

Still Buffering 187: How to VSCO Girl

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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 brought to you, much like your trusty pet... animal—cat, usually, in my experience—uh, bringing you some sort of expired creature to your door that you wish they didn't, but they're very proud of.

Taylor: I think that's pretty exclusively a cat thing.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I think I'd be pretty freaked out if my goldfish one day just had, like, [through laughter] a dead mouse in its bowl. Like, "Look what I did!"

Sydnee: Do—do birds do that? I feel like birds would do that.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Maybe?

Sydnee: They're kinda scary. [laughs]

Taylor: "Here's a bug. I got you a big ol' bug!"

Alright, sorry, but go ahead. So, what—what dead... decaying thing have you brought us?

Sydnee: Uh, I—I bring you the remnants of the day from Twitter. [laughs quietly] I've been searching Twitter for—for things for us to talk about and there's so

much going on, besides the fact that Keanu Reeves has a girlfriend, and I'm—I just wanna mention that, 'cause I'm so happy for him.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: And—and the internet is impressed, because she is age appropriate. I—and I'm not—in no way slighting—I'm very also invested in Keanu Reeves' happiness, but I like that this is a thing that's, like, newsworthy. Like, "A male celebrity has a girlfriend, and she's only nine years younger than him."

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: "He deserves all the accolades."

Sydnee: Yes, I know. It is—it is sad that that's the story, when—because pe—I think people felt the need to justify why they wanna talk about it. But, like... no one needs to front. We're all on the same page. [holding back laughter] Keanu Reeves' happiness is very important to all of us.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: We all remember how sad he was on that bench that day with that sandwich. And we've all been worried about him since then, and then he's so good in *John Wick*. He's so... angry and sad, but so good, but so angry and sad, we just want him to be okay. You know?

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Well, I—

Rileigh: I get it.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: —she seems like a cool, smart, talented, artsy lady, so—so, good for him.

Sydnee: I just—I hope they're both very happy and I will... [through laughter] now follow this relationship very closely!

Taylor: [through laughter] That's a lot of pressure! Just let 'em have their space, man!

Sydnee: I won't—I won't—I don't really—if it doesn't pop up immediately when I open Twitter, I don't know what's happening in the world, so I actually won't go searching for that information; but I'm just glad that it's in there in my brain, you know?

Raleigh: It's the first celebrity relationship Sydnee has followed closely.

Taylor: I think so!

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] It would be the first and only celebrity relationship I ever cared about. Uh...

Also, everybody's talking about who they wanna sit next to on a plane. What musician. If you—if you're stuck on a plane next to a musician, who would it be?

Raleigh: Why is that something people are talking about?

Sydnee: I don't—it's Twitter, man! I don't know why people—this is—this is both what I don't understand and why I will never disengage from Twitter. I know that a lot of people like to do that. That's fine. Everybody should do them.

I'll never disengage from Twitter, 'cause I open it and I'm like, "Why is everybody talking about what musician they wanna sit next to on a plane? That's weird. I gotta find out about this."

And that's just Twitter, all over.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: Well, I mean—I get, like, what musician would you wanna hear sing, or perform, or be able to ask questions. But the thing about airplanes are is no one should talk to anybody, and definitely no one should sing. So... I don't personally know what musician brings the most snacks and readily shares them, so I have no answer.

Sydnee: Jimmy Buffet.

Taylor: Well, okay.

Raleigh: Lea Michele.

Sydnee: Lea Michele?

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Just to get those *Glee* stories?

Raleigh: Yeah. That's all I really want. Just, like, from her early days in *Spring Awakening* with Jonathon Groff. Inside scoop on *Glee*. That's it.

Sydnee: Would you be able to ask?

Raleigh: No.

Sydnee: 'Cause that was part of why I picked Jimmy Buffet is that I've met him, and so I'm kind of cheating because I would feel like, "Hey, you—I'm—don't—there's no way you remember me—[through laughter] but, we've met. And... can I talk to you now?"

And he's just so chill, he would say yes.

Raleigh: I am, like, one degree of separation away from meeting Lea Michele, and I've thought about many times if the situation were to ever arise how I would act, and I don't—I don't think I'd be able to say anything.

Taylor: You know, I guess—I've heard stories from friends that have, like, worked with Joan Jett that she's really chill and, like, cool. So, like, that is more—like, as much as I love Joan Jett, there's also that aspect where I don't think I could actually talk to her, but the possibility of a conversation happening because of her chillness makes maybe the candidate that I would go with.

Sydnee: Well, that's—I mean, that's part of the problem with this question, is that, like, there are some people, like... like, there's my—my teenage heart says, like, Rivers Cuomo.

But, like, you know he doesn't wanna talk to whoever's next to him on a plane. And I'm not gonna—I'm not gonna be the one to break that—[through laughter] break that silence and be like, "I'm gonna force you to talk to me now."

Taylor: [laughs] You try to talk to Rivers Cuomo and he excuses himself. He goes into the first class bathroom and he doesn't come out for the length of the entire flight. [through laughter] That's what happens!

Sydnee: That is what I assume would happen, and I don't want to do that to him, 'cause I respect him as an artist! So I would just *sit* there, in—in shock, for the entire time.

I mean, I would be so—and I wouldn't wanna move. I would just—and not take up too much room, so that he wouldn't think, like, "How rude, my—[holding back laughter] my—the person sitting next to me is taking up too much space."

I would not be able to function.

Raleigh: I get it.

Sydnee: Rivers Cuomo is notoriously somewhat reclusive from the limelight. That is important to know here. I think that informs this.

Raleigh: Thank you for explaining, I just wasn't going to ask.

Sydnee: He—Weezer is where he's from.

Raleigh: Okay.

