read. Y'know what I mean? Like in a book, like, it's a story and characters and might be hard for certain people to relate to certain ideas or plots.

**Sydnee:** Sure.



**Rileigh:** But in poetry, I mean...

**Sydnee:** It's just love.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. Love or death probably, right?

**Taylor:** I think it depends on what poetry... maybe for some poetry. I don't know, I was really into E. E. Cummings for some reason. And I mean, those themes are like, this is about spacial understanding and apples. Like, it's, y'know...

**Rileigh:** And apples.

**Taylor:** Yeah, it takes you—it takes you five seconds to read the poem, and then it takes you an hour to try to figure out what he's saying. They're like riddles. Like some poetry, just because it's short doesn't mean you don't spend an hour like, "What is this about?"

**Rileigh:** Right. See, y'know—

**Sydnee:** Yeah, that's true. That's a fair point.

**Rileigh:** Yeah, and I think that's a big line between the kinds of poetry that I think... I'm gonna say teens is how I'm gonna generalize this... say they enjoy, and then the kind of poetry that actually like, is what, y'know, famous poetry is by authors like that.

It's like when you get to the poetry unit in your lit class, and everyone's like, "Oh, I love poetry. I love writing poetry and reading poetry." But then your teacher starts handing out these super intricate like, what does this mean? What are these words and these themes? And you have to spend like a week in class, deciphering just two lines of a poem.

Like, those are two very different kinds of poetry, I think. Y'know like, when you're first exposed to real, like... I don't want to say real poetry. But that kind of poetry, I feel like, is very different from when you're writing your

own poetry, kind of doing those like, five or six line about heartbreak and tears and, y'know, all those kinds of things when you're a teenager.

**Sydnee:** Which is what... I mean, that's what most of mine were about were like, angsty like, "I love him and he doesn't know who I am." Or y'know, "I'm so..." Or like, just the really dark. I had a lot of those like, "I'm so broken inside and nobody sees it" kind of poems.

**Taylor:** I think it's all... I mean, that also butts up against another thing, which is basically the same thing, but definitely a teen thing that I think most people do, which is writing songs. And like, you might not even be able to play a musical instrument, but writing song lyrics that usually live in that same wheelhouse of themes. I definitely did that.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I did that, too. I never knew what I was gonna do about composing music for it, 'cause I couldn't—

**Raleigh:** Yeah, I didn't know how to do that.

**Sydnee:** I couldn't play any instruments except for, I could play that one John Denver songbook on guitar.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** 'Cause it only had like three or four chords in it. [laughs] Also, now, hmm. Now, also, I could play all of the Aladdin songbook on my keyboard. Which, you would think that is a skill that would never come in handy again, but uh oh, Aladdin movie comes out. Charlie loves it.

**Raleigh:** You have kids.

**Sydnee:** I am so impressive to her right now. [laughs] So, you never know what skills will... sort of like Signs, right?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Just like the glasses of water everywhere.

**Raleigh:** Um...

**Sydnee:** Nobody? Okay.

**Taylor:** Just me.

**Raleigh:** Poetry! But I do think it's important, Tey, that you brought up like, the kind of poetry you were into. Because I do think that's a big difference between the first time you're exposed to poetry like that. Like, I still remember the first class I was in. I was like, they said bring your favorite poem to class, and we're all gonna talk about our favorite poems. Like, okay, cool. So I get one of my little like, Rupi Kaur, Milk and Honey poems, and I bring it in, I print it out, and I'm all ready.

And we all read them. They're all kind of the same. We all kind of thought the same general way. And then she's like, "Okay, here's what we're gonna talk about this week." And then just hands us like, the longest, most intricate, like... what-does-this-mean-type poetry.

**Sydnee:** But it really... I mean, there's such a benefit in that, once you get into it, like...

**Raleigh:** Yeah, for sure.

**Sydnee:** I remember one that affected me that way was um, W. H. Auden's The Sea and the Mirror, which is like, about the Tempest sort of that Shakespeare plays. The Tempest. And I remember reading... I had to perform it for one of my classes in college. Like, not perf—y'know what I mean. Like an oral interpretive reading, I should say.

And I had to read it and understand it really well to be able to do that, and I remember that poem becoming so important to me because of the time and effort I put into it, and then everything that it gave back to me once I was willing to give it the time.

