

Still Buffering 179: How to Tell Scary Stories in the Dark

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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: Well, sisters, there's a bit of a chill in the air this weekend.

Taylor: Hm, indeed.

Raleigh: There was, just for a day. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Just—just for a day. Did you have a little bit of cooler weather, Tey? Or just us?

Taylor: We always get your weather, like, a little bit later, so today it's actually really nice and cool. I walked outside and it felt like fall. It was very, very nice. Very exciting.

Raleigh: Yeah. We had one day it was rainy, and outside it felt like fall. You could wear jeans and a light sweatshirt, and it was very comfortable. Perfect weather.

Sydnee: It was.

Taylor: Best time of year.

Sydnee: Justin and I had a date where we sat outside at the restaurant and ate sausages in the cool weather.

Raleigh: [snorts]

Taylor: [laughs] You ate sausages in the cool weather?

Sydnee: [laughs]

Rileigh: How romantic.

Sydnee: It was very—[laughs]

Taylor: That—I thought that was gonna sound romantic, and then you brought sausages into the conversation, and... I don't know if you can romantically eat sausages.

Sydnee: Uh, there was a giant pretzel there, too?

Rileigh: Well, pretzels are good.

Sydnee: What's more romantic than a giant pretzel?

Taylor: I'm just picturing, like, the Lady and the Tramp scene with the spaghetti, but just, like—[laughs] just each coming—

Rileigh: A sausage?

Taylor: —a sausage, or a giant pretzel. Just coming from—each of you coming from one side of it. [laughs]

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: We—we did not do that. We used knives and forks, like civilized humans.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Alright.

Sydnee: Not on the pretzel, though. We don't use a knife and a fork on a pretzel.

Rileigh: No, you use those hands. Tear right into that.

Sydnee: Uh, yeah. It's been cooler. We were—Justin and I were inspired enough the other day, although it was still hot that day, to check out the Halloween tent—

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: —that has gone up outside our mall. I wonder—

Raleigh: I love the Halloween tent.

Taylor: I'm so jealous.

Sydnee: —is this a universal...

Raleigh: I don't know. Is this a thing? I wanna know, actually, because I get very excited when I see the Halloween tent.

Taylor: We don't have 'em in Brooklyn, uh...

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: [through laughter] I don't know if that—

Raleigh: I feel like you all probably have Halloween stores, though.

Taylor: We do have the Halloween stores that pop up. Like, they're not year round. They just move in to, like, an abandoned building, and then it, like, becomes a Halloween store from September until November.

Sydnee: Are they always—are they all Spirit Halloween? Is that—

Taylor: That's the only one that I see around here. Now, I will say, New York City does have a year round Halloween store. It's called Halloween Adventure, and it is amazing. Like, I—they get really busy, obviously, during Halloween, but they stay in business year round!

Sydnee: I mean, we would probably check out a Halloween store all year.

Raleigh: Yeah. I would check out a Halloween store all year round, if it was...

Taylor: Whenever I'm around there, I pop in, just 'cause I'm like, "I don't know. What if I need something?"

And I always find something that I don't need, but I have, now. [laughs] "I need this bag o' eyeballs! Who—maybe I'll need 'em! Who knows! Just some eyeballs!" [laughs]

Rileigh: I, uh—I was at, like—I think it was Target or Marshall's, one of those stores, the other day, and we were going shopping for our dorm, and we were just getting, like, some soap and pillows and curtains and things, but they had all their fall and Halloween stuff out, so I was like, "Oh, hold on. We need to check this out."

And of course the hand soap we got was pumpkin scented. That's our first step into, you know, fall and Halloween, is the pumpkin scented hand soap. But there was someone who was standing by the little, like, decorations you can get that play music, like to more Halloween-specific, less fall things.

There was a little, like, mailbox looking thing that played a different Halloween-type song whenever you pressed a button. There was a person standing in front of that mailbox, pressing the button, over and over and over again, and just slightly bobbing back and forth to the music, for maybe half an hour?

And I was like, "You know what? [through laughter] That's the kind of Halloween energy I want in my life!"

Taylor: They were—they were living for it!

Rileigh: I don't even think they ended up buying it! It's just—they were just standing there, playing each of the different songs. And I mean, I was in the aisle over, like, "What is—are they playing Halloween music? What is—who—"

Sydney: I'm here for that. I'm here for this. I like this. I like this move.

Taylor: Maybe that—maybe that decoration just came with its own ghost.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Like, that was, like—you know?

Rileigh: [through laughter] Yeah.

Taylor: And a ghost that repeatedly will play the song for you, and stare off longingly into the distance.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I like this time of year. And the more, like—the more elaborate and early that the Halloween decorations start, like, that you can buy, it's like—I'm one of those people that will put, like, a cool raven skeleton, like a fake raven skeleton in my apartment, just—that's decoration to me? So it's just like, cool! I get to update the decorations for m'house!

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: [through laughter] This time of year!

Sydnee: Well, it's decorations, and then also, like, costumes. Like, I don't—I mean, I'm an adult, and I don't only need costumes at Halloween, so—I have children. They need costumes constantly.

Raleigh: Charlie is always wearing some sort of costume.

Sydnee: I'm beginning to think I'm using the word "need" wro—like, inappropriately here. [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: I...

Sydnee: "I need costumes all the time!" [laughs]

Taylor: ... don't think I can comment on that, 'cause I fall into that. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] "My children *need* costumes all year round!" I don't—ehh. Do they? Okay. Well... either way.

Uh, we had to check out the Halloween tent as soon as it went up. It was sweltering at that time. The chill had not arrived yet, and it was very hot, so we were not in there very long.

And there's always, like, you have to get through—they put the big, stand-up, really scary yard decorations right in the front—

Rileigh: [simultaneously] right in the front, yeah.

Sydnee: And so we always have to, like, rush the children past them.

Rileigh: "Don't look, don't look, don't look!"

Sydnee: "Don't look, don't look, don't—" because they both, like, cling to us and look at us like, "What are you d—you're our *parents!*"

Rileigh: "Why did you do this to us?!"

Sydnee: "Why are you taking us into this death tent? Look at those things! This is terrible!"

Taylor: You know, I remember as a kid wondering, like, "Wow, who's the family that gets to buy those?" Like, the zombie coming out of the toxic waste bin, and it's, like, full size. And now that I'm a fiscally irresponsible adult, I look at 'em like, "I... I could buy that. I could—[laughs]"

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: "It's not a *good* thing that I could do, but I *could*." So I don't—I don't know. Maybe it's families. Maybe it's just people like me that are a little bit farther over the edge. [laughs]

Sydnee: I don't know. We lived across the street from a family for a while who would put that—it was a little girl on a swing that would sing creepy songs. She looked like a little zombie girl, and she would swing back and forth. And, I mean, it was a child-sized—

Rileigh: It was very real—life-like.