Sydnee: The band, Weezer.

Raleigh: I know that one.

Sydnee: [through laughter] Okay.

Raleigh: I know that word.

Sydnee: But he—I—at least my perception of him is that he would not want to talk with a stranger on a plane. That that would not be his bag.

Taylor: Now, Andrew W. K.... I bet he'd talk to you on a plane. I think he'd give you a sermon on a plane.

Sydnee: See, that'd be pretty cool, somebody who would do most of the talking so I wouldn't have to come up with the topics.

Taylor: I think I would just say, "Hey, Andrew W. K. I'm havin' a hard time. Could you give me some advice?" And that would be two hours.

Sydnee: Uh, the—the only other celebrity news I have for you—the only other Twitter news I have for you is that, um, Robert Pattinson is learning Jujitsu for *The Batman*. And I—

Raleigh: Who is he going to be in *The Batman*?

Sydnee: He's gonna be the Batman. The titular Batman.

Raleigh: I see.

Sydnee: I, uh, looked—I tried to look at the pictures of Robert Pattinson doing Jujitsu. I won't lie. I'm sorry, I did. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: You wanted to see Robert Pattinson doing Jujitsu?

Sydnee: I sure did. I'm sorry. Both *Harry Potter*—

Raleigh: Why?

Sydnee: —and *Twilight*? Excuse me? Yes.

Raleigh: Okay.

Sydnee: Uh, but they were on Instagram and, like, the link took me there, and then I didn't know how to find *him* on Instagram 'cause we're not, like, friends on there or whatever. And so I didn't know how to—

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: That's not how Instagram works.

Sydnee: —I didn't know how to get there, so I never saw 'em, but they're out there somewhere, internet. [laughs]

Taylor: Wow. Well, that's a—that's a star-studded cast for *The Batman* comin' up, right?

Sydnee: Uh, Colin Farrell is the Penguin.

Taylor: That's not who I would—that's not who I would assume or think of, first off, but okay. That's a—that is one hot penguin!

Sydnee: I know. I was gonna say, I'm go—now I'm gonna find there will be a time in my life where I go, "Well, now I'm sexually attracted to the Penguin from *Batman*." [laughs] So there's that.

Taylor: I—I don't know. I'm a little upset—Danny DeVito is still out there and doin' great stuff. Why didn't they just hit him up again? Like, I don't know.

Sydnee: Zoë Kravitz is gonna be Catwoman, so... yes, please. Thank you.

Taylor: That's great.

Sydnee: Thank you very much.

Raleigh: I, uh—I found—

Sydnee: I love all of this. I will be very excited to see this.

Raleigh: —I found Robert Pattinson's Instagram. I think this is Robert Pattinson's Instagram. It's @robertpattinsonofficial, but I don't think it's actually run by him, because the bio is just "Photos of actor #robertpattinson."

Sydnee: This seems like a fan thing.

Raleigh: There are no photos of him doing Jujitsu, but one of the most recent ones is just a picture of him as Cedric Diggory and the caption is just #tbt.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: For Throwback Thursday. I find that very amusing.

Sydnee: Aww...

Raleigh: He doesn't have an Instagram, it seems, Sydnee.

Sydnee: Well then I don't—who knows. These pictures are nowhere.

Raleigh: They're nowhere. They're also everywhere.

Sydnee: Twitter lied. For the first time ever, a lie appeared on—[through laughter] on social media! Oh no, I'm sorry. That's Facebook.

Raleigh: I like that if you type in "Robert Pattinson" the first thing that comes up is "Robert Pattinson Jujitsu."

Taylor: A lot of people are thirsty for those pictures, apparently! Syd, you're not alone!

Sydnee: Uh—listen. I know people like to joke about *Twilight*, but it was great, and I'm sorry. Watch him in the movies and... tell me you don't agree with me. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Well, we will! [laughs]

Raleigh: Did you see these?

Sydnee: There he is! He's doin' Jujitsu!

Raleigh: There are pictures of—if you look up "Robert Pattinson Jujitsu" on Google Images, it's the first picture that comes up.

Sydnee: I coulda googled!

Raleigh: That's—yeah!

Sydnee: Didn't think about that.

Raleigh: That's kinda your fault, there.

Sydnee: I'm very good at researching science. Not so much people. Like, celebrity people. Uh... so—[laughs quietly] other things that the internet has brought to me recently are, um, BuzzFeed articles, because Facebook is good at surfacing those. Um... those and lies about politics, I guess.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: That's Facebook for you. BuzzFeed articles about the 90's... and lies about political candidates.

Raleigh: That's what Mark Zuckerberg wanted.

Sydnee: That was his—

Raleigh: That is what he's wrought.

Sydnee: That's what that movie was about. [laughs quietly] Right?

Raleigh: *The Social Network*? Yes.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. It was about—"I—I really wanna spread political lies and BuzzFeed articles."

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: "Easier." BuzzFeed probably—was it a thing yet? Probably not.

Raleigh: Uh... that is how it became a thing.

Sydnee: Yeah, didn't he—

Raleigh: Mark Zuckerberg was like, "How do I get weird quizzes at the same time as, like, pictures of funny tweets? And also, like, somewhat news media?" And, BuzzFeed.

Sydnee: Dangerous—dangerous, democracy-threatening lies.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Is that worse or better than the real reason that it was created, which was to rank his female classmates?

[pauses]

Sydnee: I—I have no answer for this.

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah, I—I—

Sydnee: It's all... I know. It's all—[sighs]

Taylor: It's all bad. No, it's all—it's all bad. That's okay! Sometimes it's all bad!