**Raleigh:** Right. Well, my—

**Sydnee:** I mean, it's true. Poetry, I mean, that's a long one, but like, yes. You can get that from any length of poetry, because it is... in a sense, is it more difficult to tackle a giant topic without the ability to just...

**Rileigh:** All the space.

**Sydnee:** Like, of prose? Y'know what I mean? I don't know.

**Rileigh:** I mean, my first college English class, I had to make a video representation of a poem. So I had to, y'know, read a poem and then make a video that wasn't just someone reading the poem, that also told the story, and also showed the symbolism and what it meant, and all those kinds of things. Like, and it was hard. I mean, the poem was only like, twelve lines, and I had to find some way to turn it into a story, and I think in some way, yeah, there was deeper meaning in it.

You find it, and it's a more rewarding feeling, I feel like, when you're reading poetry, and you're like, "Oh, well, now I get it," as opposed to like, a big long novel or story or something where it's like, okay, well, we've been working up to this, and there's these like, little side stories and everything represents all of this. And it's easier to tell that in a longer story than in a few lines.

**Sydnee:** Sure. Hm. I had to make a physical representation of a poem once that I was in elementary school.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** We had to pick a poem, and then we had to make some sort of... I mean, it was basically like a diorama of your poem. And I chose Shel Silverstein's Too Many Kids in This Tub. [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs] I remember that diorama.

**Rileigh:** That sounds like it could be... go ahead, never mind.

**Sydnee:** Have you heard that one?

**Raleigh:** Yeah, yeah.

**Sydnee:** Okay. Anyway, so, I made a bath tub with a bunch of Teylor's little Quints toys.

**Teylor:** Yep.

**Sydnee:** And like, foam. [laughs] And a little bathroom. I remember making the wallpaper. I really liked making the wallpaper. I used like a stamp.

**Raleigh:** Now, how much did Mom make?

**Sydnee:** Mom helped me with the ideas, but I remember very distinctly, me making the wallpaper, 'cause I had a stamp. And for whatever reason, it wasn't just enough to have walls. I had to make it look like a wallpaper print. So I remember like, stamping the paper like perfectly spaced out to make it look like a wallpaper pattern. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Of course.

**Sydnee:** All over the back of this shoe box. I mean, it took forever. Anyway, I don't know why that mattered. Like, nobody cared about that.

**Raleigh:** I do.

**Sydnee:** I wish I still had it. Charlie loves that poem. I wish I still had that to show her.

**Raleigh:** You just have to make it again.

**Sydnee:** Well, hopefully she'll have that project someday.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** And then we can just whip that out again.

**Rileigh:** Yeah. Um, I still don't know why all teens... most teens... get into poetry, though. Is it because it's short? Is it one of those things that's like, "Oh, I could probably do that."

**Sydnee:** It's a way of... it's a way of expressing... I mean, for me, I couldn't draw.

**Rileigh:** Yeah, me too.

**Sydnee:** So Tey, you had that ability. I've never had that ability. And so, if I wanted to express the way I was feeling, um, like, I could write about it in my diary. Or if I wanted something that I could share with people, I guess I could've just written prose, but that seemed daunting, 'cause it's long. And a poem could be short.

And also, I think that when you first start reading poetry, and it so much... it doesn't have to rhyme of course, but so much does. Or, there's like, rules. Once you start learning that there are some poems that there are rules for, they have so many syllables and so many... and y'know, you learn about the rhyme schemes and everything. All of a sudden, all those rules seem to make it like, something that's accessible. I don't know why rules make it more possible, but I think they do.

And so when I learned like, oh, if I just follow these rules, I've written a sonnet. Cool. I could do that. And like, I know a lot of words. I could rhyme some stuff. Like, I don't know. There's something about it that just seemed more accessible.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Sydnee really likes parameters and rules to her artistic expressions.

**Rileigh:** Sydnee really likes rules.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] I loved... my favorite thing we did for the Sawbones book was, we wrote poems to begin each section. And we used a different form of poem for every one. And that was my favorite thing, was the challenge of coming up with a poem...

**Rileigh:** It's like a little puzzle.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. In that form, that had to meet that specific form, but also, would encompass what the whole section was kind of about. That was my favorite part. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** I am remembering, now, that in my tenth grade English class, our final was we had to make a little series of poetry. And we had to pick paint chips out of a box, and use the names of the little different named paint cards that you get at like, Lowes. We had to use those and write one of each kind of poetry we had learned about, and then make a poem that was titled and somehow involved the name of that paint card. And that was one of the hardest things I had ever done.