Sydnee: Yes. And it would sing all night. It was, like, motion activated, so if a car drove by or something, or the wind blew, it would make her move a little bit on the swing—

Taylor: Oh, no.

Sydnee: —and then she'd starting singing.

Raleigh: Terrifying.

Sydnee: It was all night long. So, like, you'd be at 3:00 AM, laying in bed asleep, and hear this little, like, "[creepy child singing] La la la la la—"

Raleigh: Ahhh!

Sydnee: And it was like, "Oh my gosh!"

Taylor: So that's why you moved. That why you moved from that house.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: We left—so we moved. [laughs]

Raleigh: So you moved.

Taylor: [through laughter] That was the only solution for that!

Sydnee: We, uh—we buy Halloween yard decorations because our children love their Halloween buddies, and we have already purchased a new Halloween buddy. I may have mentioned before, Charlie liked a little teeny Jason? From, you know, Friday the 13th, Jason?

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: He's a little teeny guy, like, a foot and a half tall—

Raleigh: He's actually kinda cute.

Sydnee: He's very cute. He's this little squat Jason, holding his—

Raleigh: But he is still holding a bloody knife.

Sydnee: —holding his little bloody knife, and she loves him. And then we have a little teeny Dracula, about the same size, and those were Charlie's original Halloween buddies that she loved and would carry around as a child, and pat them. And now Cooper—

Taylor: Everybody should have Halloween buddies.

Sydnee: Yeah. Cooper has adopted, uh, Sam, from the movie Trick or Treat, has come-

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: Little punk dit. What does she call it? Little punkit?

Sydnee: She called 'em either "little guy" or "little punkit." That's her attempt at punkmen. Punk—pumpkin.

Raleigh: Pumpkin!

Sydnee: Pump—pumpkin!

Taylor: You tried.

Raleigh: That's her attempt at punkmen, which is also an incorrect way of saying pumpkin. [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] So he lives with us now in our home. We brought him home from the Halloween tent. We rescued him. We've adopted him.

Raleigh: You adopted him.

Sydnee: He lives with us now.

Taylor: That's a dangerous little guy to bring into your house, there.

Sydnee: Yeah, I mean, he's really scary, and Justin is already—

Raleigh: Also child-sized.

Taylor: Yes.

Sydnee: He's also child-sized. He's bigger than our other buddies, but she loves him. She's already fed him some cauliflower and hummus.

Taylor: Nice.

Raleigh: She just pats him and says, "Hi, buddy." [laughs]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: And hugs him. She loves him. I have—if I shared pictures of my children on the internet, I have a great picture of the two of them hugging, and her cheesing at the camera as she hugs little punkit. [laughs]

Raleigh: Little punkit.

Taylor: Please—please send that to me.

Sydnee: You can see it. But anyway, so it—I know we're rushin' the season. It's still August, but—

Raleigh: Yeah. A week—well? Less than a week from now it won't be, though. It'll be September!

Taylor: Look. There are those people that start celebrating Christmas, like, in October, like, November. I just—why can't we just do the same thing with Halloween?

Raleigh: That's fair.

Taylor: It's—it's not, like, just—it's not *that* different from stuff that you wanna do year round, anyway. Watch some spooky movies. Eat some pumpkin stuff.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Uh... be... morose? I love all these things!

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Being morose.

Sydnee: There are no more rules, folks! It's 2019.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Trump's president. If you wanna—

Raleigh: World's gonna end soon anyways.

Sydnee: Yeah, the—

Taylor: Yeah, I—yeah!

Sydnee: The sea is boiling. If you wanna celebrate Halloween in August... go for it.

Taylor: We are—we are living in some sort of horrible survival horror, like, reality, so might as well have a pumpkin spice latte all the time! [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I say it's fine. I have no problems with it, and there is a movie out, relevant to our interests on this podcast—

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: —uh, that is a great way to kick off the spooky season.

Raleigh: Yes. Does this mean we are signing ourselves up to do spooky episodes every week until spooky season is over?

Sydnee: I don't—I don't think we can commit to that.

Raleigh: [crosstalk] 'Cause I don't think we can commit to that.

Sydnee: That seems excessive, yeah.

Raleigh: That's, like, eight more.

Taylor: I think we—let's just—we'll just have a spooky section every week.

Raleigh: Okay.

Taylor: I'll workshop it. We'll get better.

Sydnee: Okay.

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: Alright.

Sydnee: That, we can manage.

Raleigh: It's like Rilo's Candle Corner, except it's Teylor's Spooky Corner?

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yeah!

Raleigh: Spooky Nightmare Corner? [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Uh, Spooky Second with Teylor.

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs] There we go.

Sydnee: At some point, we can invite mom on the show to continue educating us about all of the songs that she used to listen to when she was younger that she learned were secretly about drugs.

Raleigh: [simultaneously] That were secretly about drugs. Yeah.

Sydnee: That was the text thread we were on last night.

Raleigh: The three of us and our mother.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm, telling us all of the songs from the 70s and 80s that were about drugs.

Raleigh: And then you joined.

Sydnee: Yeah, I—

Taylor: Yeah, you—you did.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: I—I—I regret that I—

Rileigh: As did I. [laughs]

Sydnee: —contributed. I—I didn't mean to. I don't know why I fell into that trap.

Rileigh: Something came over you. [laughs]

Sydnee: I mean, the answer is "All of 'em were about drugs." They were all secretly about drugs!

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: That was it. There's the answer. But, uh, I saw a movie...

Rileigh: You saw a movie?

Sydnee: Yester—day before yesterday, and you all have seen this movie—

Rileigh: Yep.

Taylor: Yes.

Sydnee: —and it is—it is a scary movie.

Rileigh: Yeah. Was it scary?

Taylor: It's... ehh, scary-adjacent.

Rileigh: Suspenseful?

Sydnee: So, Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark. Which is a film that is based on some of—we've talked about those books on the show before.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Many a time.

Sydnee: Some of the best and most disturbing books of, at least my childhood.