Sydnee: It's just bad.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: It's just bad. Uh... yeah, did you—I—I know—for a second—I wanna—I wanna talk about this, but, um... like, on Halloween—it was Halloween and the house was voting on the impeachment inquiry to move forward, and at the same time, like, the New York Times published an open letter, written by Aaron Sorkin to Mark Zuckerberg about his—about the first amendment and undermining democracy and—it was just a weird day, right? It was just a weird—

Raleigh: It's a weird day.

Sydnee: It was just a weird day. You know? [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Yeah...

Sydnee: I'm just sayin'. Uh—[laughs]

Raleigh: Everyone kind of forgot about Mark Zuckerberg for a while, and he just really wanted to remind everyone about himself, and he did it in the worst way possible.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Boy, he just can't not be a... jerk, there, can he?

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: I mean, I guess if you wanted a good Halloween scare... like, "Oh no! E—evil corporate conglomerates, and the... overthrow of our government!" Like, I don't know. There's a lot. There's a lot to be spooked about on Halloween, woo hoo!

Sydnee: [spooky voice] Oooh, 2019... [normal voice] Um... but no, this article, though—it's not scary or serious, so we'll talk about that... instead.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, it was a—it was expanding on a topic that we very briefly touched on in our live show, which is, uh... the VSCO girl. [pauses] VSCO.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Not V-S-C-O.

Raleigh: Mm-mm.

Sydnee: VSCO.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: And, uh... what—what that would have looked like in the late 90's. I believe this article was an attempt to translate for me.

Raleigh: [snorts] For everyone who is over the age of, like... 23.

Sydnee: Yes. "To translate what, uh—what VSCO means in your—in *your* language, old 90's lady. [laughs quietly] Here's what it means for you."

And so I—I read it, and it was just a bunch of things. Just a list of, like... it was not—it did not have, like, a deep description of these things. It was just a bunch of pictures of things.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Um, as many of these lists tend to be. And I—I do not feel like I understand VSCO much more than I did before, because it was a list of everything that encompassed everything about any teenager in the 90's, I feel like. [pauses] Like, I had a problem with this list.

Raleigh: Like what? What are some...

Sydnee: Well, okay.

Raleigh: ... some hits?

Sydnee: So, we start off with, uh—well, first of all, before we do that, Raleigh, would you like to give us a brief definition of the VSCO girl?

Raleigh: Sure. Um, so VSCO is the name of a photo sharing platform, kind of like Instagram, except it's more for, like, photography sharing, I would say? So it's not as much, like, "Here's a profile of all my life and my pictures and stuff," and there aren't—you know. It's not a social media platform in the sense of, like, likes and followers and stuff, as much. I think those things exist, but that's not it's purpose. It's just for, like, sharing photography you've done.

Um, that is where the name comes from, and VSCO girls, the—the thing, I guess? VSCO girl—is, like, a person who enjoys scrunchies and Birkenstocks and Hydro Flasks and oversized t-shirts and, um—like, puka shell necklaces and best friend bracelets made out of, like... yarn and hemp and stuff.

Sydnee: Which, I mean, in part—I think my confusion with this list is that what you just described is... a fairly 90's look.

Raleigh: Yes. Very much so.

Sydnee: Like, if you take away the Hydro Flask.

Raleigh: Yeah. 'Cause you weren't lucky enough to have them in the 90's.

Sydnee: No. You'd just replace it with a Nalgene bottle.

Taylor: I feel like that was a 2000's thing. I don't know, though.

Sydnee: No. no, you're right. Nalgene was 2000's. It was the—

Raleigh: I don't know what that is.

Taylor: It was more of a "I'm a fancy person, I have a Nalgene water bottle." I—I had a friend get me one once and I was like, "No. This is... I don't want—this is—this is of the bourgeois! [through laughter] I don't wanna be a part of this!"

Sydnee: [laughs] No, it was, uh, the—according to this list, it was the Nike squirty water bottle.

Taylor: Hmm.

Raleigh: Hmm.

Sydnee: The one—like, you can toss your head back and squirt it in your mouth like you're a big—a big sporto? [laughs]

Raleigh: Yeah, whenever I had, like—

Sydnee: A big time sporto.

Taylor: That's what they're called.

Raleigh: —college classes with student athletes, they always come in with those water bottles and, like, waterfall them into their own mouths, and I don't know why they're so intense about it. Like, I'm in, like, an intro political science class, and then all of these just freshman college athletes come in waterfaling their own Nike water bottles into their mouth.

Sydnee: It's the Gatorade commercials.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: It makes you think you have to drink intensely when you do sports. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah. I never drank that intensely. Maybe that's why I was never very good at sports.

Taylor: I feel like those bottles are designed to be, uh, consumed *only* intensely, though. It's not like you can really, like... you kinda *have* to do a full head tilt with that. That's just part of the design.

Sydnee: That's the—see, you know, old people worry so much about the effect of violence in movies and video games on young people and what that's gonna do to their behaviors, and really they should be worried about Gatorade commercials teaching youth to drink too intensely.

Taylor: Hmm.

Raleigh: It's really dangerous. You'd get over-hydrated like a... cactus.

Sydnee: Or squirt water everywhere.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Uh, this list contained some—many things that, of course, were popular in the 90's. I am not arguing the validity of these things. It's just—it'd be like saying, like, um... like, "You know this band now that everybody likes? Well, what would they be like in the 90's?"

And it'd be like, "Well, you know, like, pop music in the 90's. They're sort of like that."

It's like, "Well, you mean all of pop music? So they're like all of pop music."

That's what this list felt like. So the first thing was, like, those Adidas slide sandals.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Fair. I... think I had a—I either had a pair or I had a knockoff pair [pauses] I may have had a knockoff pair, actually. Now that I think about it.

Raleigh: That's more economically sound.