**Sydnee:** That does sound difficult.

**Rileigh:** Because I had to write like... it was like eight different kinds of poetry or whatever. All the different forms. I had to write one of each. And then I somehow had to include this title of this paint color. And I remember... like, that was one of the hardest things I had ever done. Poetry is hard.

Like, when you're following the rules and everything, I mean, like... y'know, there's just freeform poetry. But when you're going through all like, the rhyme schemes and the lengths and syllables, it's not easy.

**Sydnee:** It can be. When I wrote my Garfield poem recently... [laughs]

**Taylor:** Okay. You're just gonna put that out there and leave it? Okay.

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I shared it on Twitter.

**Rileigh:** I saw it.

**Sydnee:** I wrote a poem about the Garfield phones washing up on the French beach, because it was one of my favorite thing that's happened in the last...

**Rileigh:** Ever.

**Sydnee:** Ever. Uh, and the... I will say that it's a sonnet, and the iambic pentameter part gets easier as you go.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** It feels natural to speak in iambic pentameter once you, y'know, get the feel for it. I've been looking as we've been recording – I've been looking at all of my bookshelves in this room. It must be in one of our bookshelves in a different room.

We have bookshelves in essentially every room in the house. Um, for one of the classic poetry volumes from our era, Teylor, uh, the poetry book that everyone was waiting for, they didn't know they needed it until it arrived. And then, was spoken about endlessly on... well, there wasn't social media. I guess it was just television.

**Taylor:** What?

**Sydnee:** A Night Without Armor by Jewel.

**Taylor:** Oh, right. Oh, right, yes.

**Sydnee:** Uh, Jewel's poetry book defined a lot of us. You know Jewel.

**Rileigh:** The artist. The singer.

**Sydnee:** The songstress, yes. Jewel.

**Rileigh:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** Yes.



**Raleigh:** That is the extent of my knowledge, yes.

**Sydnee:** Jewel... and I mean, the thing is, like, her songs already... it's not shocking that her poetry had the same feel as like, her songs. They were very similar in that like... they spoke to me as a teenager, because they spoke of things in a very uh, deep, earth-shattering way without maybe like, all of the context needed for that. Y'know what I mean?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But that book, I have it. I feel like everyone who grew up in the '90s, especially if you were a young woman in the '90s, you were like, "Well, I better get the Jewel poetry."

**Raleigh:** Better get on that.

**Sydnee:** I mean, I love her. I love her songs. I mean, if Alanis had published a poetry book, I would've bought that, too.

**Raleigh:** I want Lizzo to write a poetry book.

**Taylor:** Yeah!

**Sydnee:** I'd buy that.

**Raleigh:** I'd buy that.

**Sydnee:** I'd buy that. Um, but in the meantime, I guess I'll just keep reading Shel Silverstein to Charlie.

**Taylor:** Heavily edited Shel Silverstein.

**Raleigh:** It's a good thing she can't read yet.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Yeah. Y'know what's been really cool? When I was going through the poetry books with her, I read them to her, and some of them I read in the way he... you could buy his cassettes of him reading these poems. And he's such a wonderful performer. I mean, he's very talented.

And he did a lot of stuff for like, adults, too. Like, some kind of um... he reminds me of like, Bob Saget, y'know? Like, Bob Saget was this really blue comedian who then was on Full House.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like, my childhood vision of Shel Silverstein were just these like, beautiful, magical poems that he wrote, which were, are beautiful and magical, but he also did like, some raunchy stuff for grownups. But he performs these poems, and they're just gorgeous. And we had these cassettes, but of course, they're long gone. I don't know where they are. And I read the poems to her in the way I realize, like, it's engrained.

So if I'm gonna do... if I'm gonna read the Crocodile Went to the Dentist...

**Taylor:** I was gonna say, that's the one that's stuck in my head. Oh, that's the one, I confess.

**Sydnee:** I always do it. But what's more crocodile tooth more or less, and then... Every time! But uh, and I was thinking, man, I wish I could find these cassettes for her. And thank you internet.

**Raleigh:** Those are on YouTube somewhere. That was the first thing I was gonna say.

**Sydnee:** They're all on YouTube. So I found them, and now I play these for her sometimes so she can hear them performed by him.