Raleigh: Yeah. Well, they were from your all's generation. They were written when you all—and published when you all were younger. And, uh, I remember they were in the big box of books that got passed on to me, along with a bunch of Archies and, like, Babysitter's Club books and stuff.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: I remember looking through that box once, and I couldn't have been more than, like, probably eight years old, and I remember coming across those books, like, all four of them, and just looking at the drawings on the front, like, "[softly] Wow..."

Sydnee: There's only three.

Raleigh: Three.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: I remember looking at the drawings on the front, just, "Oh. Oh, no."

Sydnee: We've said it on the show before. The art really...

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I mean, they're scary anyway, but the art is what made that series.

Raleigh: I remember reading those books and just covering up the drawings while I was reading so I could read them and not have to look at the illustrations.
[laughs]

Taylor: 'Cause that's the thing that I wonder about, though, is I do think there is a fourth volume, sort of adjacent to that series, but its different art.

Raleigh: I thought there were four.

Sydnee: Hmm, okay.

Taylor: There is—it's like—

Sydnee: I stand corrected.

Taylor: —I can picture the cover. It's either, like, a—like, a sea creature or a wolf monster, something, but the art is different. And now that they—they've re-released these books for the same age range, but they've changed the art, which was a little controversial, because I would argue that—I don't think those scary stories... some of them were a little weird and a little disturbing. I don't think they were particularly scary. I think it was, like, I would say 75% the artwork, 25% the actual stories, as far as the scare goes.

Sydnee: I agree, I agree. I saw those. We were at the bookstore the other day, in the kids' section. Not—I was not contemplating buying those books for my five year old or my 18 month old, in case anybody was worried.

Raleigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: But I happened to see them, as I was looking at other books in the kids' section, and I pulled 'em out to look at 'em, and the art was all different, and I said that to Justin. I think you've—you've lost it. If you change the art, you've lost the thing that made these books, um... and, like, they were, like, one of the—I don't wanna say they're one of the most banned books from kids, but they were certainly up there. Like, parents were outraged by these books, and I think the scary pictures were a big part of that. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Uh, well, whenever they are ready, I have the originals. I've rescued them from our—from some box in the basement, a couple times when I was home before, and I have them all, [through laughter] so whenever your children are ready to be permanently traumatized, by the art of Stephen Gammell, I believe is the illustrator for those? Then, yeah, just let me know.

Sydnee: Yeah. I—someday, I want them to be exposed to that. Not yet.

Raleigh: Um, in case you're also curious, there is an article online that ranks all 82 scary stories—

Taylor: Really.

Raleigh: —from all books. It ranks them from worst to best.

Sydnee: What, uh—

Taylor: I don't—you go ahead.

Sydnee: I wanna know—well, we'll get—we should get to that. I at least need to know the worst and the best.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: [simultaneously] Yeah.

Sydnee: I—yeah.

Raleigh: Important.

Sydnee: But—but Taylor, I will not—I will not jump to that yet. We need that information at some point. What were you about to say?

Taylor: I know. I'm just curious—oh, I was gonna say the same thing. I don't need the whole list, but I do wanna know what they consider to be the best. And the worst.

Raleigh: The worst is The Big Toe.

Taylor: What?!

Sydnee: Really?! That's not true!

Raleigh: On this list.

Taylor: That has body horror, it's a haunting—that one's—it's—that one's very scary!

Sydnee: And having now seen it, uh, realized on the screen—

Raleigh: Horrifying.

Sydnee: —it's upsetting! It's very upsetting when he eats the toe! [laughs]

Raleigh: When he was—honestly, just that whole part with the stew. Just kind of my stomach was like, "Ugh... ugh..."

Taylor: Oh, yeah.

Rileigh: "Ugh..." [laughs]

Taylor: I thought they did a pretty good job in the movie of picking out the ones that I think stuck with us the most, 'cause I definitely remember that one from childhood. Just something about the thought of, like... like, digging up a cadaver's toe from your backyard and putting it in a stew. Like, the whole—[inhales] that. And I thought that sequence in the movie was pretty—pretty good. We'll get to the movie more in detail, but alright, so that's the worst. I don't agree.

Rileigh: Uh, and I wanna say what the top two are, because both the top two are actually in the movie.

Sydney: Okay.

Rileigh: Um, number two is The Red Spot.

Taylor: Yeah...

Sydney: That's iconic.

Rileigh: Which—horrificing.

Sydney: I mean, who—who—

Rileigh: I remember reading that one and being like, "[distracted] That's what's gonna happen whenever I start getting acne? Spiders are gonna come out of my face?!"

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydney: Yeah.

Taylor: Acne isn't real. It's just spiders. Sorry, kids! [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydney: [laughs quietly] Yeah, that one's rough.

Rileigh: Um, any guesses as to number one? Any favorites that you—

Sydnee: Is it Harold?

Rileigh: It is Harold.

Taylor: Ohh, okay. Yep.

Rileigh: Which I get.

Sydnee: Now, Taylor, you're gonna know, maybe. I think maybe you'll know. Correct me if I'm wrong, but that is not the way that story ended... in the book, is it?

Taylor: Uh... doesn't—isn't it the scarecrow is, like, tanning the skin on the roof?

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: Yeah. I remember that one being particularly gruesome, and I'm pretty sure he skins the guy and he's, like, letting his—he's walking back and forth on the roof, like, letting his skin tan so he can make a new scarecrow, right?

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yes. That is—

Rileigh: This says in the description in the original story, Harold's payback for being, you know, the scarecrow's payback for being abused by these farmers, is he skins them and spreads out their bodies to bake in the sun.

Taylor: Yeah, okay.

Sydnee: Yes. That—that—I wondered about that change, and—I mean, I guess I should say, we're gonna be talking about the movie, and there are—

Rileigh: There are spoilers.

Sydnee: —spoilers.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um, if you've read the books, I don't know. I mean—

Rileigh: Still, I guess it—spoilers.

Sydnee: Still, there are differences and spoilers, so. There are spoilers. Uh, but I found that change—that was one of the changes that I did not—I did not think was for the better in the movie, because the end of the original story... I remember what stuck with me is that—so, these farmers are mean to a scarecrow, and then ostensibly the scarecrow comes to life, murders them all later, and then stretches their skin out on the roof...

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: ... to dry in the sun.

Rileigh: To make new scarecrows.

Sydnee: Or—yeah. And the way that they talk about it is you hear—there's somebody in the house, still. Somebody is alive, because they wake up, and they hear, like, a tap-tap-tap on, like, the tin roof.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And they go outside and look, and it's Harold running back and forth—

Rileigh: [shudders]

Sydnee: —across the stretched out skins.