Taylor: I remember them being popular, but I feel like I associated those more with, like, jocks. With sporty kids. I feel like you had them because you played soccer.

Sydnee: I did. That's where I wore them, 'cause I would wear them with socks.

Rileigh: Yeah. That's kind of the thing is, like, you're going to your game or whatever, you don't wanna wear, like, your cleats, your good tennis shoes, so you wear your sandals with your socks and then switch out after the game.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Um—

Rileigh: That was an athlete thing.

Sydnee: They talk about burning incense sticks that smelled like cool water or CK One. I definitely burned those incense sticks. I will say that that was very 90's, and there were some things on this list that I know were me. And now, when I took the quiz, I got e-girl.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: So I don't know—

Rileigh: I still don't get that.

Sydnee: I don't know if this is representative of an e-girl, than, more than a VSCO girl. But, like, they talk about those gauzy mosquito net thingies that you could put over your bed. Like, canopy/mosquito net combo.

Rileigh: I used to want one of those so badly.

Sydnee: I had one of those. I had—they talk about, like, the celestial print. Like, sun, moon, star print bedding. I—not only did I have that, but—Taylor, you may remember this. I had a crate in my room that Mom decouped...

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: ... a bunch of those things on to.

Taylor: Yeah. Oh, no, you had a whole theme. You had, like, a... a border?

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Yep.

Taylor: So that was the time period where every room had to have a decorative border in it? [laughs]

Sydnee: I had a wallpaper border with, like—like, an astrological looking wallpaper border.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Um, and then, uh, the glow-in-the-dark stars on my ceiling. [pauses] I don't know. Are these VS—these don't seem VSCO.

Raleigh: I—from what I understand, VSCO now is just, like—I mean, it's like you said. It's just basic.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: It is! It's just, like, the typical, standard, basic... teenage female.

Sydnee: Well—and, like, they do include in this list, like, uh, using Bath & Body works body spray.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: But... I thought *everybody* did that.

Raleigh: I mean, I did that, growing up.

Taylor: Yeah...

Raleigh: That was just because they had, like, the most—the widest variety of tasty smells.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: And they all were, like, shiny and pink.

Taylor: I think I would—

Raleigh: That was about it.

Taylor: —I would buy it more if they had picked a specific flavor of Bath & Body and said, "This was the one."

Sydnee: And see—yeah. Well, and it would've been, what? Like, Plumeria?

Taylor: Would it've been? Why? That was my scent.

Sydnee: [laughs] No... I don't know. I feel like everybody had either Plumeria or that cucumber one.

Taylor: Hmm, that's true, yeah.

Raleigh: I was more of a Sweet Pea girl.

Sydnee: Hmm.

Raleigh: That was my—my scent.

Sydnee: Uh, I—I don't remember what my original one was. They discontinued it. It was something purple.

Raleigh: Twilight... Forest.

Sydnee: Midnight Path is—

Raleigh: Midnight Path.

Sydnee: —was the one they repl—they replaced it with something called Midnight Path, and that's the one that I used later, but I don't remember what the—it was another purple thing, is what it originally was.

Taylor: Wasn't it Freesia?

Sydnee: No, I didn't use Freesia.

Taylor: Hmm.

Sydnee: Or did I? Was it Freesia?

Taylor: I thought you did. I don't know.

Sydnee: Maybe it was Freesia.

Taylor: False memory. Not sure.

Sydnee: It could be. It could—it could've been. Well, and they talk about that people also used to like to use the Victoria's Secret Pear Glace body lotion, which I do remember people having. But I didn't... I mean, Victoria's Secret. That was for the grownups.

Raleigh: That's for the *women*.

Taylor: [muffled laughter]

Sydnee: That was not—I was a kid.

Raleigh: I twas a—I was a—

Sydnee: I was a child.

Raleigh: —a lad.

Sydnee: Um—

Raleigh: A wee one.

Sydnee: And cargo pants. See? Like, how does this—the wide-leg cargo pants. How does this all go together?

Taylor: These are just lots of different—I don't know.

Sydnee: I mean, I love cargo pants! I wore them! A lot!

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: They were great! With tank tops? Are you kidding me? What a great look.

Raleigh: Well...

Sydnee: And Vans?

Raleigh: Well... [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: Big cargo pants, all ragged at the bottom, kinda muddy and dirty, torn up, a pair of Vans, and a little tank top?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Sometimes I'd wear one of those little beanies, too.

Raleigh: That's a really good look you're describing, Syd.

Sydnee: Hemp necklace. Some Fimo beads.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: But that's not—I mean, I just don't think that any of these are a cohesive, one—one kind of person. I don't—one kind of girl. I feel like a lot of it, too, is, like—I don't know. We feel the need to quantify and then, the next step, judge teenage girls a lot.

Sydnee: Yes.

Taylor: And this kind of stuff is just more of that. Because as—you know, for the stuff that's today, I'm not a kid today, so I don't know if this stuff is disparaging or not or is, like, all over the place. But this list that you're reading off, Syd, is very much, like... that's just a lot of varied interests that different people could have in different combinations.

Sydnee: I agree. I think we are starting to get to the—the core problem with, like, if you try to define this too strongly and break it down. Um, and identify with it.

One is, we can't, 'cause we're old. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Well, yeah. But even the idea, like, that the term, if it's—it's so—it's coming from a photo sharing website where people are more trying to share artistic photos and not just, like, "This is what I ate today, and here's a selfie"?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: That sounds like that's a cool thing. Like, whatever your gender is, if you're a part of. Like... where you remove the whole, like, social popularity aspect and just have art. Like, why is that... something attached to, like, a derivative, like, "Oh, this is just—it's one of *those* girls." [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: I will say, it's always been more obscure to me. Like, a... like, how for a while when I was in, like, middle school, everyone started getting Twitter, but not everyone had a Tumblr. Tumblr was for more, like, the artsier people I knew. Um, VSCO has been, like, a—everyone got Instagram at the same time, but VSCO is for the more... artistic—

Sydnee: It's more niche.