**Raleigh:** That's good.

**Sydnee:** And it's so good. They're out there, in case you, like me, were like, "Man, I loved those cassettes. I wonder if I could..." They're out there on YouTube.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And they're just beautiful to hear. And it's nice. Charlie, now, makes up songs and rhymes and things all the time. And I like to think that maybe this has influenced her a little bit.

**Taylor:** That's awesome.

**Sydnee:** So anyway, I'll return to...

**Raleigh:** Poetry lives on.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, poetry lives on. I'll go write some more under my pen name, Lenore.

**Raleigh:** Oh, Lenore.

**Taylor:** Keep those coming, Lenore.

**Sydnee:** [laughs] Isn't that so... those books... I think I have those books, too, that we bought with my poems in them.

**Raleigh:** I'm sure you do. That's not something you'd get rid of.

**Sydnee:** That's so sad.

**Taylor:** Are those still available for purchase? Because I think there's a whole group of people that would love to have...

**Raleigh:** Oh, yeah.

**Taylor:** The original Sydnee Smirl publication.

**Sydnee:** Sydnee Smirl, AKA Lenore. I don't know, and honestly, this isn't me trying to dodge the question. I don't think I could come up with a title, given all the time in the world, for those books. Because they really were like, the most generic, like, collection of American poetry in the year 1990 whatever. Y'know, like, it was just...

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But they were hardbound. They were expensive, because y'know, it was a rat.

**Taylor:** [laughs] But you got published!

**Sydnee:** Yes, in the loosest sense of the word. Yes, my poetry got published in a book, legitimately. Those Sawbones poems. There we go.

**Raleigh:** That's true. There you go.

**Sydnee:** There we go.

**Raleigh:** I was gonna say, you are a published author. Like, this is not...

**Sydnee:** I know, but it seems... [laughs]

**Raleigh:** A literal published author.

**Taylor:** Everybody starts somewhere.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, I'm prouder of the poems. Uh, well, thank you sisters.

**Raleigh:** Thank you, Lenore.

**Sydnee:** This has been fun.

**Taylor:** Yes, thank you, Lenore.

**Sydnee:** That'll be enough of that. We shall never speak of this again.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Uh, thank you listeners. Thank you for tuning in. You should check out MaximumFun.org for a lot of wonderful shows that you would enjoy on our fantastic network. Uh, you should tweet at us @Stillbuff. You should email us at [StillBuffering@MaximumFun.org](mailto:StillBuffering@MaximumFun.org) if you have thoughts or

suggestions or questions or comments or po... poetry? That you want to share.

**Raleigh:** Poetry?

**Sydnee:** You want to share some poems? We love poems here as you can tell. So share `em. And uh, thank you to the Novellas for our theme song, Baby You Change Your Mind.

**Raleigh:** This has been Still Buffering, a sisters' guide to teens through the ages. I am Raleigh Smirl.

**Sydnee:** I'm Sydnee McElroy.

**Taylor:** And I'm Taylor Smirl.

**Raleigh:** I am a teenager...

**Sydnee:** And I... was... too.

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] And I... was... too.

**Raleigh:** There are too many kids in this tub. There are too many elbows to scrub. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** [indecipherable]

[theme music plays]

[music plays]

**Renee:** Well, Alexis, we got big news.

**Alexis:** Uh oh.

**Renee:** Season one, done.

**Alexis:** It's over.

**Renee:** Season two, comin' atcha hot.

**Alexis:** Three years after our season one.

**Renee:** Three now. Three now. Technically, almost four years.

**Alexis:** Alright.

**Renee:** And now, listen, here at Can I Pet Your Dog, the smash hit podcast, our seasons run for three and a half years. And then it's season two.

**Alexis:** We can match you with new, hot co-hosts named you. Hi, I'm Alexis. We also have a field trip, dog tech.

**Renee:** Yeah?

**Alexis:** Dog news...

**Renee:** Dog news.

**Alexis:** Celebrity guests...

**Renee:** Oh, big shots. Will not let them talk about their resume.

**Alexis:** Nope, only their dogs.

**Renee:** Yeah, only the dogs. I mean, if ever you were gonna get into Can I Pet Your Dog...

**Alexis:** Now's the time.

**Renee:** Get in here!

**Alexis:** Every Tuesday...

**Renee:** At MaximumFun.org.

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