Rileigh: I have this, like, vivid picture in my head of just, like, hearing a tap on the roof, and looking up and seeing a scarecrow just scampering across my roof.

Sydnee: Scampering across some stretched out human skin. I mean, it's a—it's a very upsetting...

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Even the story, outside of the imagery, the story is, like—I mean, it's stuck with me all these years!

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: You know, it's interesting, 'cause it makes me realize how much of the original books rely on you imagining a sound, but obviously it's a book, you can't hear it, so you think to have a movie medium you can actually hear these sounds. But to that extent, I think you kinda realize where, like, something is lost when something is gained, because the sounds that you heard reading that book, be it, like, Me Tie Doughty Walker—

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: —or the tap-tap-tap on the ceiling, or, like, you know, the ghostly voice asking for their toe. That's so much scarier in your head than it could ever be in a film, and it's weird how much those books rely on imagined sounds.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: It is very true that that—uh, the Me Tie Doughty Walker was another one of the, like, in terms of things that scared me—

Raleigh: Terrifying.

Sydnee: That was way up on my list. I don't know—I don't know if you two felt that way—

Taylor: Oh, yeah.

Sydnee: —but that—that—

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: And it's weird. It sounds like it shouldn't be.

Raleigh: Right.

Taylor: Because it was a weird story. Like, the story didn't... like, that's—that's where I think those books were at their best, where—'cause, like, The Red Spot I get because I think it's just that one image that all sticks in our head, the girl screaming—

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: —and, like, that long, drawn-out face, and the spiders. But that's, like, an old urban legend. Like, that story is not an original from that book, I would say, right? Like, that idea has been around for a while.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I think you're right. I don't know where it came from, but I think you're absolutely right about that.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Well, and that one is one that was different for the movie as well, right?

Sydnee: Mmm...

Raleigh: Me Tie Doughty Walker?

Sydnee: Oh, Me Tie Doughty Walker was, yeah.

Raleigh: I don't remember that being exactly like that in, uh... in the book.

Taylor: No, because I do know that the jangling man was, as they called it, the monster in the movie, that was the original creation, because there was no illustration to go from for that.

Raleigh: Oh, okay.

Sydnee: I don't think—I don't think that all the body parts fall down the chimney in the original story. I thought just the head did.

Taylor: I thought it was just the head. But it's such a weird story, 'cause I was gonna say, that's where I think those stories really shine, is just the *weird* ones. Like, the dog is saying something weird, and then they worked that into the movie, and for some reason when I read the book and the idea of this dog talking back in this weird—like, what does he say? [through laughter] Like, Polly-wolly something?

Sydnee: Dingo dingo—

Taylor: Yeah! Like—

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Like, that—the dog in the movie kind of verbalizing, I'm like, that's just strange. I don't—okay. But in the book, it was terrifying! The idea that your dog starts talking in this nonsense language.

Sydnee: Yes. Yes. I—and that one used to... that one haunted me, when I would, like, close my eyes at night. I would think I heard someone out there yelling, "Me Tie Doughty Walker," which, what does that even—

Raleigh: What is that even?

Sydnee: —what does that even mean?! I don't know! [laughs quietly] But yeah. Now, I did think, visually, that creature in the movie was pretty frickin' scary.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Very. The whole visual of, like, a person made of person parts, but walking, like, hunched over and backwards, and the parts move and are forwards and backwards, and upside—ugh.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Hmm. Yeah. That—that was a good—and I did—I mean, 'cause I know Guillermo Del Toro wrote the scr—or he had a hand in the screenplay, or maybe produced it? He didn't direct it. Like, it's not entirely his production, but you could feel his hand on things at certain times, and it was like—especially, like, monsters that were equally fanciful, and weirdly beautiful, or, like, just very fascinating to watch, but also terrifying. I feel like that's—he's great at that.

Raleigh: Well, I mean, I felt like that monster from Me Tie Doughty Walker, the jangling man—is that what he was called?

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Um, that was one that wasn't in the book. Like, the illustration wasn't, but almost the way he was made looked like an illustration from that book. Like, his face, and just, like, the amount of detail in his expression, looked like it was a drawing from that book. Like, it very much went with the whole feel of the movie.

Taylor: Yeah. They definitely rose to the challenge, I agree.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I agree, 'cause I felt—I felt like if that image had existed in the book, it would make total sense with the other artwork.

Raleigh: Yeah. That had me wondering, like, "Was this in the book? Was this picture in the book? I don't remember it, but maybe it was."

Sydnee: Um, I mean, 'cause Harold looked like I remember Harold looking in the books.

Raleigh: [through laughter] The hug monster.

Sydnee: The hug monster. The hug lady.

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: When you look at a picture of the hug monster from the book and the one from the movie, I mean, it's exact. Like, that is exactly what it looked like in the book.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: It's weird, 'cause it's not, uh, the story—that's another one where, like, the story is just kind of weird, and, I mean, I guess kinda scary, but it's just kind of weird, but then you add the hug lady, and whoa.

Raleigh: That face. Ughhh.

Taylor: Yeah. 'Cause in the original story, that's—I thought that was—oh, that is. This is an evil place. That's just, like—'cause I was thinking, it's very similar to Room For One More, but that's not the same story.

Sydnee: No, uh-uh.

Taylor: Okay.

Sydnee: That is a different story. Yeah. But I agree, the imagery—and that was very well done. I felt like the red room and the hallways and her coming at him,

and I felt like all that was a very... intense sequence. I don't know that the payoff did it for me.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Just being absorbed into her—her nice soft tum-tum? It actually seemed kinda nice. [laughs]

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [through laughter] It did!

Rileigh: It did seem kinda nice! I was like, "Aw, they're hugging. Oh, okay, well..."

Sydnee: "Bye!"

Rileigh: "Bye!" [laughs]

Taylor: It's like, "Oh, this is—this is an evil place. Come into my nice soft tum-tum. I'll keep you safe, lil boy!" And that seems alright. [laughs]

Rileigh: Like, she seemed very nice! Like, I would've... hugged her, I think.

Sydnee: Yeah, I know! That's why—if she had been heading towards me with that smile on her face, wantin' to hug me, I probably would've been like, "Oh, well, okay."

Taylor: [laughs] Well, Sydnee, you wouldn't last in this world. "Oh, it's—it's just, you know, she just—she's in the hospital, she want a hug, I'm a doctor, I can—I can help!" [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: "I can do that!"