Raleigh: —niche, yeah. Edgy people.

Sydnee: Well, let's—let's break this down further, but before we do that...

Raleigh: Let's check the group message.

Sydnee: Uh, first of all sisters, *Still Buffering* is sponsored in part this week by HelloFresh. So... cooking can be hard?

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: And you don't know what to make, and you don't want it to take forever, and you don't know, like, if you have the right ingredients or what you're gonna need, or if you're gonna buy too much of something and then not use it. [sighs] And you wanna try new things, but you don't even know where to start, and HelloFresh can help you out by making cooking delicious meals at home a reality, regardless of how comfortable you are in the kitchen, and how prepared you are, and what you know—what you know how to cook.

There's something for everyone. There are family recipes. There are vegetarian recipes. They have a fun menu series, things like Hall of Fame and craft burgers, and it's really easy to change your delivery days, your food preferences, if you're

gonna go out of town for a week and you need to make sure you don't deliver a box of food to your house when you're not there.

Uh, they can take care of all that for you. It's really easy to use, and the ingredients are all there. They're all pre-proportioned. You won't have a bunch of stuff left over. The directions are super easy to follow. They've got pictures... which is great.

Rileigh: What's better than pictures?

Sydnee: And, uh, you can make yourself and your family or your friends, your loved ones, or not loved ones—whoever you're cooking for, you can make them delicious food, right there at home. And, uh, feel good about what you cooked and what you ate and—and tried something new, maybe.

So, Teylor, if our listeners wanna check out HelloFresh, what should they do?

Teylor: Well, for a limited time only, you can get *nine* free meals with HelloFresh. So, you can go to hellofresh.com/stillbuffering9 and enter "stillbuffering9." That's nine free meals from HelloFresh by going to hellofresh.com/stillbuffering, use code "stillbuffering9."

Nine free meals! That's a lot!

[pauses]

Rileigh: Uh, I wanna talk to you about Native Deodorant, because this week *Still Buffering* is also brought to you in part by Native. Um, Native contains simple ingredients that you understand, so you know everything that's in your deodorant. That, you know, that less is more. Just—you know what's goin' in your pits. You know what you're puttin' on your body, which I think is always good when it comes to makeup or body products. You wanna know what's goin' in there, and you can do that with Native.

Um, and they also come in a wide variety of enticing scents for all people, and they release new, limited edition seasonal scents throughout the year. We're comin' up on the holiday season, you know, get those—those holiday scents, as we're getting into the colder months.

Sydnee: Holiday pits? Is that what you were gonna say there?

Raleigh: Maybe you could have pits—I'm not exactly sure what these seasonal scents are, but maybe you could have pits that smell like peppermint or gingerbread? Um... holiday cheer?

Sydnee: You pro—[laughs quietly] you probably shouldn't guess.

Raleigh: I'm—I'm just, like—you know. These are my suggestions for you, Native, as someone who enjoys holiday scents. These are my holiday suggestions. Um, and they also have an unscented formula and a baking soda-free formula, if that's what you're looking for, and they offer free returns and exchanges in the USA, so, you know. You can exchange your scent and return it if you want, for free.

Um, I really like Native. The best smelling deodorant I've ever used... on my pits, definitely the one with the most natural and, uh, fewest amount of ingredients, so I know everything that's going in there. And I smelled like coconut and vanilla all day. Delightful.

Sydnee: You did smell great.

Raleigh: Smells great. Um, so, Teylor, if our listeners wanna check out Native, what should they do?

Teylor: Well, for 20% off your first purchase, you can visit natedeodorant.com and use our promo code "buffering" during checkout. That's natedeodorant.com, get 20% off your first purchase, use promo code "buffering."

Sydnee: So, I think—I think we were hitting on something that is—is deeply, like, rooted in all these conversations about things like VSCO girls and e-girls, and then the other kind of girl is a softgirl. Which, like, they talk in—

Raleigh: In this quiz.

Sydnee: Yeah. Um, they talk about how people used to have all those, like, picture frames with feather boas around 'em. I figure that must be a softgirl thing.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Um, although I still don't really know. And, uh... and really what they're—it is, like you said. It's a way of categorizing and then, in some ways, like, minimizing the interests of... largely, I would say, teenage girls.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Um... I'd say teenagers in general, you know, of all genders, fall victim to this, but I think—you know, we were joking earlier about *Twilight*, but, I mean, definitely I think the stuff that is more stereotypically associated with teenage girls gets hit the hardest.

Raleigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Um... because a lot of this stuff is just, I mean... there were... so, like, they talk about how, like, Fiona Apple was so big then. Or, like, the TV show *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

And it's like, so are we making fun of teenage girls because they liked good TV and good movies—I mean, good music? Is that then... like, "Can you believe that? They liked a good TV show and some good music."

Taylor: Well, and those are just so different things, too. Like, I happen to like both of those, but there's, you know... how much overlap is there between Adidas sandals and being able to judge that Fiona Apple is quality music? [laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Taylor: I don't see the connection point there.

Sydnee: Well—and they talk about, like, uh, "VSCO girls of the late 90's loved to play N64." [loudly] Who *didn't* love to play N64?! [pauses] I mean, like, what do you mean?! Everybody loved Nintendo 64! Right?

Taylor: Yeah?

Sydnee: It wasn't just me.

Taylor: No, I—we both loved it.