Sydnee: I'll give ya a hug, that's okay! [laughs] Yeah, no, I would—I would not fare well. [laughs]

Taylor: I did—I'm always very critical of jump scares in horror movies, 'cause they feel very cheap, but I will say, the buildup in the toe story, as far as—like, we all knew it was coming. It was clear that—I think you—like, long before it happened, you knew where the monster was going to be.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: And then I kind of appreciate it, because the visual payoff, even if it was, what, like a two-second moment where you saw the face, it was like, once again, like that exact illustration from the book.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: That, like, eyeless, you know, feminine corpse.

Sydnee: Yeah. No, that was good. That whole scene. It was—and the grotesque was definitely there with the stew. They did a good job with the grotesque.

Taylor: Oh, yeah.

Sydnee: I—I appreciated that. Yeah. But I did have—all these good things aside, it was a good—like, if you're looking for a good scary movie, it definitely played on my nostalgia for the books. It hit on—I mean, I will say, just knowing that they were about to tell Me Tie Doughty Walker—like, as that story started to be written in the book, and I realized what was about to happen, I got chills. Like, I had a moment of terror. Because of all of the associations I have from my—

Rileigh: With that story.

Sydnee: —yeah, with that—from my childhood. So, like, I—bravo on those things, I felt like. Well done. I did feel like, because I had such high expectations for it, there were some things that I would nitpick about it.

Rileigh: Yeah. And, I mean, I think that all the tellings of the stories and the monsters and the callbacks to the books that we've talked about are good things about the movie, but to me, there were some... I mean, we're talking about it because it's, like, a 2019 adaption of a, you know, late 80s, early 90s books. And I think—it's about teenagers, and I think some of the problems with the story came from, you know, the over—the overarching plot.

Sydnee: Yeah, I almost—I almost would've preferred, personally, I think, just an anthology.

Taylor: Yeah.

Raleigh: Yeah. That's what I was kinda hoping it would be, and kind of expected it to be.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: Um, which, you know, isn't one big cohesive story, but makes sense for those books, because those books weren't one cohesive story. Those books were just anthologies.

Taylor: Yeah, would agree. I thought the weakest part was the story that they built to kind of tie them all together.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: And... I don't know. I mean, speaking of, like, you started off talking about Trick or Treat, which is, like—horror movie anthologies are one of my favorite things *ever*—

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: —and there are so many that are done so well, and it fits the format. 'Cause that's the thing about scary stories. They're these little short stories, they have real brutal, gruesome payoffs that come real quick, and then you just move on, so it does seem like the perfect format is already, like, well-known, like, big in horror. It is weird that they decided to make it, like, a larger thematic movie.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Well, and it—exactly what you said. The brutal, gruesome payoff... it kind of prevents from being able to do that well, because you're using your main characters, and you can't... that's like—I had—Justin and I had a theory after seeing it that the girl in The Red Spot, Ruthie, that in the original, like, thought process, the plotting of this movie, I bet she was supposed to die.

Raleigh: Probably.

Sydnee: But if she does, her brother hanging out with his friends trying to solve the mystery in the next scene kinda falls apart, right?

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like, it—you can't have those kinds of consequences, and then expect the other characters just to continue on with the story. So you have to blunt—which is why, like, two of our characters just disappear.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I mean, are they dead? Maybe. Who knows.

Rileigh: Well, they kinda left it open at the end for, I would assume, a second movie.

Taylor: Right.

Sydnee: That was my assumption, too, is that that way we can have a sequel. And then you have Ruthie, the Red Spot girl, who—that really lost it for me.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: So, she had spiders in her face. There were spiders all over the bathroom.

Rileigh: People saw them.

Sydnee: People *saw* them. We have established that spiders *definitely* were there.

Rileigh: I mean, there spots all over her body where these spiders were coming out of them. She had physical markings where spiders were coming out of her body!

Sydnee: So... why was—why have we—why have we put her in a psychiatric hospital?

Taylor: Well, but then you get the final shot of her just, like, in the back of the truck, like, smiling with a small little, like, wound on her face—

Rileigh: Stitch, yeah.

Taylor: Yeah. Like, okay, yeah. Now let's hunt this eternal evil together, and find my brother.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah, I don't—I think it kind of—it kind of weebled on that line between—it's not, like—what is the rating on that? Is it R, or is it PG-13?

Sydnee: PG-13.

Rileigh: PG-13.

Taylor: Okay. So I think that's the thing, is that you could've pushed that property to an R rating very easily, but I think to keep it PG-13 you can't have explicit child death? [laughs] I guess?

Rileigh: Death, yeah. They just kinda disappear.

Sydnee: But they don't care about Tommy, though!

Taylor: Well, but I don't know. Maybe you can un-scarecrow him, if—if you define... I don't know. Like—

Rileigh: That was, like, one of the most shocking moments in the movie for me, where, like, up until that point you're like, "Yeah, it's a scary movie," but you can tell it's intended for, like—you know, middle schoolers, high schoolers could watch this and, like, it's not gonna give them nightmares.

But when he got stabbed, full on, with that pitchfork, I was like, "Whoa! [laughs] Whoa! What?"

Sydnee: And they—but now, I will say that, like, I felt like they went over and above to try to make him as reprehensible as possible.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like, there was so—

Rileigh: He was the one character you didn't like, that did get killed by the scary story.

Sydnee: And in 2019, that character that they had... it, like, took on a whole new level, and I felt like that was intentional. He had that, like, dead-eyed, sociopath thing. You know? Where it was just like, "I have no regard for any kind of human life whatsoever, and I'm feeling nothing, and you have no idea what's happening behind my eyes, and I'll do any—" didn't you feel that?

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: And maybe this is just a testament to the actor, but, like, he—he was more disturbing to me than a lot of the scary stuff! Like, so—I mean, I feel like they set him up to be like, "You're not gonna care what happens to him, because he's just so awful."

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Is that, like, a weird stipulation for PG-13? Like, "Okay, okay. You can't kill kids. *Unless* the kid's a total—just a total jerk. Just a total—total butthead. Then that's fine."

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like, as scary as po—I mean, like, think about it. Like, his girlfriend's like, "Please don't lock my younger brother in the cellar of this abandoned house to die," and he's like, "Oh, you don't like it? I'm shoving you down the stairs."

What?

Taylor: Yeah...

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah, that—that does make me, like—'cause there's the scary stories, and then there's—which I don't know how I feel about the choice of, like, the backdrop, which is... Vietnam?

Raleigh: Well, I was trying to—

Sydnee: That's the other thing I wanted to talk about, yeah.

Raleigh: —I was trying to figure that out the whole time, because it's set in what, '60... 8?

Sydnee: 8?

Raleigh: '69? Well, no, it was an election year, so probably '68.

Sydnee: I think it's set in '68, isn't it?

Raleigh: Or, no. '60... '68 or '69. And I know a lot of times with more modern scary movies, they set them in a not modern time, because you have questions like, "Oh, they would have had cell phones," or, you know, "They would've had cameras," or something. Like, they wouldn't have been doing this or doing that. So I guess that part of it makes sense.

Like, getting rid of the modern technology to tell this story better, but they didn't just use a backdrop that makes it so they can get rid of modern technology. They, like... that's not a backdrop, either. It's like a part of the story, is the fact that this is taking place in, like, a Nixon presidency, Vietnam era.

Sydnee: Yeah. I don't know. Was this—was it the '68 election or the '72 election?

Raleigh: I think it was '68.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Raleigh: 'Cause it was in the 60s.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah. But, I mean, part of it I felt like, well, I think they're cashing in on the current—I mean, just, *Stranger Things*, it kinda has that same, like, "Let's put it back in a decade, let's—" and I think it's hard to write, like, modern horror

without having to be somewhat self aware. Like, you can't put a bunch—you can't put out a teen horror movie and ignore the fact that every teen growing up now has, you know, a lexicon of understanding of horror in their, head, unless you just completely write that script like as if it doesn't ex—they don't exist in this real world.

So I think it's an easy fix, just to roll back the clock, but then to put it up against the very real, terrifying situation of Vietnam, and end with one of your characters—like, it's kind of a almost happy ending, but he's, like, on his way to Vietnam? Like... [laughs]

Rileigh: The war, yeah.

Sydnee: Right.

Taylor: It's like, "Uh... okay?"

Sydnee: Well, I—that was part of what bothered me, is I feel like there were a lot of movies that use that time period as a backdrop, especially, like, things that are scary or disturbing or upsetting, because it was a time when... and I wasn't alive then, but this is what people older than me will say. [laughs] It was a time when young people looked to adults and realized that, one, they don't know what they're doing, two, I can't trust anything they're saying, and three, they will send us off to die, and not think twice about it. And they're not protecting us. They're not helping us, and they're not in it for us! We're on our own.

And so it's a great time period to set horror films, because you often have younger people, teenagers or pre-teens or whatever, who are on their own against some sort of unspeakable evil—

Taylor: Right.

Rileigh: And they adults don't listen to them, and don't help them, yeah.

Sydnee: Exactly. The adults don't save 'em, they don't help 'em. So, like, it makes sense, but I would argue that it is no longer necessary to do that, because we have that situation now.

Rileigh: We have kind of re-entered that same era. [laughs] In 2019.

Sydnee: I think that people growing up today are having the same reaction to authority figures and to adults that people growing up then did, and I don't think it's necessary to call back to that time period.

I think you could say the same thing about, you know, the younger generations looking to adults right now and saying, "Uh, climate change is happening, and we are terrified, and we're the ones who have to live in this world, and you're doing nothing, and we're on our own, and you don't care."

Like, it would be so easy to tell that story in 2019. I don't know why you decide to set it... like, why do you *have* to set it in the 60s?

Raleigh: And make it so present, too.

Taylor: Yeah. And even to have, like, your crazy, dead-eyed bully that's a total racist, it's like, you could've put him in a MAGA hat and had it been modern times! Like—[laughs]

Raleigh: Same exact thing, yeah.

Sydnee: Right. I mean, like, there was no reason that that—all that stuff is how young people are feeling now, and it just—I don't know if it was like an out-of-touch, or if—or, my other guess is, it's just easier to set a horror film before cell phones were invented, right?

Raleigh: I think it is. I think a lot of people—I mean, *Stranger Things* is kind of the same, right? Like, they have this older technology they incorporate, but it's also easier to do a lot of the thing they do, knowing that kids would be playing D&D together, or, like, using radios to communicate, not, you know, texting and playing video games.

Sydnee: Although that is something that we talked about, the amazing walkie-talkies of horror films.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: They amazing—like, that they work across town. Like, I don't know who had these walkie-talkies. I didn't, as a kid, but, like, they all have these incredibly long range walkie-talkies. [laughs]

Raleigh: That's true.

Taylor: I will say, at least a touch of it has to also be Guillermo Del Toro's influence, because he always makes—like, his—his movies are always sort of—or, his horror movies have been highly allegorical for, like, political climates. So, like, that probably—like, to bring that in, like, makes sense. It's a kids' movie, so it feels a little heavy handed, but I think, like, he always... he tends to mix horror and, like, political allegory very seamlessly, so... I don't know.

Raleigh: Yeah. Well, and I mean... yeah.

Sydnee: [crosstalk] Yeah. I mean, it makes sense. It makes sense.

Raleigh: It makes sense, and there was this second level to, I think, all of the scary stories that, like, they were scary stories that existed before. They didn't write these for these characters, but they did write the characters for the specific scary stories that they, you know, were subject to.

And I think there was, like, this weird... like, if you look, there's a connection for each of the personalities of the characters to why that story is for them, or, like, why that monster. But it just seemed like it wasn't—it wasn't as deep as, like, an adult scary movie that also has this deeper level of, like, meaning and connection to the characters, but wasn't as shallow as just, like, a kids' scary movie that just kind of, like, monsters.

Sydnee: It wasn't just random.

Raleigh: Yeah, it wasn't random. You could tell, if you thought about it, like, "Oh, well, uh... that jangling man came for Raymond and called him a coward because, you know, his inner monster was the fact that he was—" what, a draft dodger? That was his thing? That was why he was on the run? I—I—

Taylor: Yeah, and he said—

Raleigh: Yeah. [laughs]

Taylor: He said it was his brother, right? That came back in pieces, so it kind of made sense. Like, then there's this corpse that—yeah.

Raleigh: The man was in pieces.

Sydnee: That's true. That's true.

Taylor: You know.

Raleigh: Or Auggie, whose dad is not present, and his mom is gone a lot, and he's talking about the scary story that his dad used to read to him all the time that now is coming to life with this food his mom has left him while she's left him, again, on his own, to take him.

Sydnee: Yeah. I think that there were definitely all those things kind of hinted at, but I also think... like, Justin and I spent a lot of time after watching the movie talking about it all, and I could pull out a lot of this stuff on sitting and reflecting and thinking about it—

Raleigh: But not during.

Sydnee: Huh?

Raleigh: But not during.