Sydnee: Or Game Boy Colors?

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: Everybody had pagers. Everybody liked *Romeo and Juliet*, that movie with Claire Danes and Leonardo DiCaprio.

Raleigh: I enjoyed that film.

Sydnee: See? Young people still like it today. Um... now, bucket hats—bucket hats might be a more, uh—

Raleigh: They have come back.

Taylor: *Really?*

Raleigh: Yeah.

Taylor: [gasps]

Sydnee: [hopefully] Are you serious?

Raleigh: If I had to categorize it into one of the three categories I would probably also put it into the VSCO girl category, if I had to.

Sydnee: Bucket hats are back?

Raleigh: Yes. Are you gonna get one?

Sydnee: I *have* them. I just don't—

Raleigh: Are you gonna wear 'em?

Sydnee: —I'm gonna wear 'em now! I love bucket hats!

Raleigh: I'm gonna go to Disney and Sydnee's just gonna be wearin' bucket hats the whole time.

Sydnee: I still have a bucket hat that I got at Rainforest Cafe. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Mm-hmm?

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] That says "Rainforest Cafe" on it.

Rileigh: Does it? [holding back laughter] You got it at Rainforest Cafe and it says "Rainforest Cafe" on it?

Sydnee: It was my favorite hat for so long.

Rileigh: Now you can wear it again.

Sydnee: I can wear it! And I'll be *cool*, though. Like, I could wear it whenever I wanted.

Rileigh: [simultaneously] And carry around your Hydro Flask.

Sydnee: But now I can wear it and be cool

Rileigh: Yes.

Sydnee: Yes. [laughs quietly]

Taylor: Well, I don't—I mean, I feel like this goes to, like, a—a deeper understanding when we look at, like, how we quantify women through the ages, where it's—we need to quali—like, "What—what kind of woman are you?"

Like, that's not... you know, like, "What category do you fall into, so I know how to treat you?"

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Taylor: And I mean, we have the archetypes of, like, you know, the... the innocent, the bombshell, the—the ingénue. Like, these kind of terms, and it's like, dudes don't really get put into those categories, but that's because you can objectify something that you can stereotype.

Sydnee: That's true. That's true. I think there—those—there may be some generalities for that for guys, but not to the extent that women do, for sure.

Taylor: Yeah, not saying it doesn't happen.

Sydnee: And I think that's... yeah. I think—I think when—like, on this list it talks about "All late 90's girls had a, uh, Spice Girl they identified with," which I will not... say was true for me, necessarily.

Rileigh: You don't identify with any of them?

Sydnee: I—I was not a huge Spice Girls fan?

Rileigh: [disappointed tone] Wow.

Sydnee: And also, no, I didn't identify with any of them. I didn't feel like I was—like any of them quite encapsulated me.

Taylor: Well, that's also kind of funny, 'cause each Spice Girl was supposed to represent a very different kind of girl, so it's like, "Okay, great. So that's a whole bunch of different..." They literally were based around types! There was a *sporty* one, and there was a *posh* one! Come on!

Sydnee: I guess if I was closest to one of 'em it would be... Scary?

Taylor: Okay!

Sydnee: I guess?

Rileigh: That's good.

Taylor: It—alright. Yeah?

Sydnee: I—I don't know!

Taylor: I always liked Ginger, but that was just because her hair was cool. I probably—

Sydnee: Her hair was very cool.

Taylor: —re—retroactively, I think I probably just thought she was really pretty. [laughs] I can—I realize that now!

Sydnee: Uh—that's true. That's true. Um—no, but I think—I think that's very true, and, like, this is just the latest way to, like—I think the VSCO girl is... [sighs] I don't know. I—I still think it seems just sort of like what the—the preppy, popular girl was.

Rileigh: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: It was just the most popular—like, if you distilled the coolest things that teenage girls were into back then, that looks kind of like what that is now.

Raleigh: I will say, "preppy" is very different than "popular," though.

Sydnee: I feel like there was a lot more overlap back in the day.

Raleigh: Hmm.

Taylor: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: See, preppy is a very distinct thing, at least in my experience, growing up.

Taylor: Hmm.

Raleigh: Very much, like... oh, the—the Vera Bradley backpack, matching lunchbox set, wearing, like, your boat shoes, your Sperry's.

Sydnee: Hmm.

Raleigh: Your Vineyard Vines. Stuff like that. Like, the pastel colors and girls always dressing nice and wearing their pearls and... guys wearing, like, boat shoes and khaki shorts.

Sydnee: Well, I also feel like a lot of these looks, too, are a lot more, um... like, they talk about the—the makeup on here, dark nail polish was a thing, and, like, frosted lips that are sometimes overly lined. Um, skinny eyebrows.

And, like, the—the makeup of the 90's I feel like was a little more uniformed. Like, everybody kind of got into the same trends, whereas now I feel like a lot of these looks—when I was trying to figure out VSCO vs. e-girl vs. softgirl, it seemed like the makeup was a very big piece of it, 'cause they're all distinct makeup looks, is my understanding.

Raleigh: Right. Yeah.

Sydnee: Right?

Rileigh: I mean... if we're, like, generalizing and continuing to paint this, like, picture of, like, a standard, general... image of this category, then yeah.

Sydnee: Are they overly exaggerated because of social media?

Rileigh: Ye—yeah. I think so.

Sydnee: I mean, is that—is that maybe why we're, like, overly exaggerating these archetypes in a way that I—I don't—I feel like things were more blended before.

Rileigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like, this—this list is, like, every girl from the 90's.

Taylor: Right.

Rileigh: Well, yeah. But also, I mean, do you just think that because you weren't being exposed on the internet to people from other places, and that was just in your high school experience, everyone you were around did all these things, and maybe in other areas—

Sydnee: So is it the chicken or the egg?

Rileigh: Yeah.

Taylor: Yeah. Well, and I think because we lived them, we experienced them as our unique selves, so it seems really weird to retroactively put yourself into a category with things that it's like—I mean, 'cause the truth behind all of this stuff is, like, it's fun. We love to, like—it's something we do ourselves when we seek out BuzzFeed quizzes or, like, personality test quizzes. You know, to, like, say, I can lock something in about myself and that can be true.

But I think that the real life experience is is that you change a lot, and sometimes, you know, it's really freeing to realize that you don't have to have one aesthetic or one style or one label. That, you know—like, the full range of it.

So, for me to look back and be like, "No, I wasn't that," but that's because *none* of us really fit into these categories really tidy. It's something else that society kind of does and says, like, "Oh, this is what you are." It's like, "You're—we got you in a box now. Put you away."

Sydnee: That's true. That's true. I think that's important to note, 'cause we talk a lot about, like, the way that other people, um—especially, I think, with young women—will, like we said, categorize them and box them in and give them, like, "This is your role in society. This is character that you are."

I do think there is, uh—we all have a natural, very human tendency to want to, like, figure out our own place in the world by putting ourselves in different groups.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: And—I mean, I think it's the same impulse that makes you take, like, a Hogwarts House quiz, right?

Raleigh: Yeah, that's why we like BuzzFeed quizzes so much.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Is—so that we can figure out our place in the world in relation to other people. Um, but you gotta be careful, 'cause, you know, Vonnegut would say that's a granfalloon. You're not really part of that group. It's a false association.

Taylor: Well...

Sydnee: But it makes you feel safe and comfortable.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: [holding back laughter] It's like sports fans.

Taylor: I think it's good to—to experience these ideas, if it helps you learn or expand yourself, to find something new out about yourself. I think it's bad when it makes you feel like you have to cut off things *from* yourself.

Like, I know growing up, I felt like I was a *smart* girl, so I couldn't be anything—like, even, like, self care felt like such a—a thing that I shouldn't take part in, you know? Because that was, like—like, I don't know. Like, face masks or, like—like, a skincare routine. Like, "No-no-no-no. I'm a—I'm artistic and I'm intelligent. I don't *do* those things, because that's for... that's—that would make people lose respect for me."

It's like, no! It's—you can have—you know, that's just self care. [laughs quietly]

Sydnee: That's true. I mean, that—that definitely, um... I feel like I've limited myself—when I was younger, not as much now—um, because I think as you get older, most of us start to let go of the need to, like, be part of those. To—to—you realize how limiting, how it can be defining but also limiting to have all those kinds of boundaries and labels.

Raleigh: Because, I mean, in, like, reality and interacting with other people away from social media and in person, it doesn't really have any sort of... impact, on anything.

Sydnee: That's true.

Raleigh: I mean, like, if you take a BuzzFeed quiz like, "Aw, man, I'm a VSCO girl." And you're, like, looking at your social media like, "Wow, do I look basic? Do I look like—I don't know." Everyone has told me, like, "Yeah, you *are* one of those."

I'm like, "Well, does that... does it *mean* anything?" Like, when you're talking to me, we're having conversation, it's not, like, "I should tell you, before we get started in this intellectual conversation, I am a VSCO girl. Do with that information what you will."

Taylor: [laughs]

Raleigh: But that is important for us to—to have these guidelines set out beforehand. "Will you please take this quiz so I can know your place in this—in this realm, before we continue?"

Sydnee: "[holding back laughter] Be—before we start talking, I think it's very important—hi, I—I'm here to interview for this position in your company, but before we start, I think it's important that you know, I am a Gryffindor."

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: "So..."

Raleigh: "I've noted there's a large section on your resume just for your answers and your personality types as defined by various quizzes? Um... can I ask why?"
[laughs]

Taylor: "I—I'm really glad that you know what type of pie you'd be, but I don't know—"

Sydnee: [laughs]

Taylor: "[through laughter] how this relates to this interview!" Yeah...

Sydnee: [laughs] "I—I know, I'm surprised, too. I always saw myself as more of an Anya. I did get Willow, though, so..."

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: "... that is... are you comfortable with that in your company? I don't know."

Raleigh: These are the important questions.

Taylor: Yeah.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Raleigh: But, I mean, they don't actually have any bearing on anything you do in life, really. When you're interacting with other people and carrying about your day. Like, it's not something that enters into any sort of real life situation, so it probably impacts the way you think about yourself and the way you think about how other people see you, especially when you're going through your formative years and your youth, but, I mean... it also doesn't really mean much of anything.

Taylor: Right. Well, that—I think that's how identity is—that's how it works healthfully, is that they're the part of you that you connect to and that you feel, you want to embrace, you continue to move forward with, and there are always things that you kind of jettison off and adopt new things, and that's how you develop, you know, who you are. And it never really stops doing that, so, you know, your quiz answers might change all the time, [through laughter] but that doesn't mean that you change as a person.

Raleigh: I mean, it's even something like the fact that I'm bisexual, right? Like, that's something about me that is part of my personality and my identity, but I don't start every conversation with it. It doesn't change how I, you know, behave, and participate in life. It's just, like, a part of my—my self.

Sydnee: No, that's true.

Rleigh: Things like VSCO girl and e-girl and softgirl are just very, very much less important versions of—[snorts] of identities, I guess.

Sydnee: Like, I don't start every conversation with "I am apparently the only human left on Earth that likes Necco Wafer candies, and I think that's important that you know about me."

Rleigh: That's part of your identity, though.

Sydnee: [laughs] But it is. I love Necco Wafer candies.