Sydnee: Yeah. I mean, I didn't—that was my complaint, is, like, I didn't feel it during. During, I had a lot more questions. During, I felt like there were a lot of things that seemed off, or reactions that I didn't feel—like, I don't know how we got from, like, the main character's dad in the beginning of the movie is, like, disinterested, falling asleep in front of the television, "Don't stay out too late," to, like, him crying on the phone and telling her it's not her fault that her mom left.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: It just felt like a 180—and I didn't know, like—are you telling—is that because I'm watching? Is that—[laughs] like, "Oh, we heard the audience was here. Let's have a conversation about how it's not your fault that your mom left." You know? I mean, it just—it felt very... off. Like, what is—like, how is it not—my kid's missing. There've been some kids murdered. Um, I only have one question. Where the heck are you?

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Stop talking about anything else. Where are you? I'm coming now. Like, that's your only... as a parent. That's your only conversation.

Rileigh: And the main character is supposed to be this outcast that only has her two friends, and everyone else makes fun of her and doesn't like her, but are we... I've been in high school, and maybe not in the 60s, but, like, I've still been in a high school setting. I don't think someone's mom leaving is what you make fun of them for!

Sydnee: That seemed a little wild to me. The assertion that—

Taylor: Yeah

Rileigh: That seems a little wild, right? That, like, the reason that everyone makes fun of her and doesn't like her and picks fun is because her mom left?

Taylor: Yeah...

Rileigh: What?! [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Well, and I guess... like, it makes me—'cause I always think of this, as far as somebody that, like, I work in comics and illustration, and there's always sort of the argument, like, is everything better when it's made into a movie, or is there some stuff, like, intellectual property, that it's better in a smaller medium? It's better in a more personal medium? You know, it's better in black and white?

And I think, like, this movie makes a pretty solid argument for, "Were the—were the books the perfect medium for these stories, and this sort of imagery?"

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: I—I think so. I mean, I really—I think it will probably do well. I would bet it's rated well, because one, if you have no familiarity with the books, if you're just seeing it, if you're a younger person who never saw them growing up and you're just seeing it 'cause it's a scary movie, I mean, it delivers on scares. Like, there's scary stuff in there. And a lot of the acting was very good, too.

But I think if you're like me, somebody who's seeing it as much for nostalgia, you're still gonna, like—I mean, I have—like I said, I have complaints, but I had an enjoyable experience, and it was neat to see my childhood come to life like that.

So, I think it's gonna do well and it's gonna be rated well, but—

Raleigh: I mean, it has an 81% on Rotten Tomatoes.

Sydnee: That doesn't surprise me.

Raleigh: That's pretty good!

Sydnee: And I would recommend people go see it, but I think there was this little voice in the back of my head that was going, "But it could've been better.."

Raleigh: It could've been better.

Taylor: Right. I agree.

Raleigh: And I assume—I assume there'll be a second one? It was the most, like, obvious, unsubtle way of saying, "There's going to be a sequel to this movie," at the end of it when the main character is doing this, you know, internal monologue, and just says, like, "I know there's a way to find our friends and bring them back, and I know it's somewhere in the book, and we're going to find it."

Sydnee: First we had to rescue Ruthie from the psychiatric hospital, where she went 'cause she got a spider bite.

Taylor: Yeah...

Raleigh: And she's gonna be the one to really help save the day. We couldn't do this without Ruthie! [laughs]

Sydnee: You know what a big role she's played so far in helping! [laughs]

Raleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Yeah... Hmm.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: I do—I do wish it was, like, just... 'cause I think that also, like, having an explanation, like, "Oh, it was this girl that was... locked away by her family because she was—" I'm not wrong in this—"because she was an albino?"

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: That is what I understood.

Sydnee: She had albinism, yes.

Taylor: But when you see her, she's also, like—the way that you see her, like in the flash, she's got long, dark hair, so I was a little confused. Like, she just was really pale? Like, that's just—[laughs] okay? I don't know what—it was some—

Sydnee: I don't think it's clear, and—

Raleigh: Thought it was gonna be something other than that, honestly.

Sydnee: I—I also—from me, if you're gonna introduce a supernatural element in a movie, I feel like you have to have rules for the supernatural element. I feel like that's very important in a horror film. And there has to be, like, a thing that you have to do at the end to satisfy the supernatural force so that it goes away, and I felt like she kinda talked her in to...

Raleigh: She did!

Sydnee: Like, that was what—

Raleigh: Definitely did.

Taylor: She wrote her story.

Sydnee: It was like—

Raleigh: Just, like, persuaded her.

Sydnee: But it wasn't like a magic—you need it to seem like a magic spell. Like she said the right thing, she did the right thing. But instead, it wasn't that. She, like, talked her in to letting her, like... I don't know.

Raleigh: She, like, wrote two lines of her story.

Sydnee: It felt like an argument.

Rileigh: Yeah, she, like, wrote two lines of her story and was like, "See? I'm gonna do it! I wrote the first part of it!"

Sydnee: And you can't talk ghosts into stuff!

Rileigh: Yeah, that doesn't seem...

Sydnee: At least, that's my supernatural horror film rule. You can't talk the ghost into it! You say the magic thing that makes the ghost listen to you, but you can't talk 'em into it.

Taylor: Well, and to that extent it's like, I think that once you start getting, like, rules and ways to defeat it, it stops being scary. The scariest thing about horror is the unknown. The scariest thing about those stories is that—what the—what the heck does Me Tie Doughty Walker mean? You don't get an explanation! You don't know what it means! Move on to the next story! Why was there a corpse buried in this person's backyard so they could mine a toe? Who knows! Who knows what happens at the end?

It just ends, and it's like, the unknown and the complete, like, the lack of reason for as—why—why did Harold come to life? Like, you don't get any reason. Anything can happen. Like, it's not about, "Did you break a rule? Did you take a book you weren't supposed to take?"

It's the senselessness of horror and, like, the stories, that I think is the scariest part, and so once you assign rules to how to defeat it, once you give a reason for why this is all happening, it kinda sucks some of the horror out of it. It's like, "Oh, it's just this angry sad ghost lady. She's doing it all. There's a reason. It's all understandable. It's something we can digest now."

Horror is way scarier when you can't digest it.

Rileigh: Yeah. I think that's why those stories work better as an anthology book series, because the story ends, the person dies or gets eaten or turns into a scarecrow, whatever, and that's it. Like, you don't—there's no going back to see how you save them. There's no... defeating the overall evil. There is no overall evil. It's just, like, a bunch of... scary stuff. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: I also—not to belabor it, but I would also just throw in there this thought. The main—the bad force, the bad guy, the bad girl, the person who is responsible for the bad—

Raleigh: [through laughter] The bad girl?

Sydnee: Well, we always say "the bad—"

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: It's the bad... person, who's responsible for all of the bad stuff that happens in the film, was abused and tortured.

Taylor: Right!

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: And feels rage because of her torture and abuse, and I feel like a story where she is the evil force, and, like, the way that she's defeated is basically somebody saying, like, "Chill out, it doesn't give you a right to hurt other people—"

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Is a little... you know?

Raleigh: A little "Ehhh..." [laughs]

Sydnee: Like, that's—uh... really? Uh, is that really the story we need to tell *right* now? Is that really our concern? Is, like—but if we abuse people, then they might get mad and hurt other people, so let's get mad at the victim of the abuse," instead of, like, why don't we go back to, like, Old Ephraim.

Raleigh: Right.

Sydnee: And Doodad, or whatever that other—[wheezes] name was.

Taylor: Doodad?! [laughs]

Sydnee: I don't remember! There was a weird name!

Raleigh: Ephraim and Doodad! [laughs]

Sydnee: Called—Ephraim and Doodad!

Taylor: Ephraim and Doodad.

Sydnee: Like, they're the—they're the bad guys! Can we talk about, like, her family? They were the *bad* guys, you know?

Taylor: Yeah...

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

Taylor: I do wanna know how that masterful—

Sydnee: It's 2019!

Taylor: That plot of, like, blaming the lady they had locked in their basement for these kids dying? Like, how did that work? Like, "Oh, they played in the river that was poisoned by us, and then they died. Uh, it was the girl we have locked in our basement!" [laughs] Like, wha—what?

Sydnee: Yeah!

Taylor: How did—

Sydnee: "The totally normal thing we did, which was lock one of our children in the basement. You know. And then she killed your kids. And, by the way, and so for that, we'll lock her back in the basement. Don't call the cops or anything."

Taylor: Yeah. It's like, no, but your kids died of poisoning! She did it. Poisoning that comes from your—what was it? Like, a paper mill or something?

Sydnee: Paper mill? Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah, like, okay. That's a weird... that's a...

Raleigh: There's no one in this movie named Doodad.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: [laughs]

Rileigh: Sorry, I've just been looking at the whole IMDB. There is Ephraim! And there is... Harold.

Sydnee: There was another one that—in her family, that got—

Rileigh: No one named Doodad.

Sydnee: —that got killed.

Taylor: No one named Doodad! [laughs]

Sydnee: And there was a—

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] There was a story about them! It was a weird name I'd never heard. I thought it was Doodad, but I don't think it was.

Taylor: There were some weird names.

Rileigh: I don't think it was Doodad.

Taylor: I rem—I think I—I wanna agree with you, to the extent that there was definitely another weird name that I went, "That's a name?" But... I will not—

Sydnee: It was! It was! It was—

Taylor: —I will not cosign on Doodad.

Rileigh: I will not say Doodad! [laughs]

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, uh, I would rec—I would still recommend. It's a good—

Rileigh: Good scary movie for the season.

Sydnee: —if you like scary flicks, it's a good scary flick, you know? You could spend an evening in a lot worse ways.

Rileigh: Definitely watch it with your kids, too.

Taylor: Yeah.

Rileigh: Not, like, scare city.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: It'll get you geared up for what comes out, I believe, next week, which is the second chapter of IT. Uh, also, like, a—

Rileigh: Yes!

Sydnee: [shudders]

Taylor: —dated in the past, like, you know, story that was from our—well, from—the original miniseries was on TV when we were young, and then the actual Stephen King novel was from the... 80s? I think?

Sydnee: I think. Something like that.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah, that's—

Rileigh: I'm very excited for that.

Taylor: —not for kids. Suuuper not for kids.

Sydnee: No.

Rileigh: Not for kids.

Sydnee: Not for kids.

Rileigh: I'll take Charlie.

Sydnee: No.

Rileigh: [laughs]

Sydnee: No. She still likes clowns.

Taylor: You need to teach her otherwise.

Rileigh: Not for long, yes.

Sydnee: Uh, thank you, listeners, for joining us. Thank you, sisters.

Taylor: Thank you!

Sydnee: For seeing the movie, and talking about it. And, uh, like, I said, I would stand by my recommendation to go see it.

Taylor: Yeah, same.

Rileigh: Yeah. Even if you haven't read the books.

Sydnee: Yep. Uh, and you should also check out Maximumfun.org, if you like podcasts, 'cause there are many, and they are excellent, and you should listen to them.

Rileigh: [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: And you can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org, if you have thoughts or suggestions or questions or comments, or if you wanna tell us if Halloween tents exist outside of our mall area—

Taylor: Or in Brooklyn!

Sydnee: Yeah. Please, let us know. Or you can tell us on Twitter, @stillbuff, 'cause we will check that too! And thank you to the Nouvellas for our theme song Baby You Change Your Mind.

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

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: And I'm Taylor Smirl!

Rileigh: I am a teenager..

Sydnee and Teylor: And I... was... too.

[theme music begins in the background]

Rileigh: Doodad.

Sydnee: [laughs] [quietly] Doodad! Doodad!

Teylor: I'll Doodad ghost [unintelligible]—

Rileigh: I'll Do—

[theme music plays]

Speaker One: Listen, I'm a hotshot Hollywood movie producer. You have until I finish my glass of Kombucha to pitch me your idea. Go.

[slurping noises]

Ify: Alright! It's called Who Shot Ya? A movie podcast that isn't just a bunch of straight white dudes. I'm Ify Nwadiwe, the new host of the show, and a certified BBN.

Speaker One: BBN?

Ify: Buff black nerd!

Alonso: I'm Alonso Duralde, an elderly gay, and legit film critic who wrote a book on Christmas movies!

Drea: I'm Drea Clark, a loud white lady from Minnesota!

Ify: Each week, we talk about a new movie in theaters, and all the important issues going on in the film industry.

Alonso: It's like Guess Who's Coming to Dinner meets Cruising!

Ify: And if it helps seal the deal, I can flex my muscles while we record each episode.

Speaker One: I'm sorry. This is a podcast? I'm a movie producer! How did you get in here?

Drea: Ify, quick! Start flexing!

Ify: Bicep! Lats! Chest!

Who Shot Ya? Dropping every Friday on Maximumfun.org, or wherever you listen to podcasts!

[music plays]

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