Taylor: I—I like Necco Wafers.

Rleigh: They're so gross.

Taylor: I never was asked to weigh in on this debate!

Sydnee: Well, sorry! Thank you! There we go!

Rleigh: [quietly] So gross.

Sydnee: Two to one!

Rleigh: That's just like chalk.

Taylor: See-

Sydnee: That's what Justin says. Justin says that it's like chalk that tastes bad, so what part of it do you like? [laughs]

Rleigh: [laughs]

Taylor: Its chalk that tastes good! It's the taste-good part that I like.

Sydnee: Cooper loves them. Charlie pretends to, 'cause she wants to be part of the group. [laughs quietly] But she'll end up putting them all in my mouth, but Cooper loves them.

Rileigh: Aww. I'll join Charlie in on that. I'll get her some—some Smarties. Some Sweet Tarts.

Taylor: Need I remind the people listening at home that Rileigh likes Dots?

Rileigh: I do like Dots.

Sydnee: Yes! [loudly] You have no room!

Rileigh: [simultaneously] What about it? So does Charlie!

Sydnee: You have no room to talk!

Rileigh: I bet Cooper would, too.

Taylor: Maybe—

Sydnee: Cooper will eat anything.

Taylor: Maybe the real lesson here is that it's okay that we all have different likes and dislikes, and we don't need to go to war over these things or campaign against each other! [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: My question is, why has no one made a BuzzFeed quiz yet that's "Which Smirl sibling are you?"

Sydnee: [laughs quietly]

Rileigh: I just wanna know that. I wanna know which one I am.

Taylor: [through laughter] You wanna know which one you are?

Rileigh: Yeah!

Taylor: Well, I think we know! [laughs]

Rileigh: I—some days it changes! I don't know!

Sydnee: I took the McElroy brother one and I was Justin, and that felt weird.

Rileigh: I got Griffin.

Sydnee: I don't know—

Raleigh: So.

Sydnee: —if I am my husband. I don't... that weird.

Raleigh: I mean, you've lived with him for a long time.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Taylor: I'm not gonna—I don't think I've even—that would be weird. I don't wanna take that quiz.

Sydnee: It was very weird.

Raleigh: It was weird.

Sydnee: Yeah. Uh... for anybody who is curious, I do feel like we should mention that whether or not any of these definitions or labels matters, uh, we did—we took that quiz before we did our live episode to find out if we were VSCO girls, e-girls, or softgirls. Um—

Raleigh: As did Lin Manuel Miranda.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Raleigh: I was a—

Sydnee: And I thought it was worth mentioning that he was a VSCO girl. [laughs]

Raleigh: He was a VSCO girl. [laughs]

Taylor: Uh, and Charlie did, as well. Charlie was a softgirl.

Sydnee: Yes.

Raleigh: That makes sense.

Sydnee: That—she is.

Raleigh: She is very soft.

Sydnee: [laughs quietly] Oh, I don't know. I don't know. She's... she's gettin' harder.

Raleigh: Yeah.

Sydnee: Um... she was Mal for Halloween. It's Maleficent's—

Raleigh: Most people who—I was gonna say, most people who don't have small children or aren't children don't probably know what that means.

Sydnee: Maleficent's daughter from Disney *Descendants*.

Raleigh: Yes.

Taylor: [whispers] Oh, okay.

Sydnee: If you haven't seen the films, I'm sorry you're missing out. The music is great. It, uh—

Raleigh: It is pretty good.

Sydnee: In the parlance of the day, it slaps. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: [quietly] Oh, God. We have to end this episode.

Taylor: [laughs]

Sydnee: Um... and happy belated National Candy Day, since we talked about candy.

Raleigh: Yes.

Sydnee: That's the other thing Twitter told me.

Raleigh: They had leftover Halloween candy in the honors college building where we have our honors seminar every week, and one of the professors came in and said "Hey, you all should help us eat this," so we took the whole bowl of it and brought it into our seminar class and finished throughout the entire class. Just the

eight of us, so that's how we celebrated. [holding back laughter] It's the first time I've had candy in such a long time.

Sydnee: Well, happy candy to you all. [laughs quietly]

Raleigh: Yeah. Happy candy.

Sydnee: Um, don't let quizzes define you, unless you want to. Then that's fine, too.

Raleigh: That's fine.

Sydnee: Then you can... take all the quizzes you want. That's great. Um, thank you, sisters.

Raleigh: Thank you, sister.

Sydnee: Thank you, listeners. And thank you, Maximum Fun, the network that hosts our podcast. You should check out maximumfun.org for lots of wonderful shows that you would enjoy, and you can tweet at us @stillbuff, and he can email us at stillbuffering@maximumfun.org.

And thank you to The Nouvellas for our theme song "Baby You Change Your Mind."

[theme song begins in the background]

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

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Taylor: [simultaneously] And I'm Taylor Smirl.

Raleigh: I am a teenager...

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

[theme song plays]

[music plays]

Renee: Well, Alexis, we got big news.

Alexis: Uh-oh.

Renee: Season 1, done.

Alexis: It's over.

Renee: Season 2, comin' at you hot!

Alexis: Three years after [laughs] our season 1.

Renee: Three and a half. Three and a half. Technically almost four years.

Alexis: Alright. 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 at season 2, we come at you with new, hot co-hosts named you.

Alexis: Hi, I'm Alexis. [laughs]

Renee: [laughs] And we also have, uh, future of dog tech.

Alexis: Yeah.

Renee: Dog news.

Alexis: Dog news.

Renee: Celebrity guests.

Alexis: Oh, big... shots.

Renee: Will not let them talk about their resume.

Alexis: Nope, only their dogs.

Renee: 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.

[music plays]

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